HOW to SEAL the DEAL with integrity

Sell More by Mastering the Art of Ethical Persuasion

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You started your blog to help people, right?

Well here’s a very simple truth you’d better come to grips with pretty quickly: You can’t help those people if your blog whithers and dies on the vine.

You have to find ways to create cash flow, so you’ve created a product or service to help make that happen.

But how do you get people to buy it? Most bloggers, bless their hearts, take to selling like a gorilla takes to figure skating.

They either hate selling so much they just don’t do it, or they make the mistake of thinking that mimicking those cheesy, schmutzy, pushy, hardcore sales tactics they see online is the way to go.

Not selling anything is a surefire way of hopping the express train to oblivion.

And using online marketers as your model for good selling is like shelling out your hard earned cash to attend Justin Bieber Charm School. It doesn’t end well.

But it’s ok. You don’t need to be a sales master to learn the basics and make them work for you.

After over 20 years of sales and sales management, I decided to create this report and share with you three of the easiest to master - and yet most overlooked sales principles that can help you sell more effectively on your blog.

If you put these three principles into play, you’ll find that creating offers, speaking about your offers, and writing copy about your offers becomes much, much easier.

And if at any time you need more extensive help with your sales, marketing, or positioning, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Seal the Deal With Integrity
Principle 1: Don’t Be a Feature Preacher

In any field, the basics are your foundation. You don’t have to be the best in the world at something to get results.

What you do need is a firm grasp on the basics — and the discipline to execute them properly over and over again. Take any sport for example.

How rudimentary and basic are…

• Passing the ball in soccer.
• Dribbling in basketball.
• Blocking in football.
• Holding a club in golf.

It doesn’t get any more basic… and it doesn’t get any more important either. That’s why your 7 year-old who’s just learning, the high school kids, the college teams, and the millionaire professional athletes all work on those same basic skills every single day.

They all understand how important the basics are, so they spend time on them daily regardless of what level they’re at.

If you don’t have the basics right, you have no business trying to get fancy.

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And yet so many people spend so much time in pursuit of elaborate tools and processes that in the grand scheme of things are only moderately useful. It’s a great example of putting the cart before the horse.
One Simple Shift That Will Boost Your Sales

So that’s what we’re talking about – a small, simple change that will help you sell better.

If you read Reboot Authentic regularly, you know I detest the whole instant fix/magic pill tripe that’s widely available on and offline. This isn’t that. This is a real, small shift in the way you sell that will help you better serve your audience and make more sales while doing so.

But before you can understand the solution, you need to fully understand the problem.

Our Fictitious Sales Excursion Begins

Let’s set a scene and paint a picture.

Imagine a married couple walking into a car dealership with their three children who range in age from 2 to 8.

They have the diaper bag over the shoulder, the smallest kid is squirming around in Moms arms, and Dad’s telling the one kid to stop doing something horrible to the other kid… you get the idea. They’re busy parents.

As they walk in to the car dealership, 73 salesmen trample each other to get to the family first. When the skirmish is over, the wounded are dragged off the battlefield, and the victor emerges from the pile – the family explains their purpose for visiting the dealership: They’re looking for a new vehicle for Mom.

Mom tells the salesman, “I drive the kids around a lot… and as you can see they’re, well… energetic. My car is just too cramped. The kids are smooshed together back there – which makes them argue… which makes me tense… it’s just awful. And there’s no place to carry groceries or anything with all of us in there. I need something roomier.”

Take note of what we know about this family so far – it’s important!
The salesman immediately knows what he wants to show her. He leads the family over to a nice looking minivan, slaps his hand down on the hood and says...

“This van is a 6 cylinder, seats 7, gets 18mpg city – 27 highway. It also has airbags all around and front wheel drive. This model comes with cruise control, it has a DVD player with a screen in the back, a large cargo area, and it has a 5-speaker sound system and an auxiliary MP3 audio input.”

How does that pitch sit with you?

Does it excite you? Does it leave you cold? Why?

I’d say it’s a terrible pitch. Let’s discuss why.

**The Sweet Spots: Alleviation or Attainment**

In general – what is our fictional salesman doing wrong?

Well, several things, actually – but we’re going to focus on the big one. The one that perhaps kills more sales before they start than any other mistake… **Being a Feature Preacher.**

Features are… well, features. They’re things like…

- It’s red.
- It’s tall.
- It weighs 1000 pounds.
- It’s made of steel.
- It’s sugar free.

Features are important, but they’re not very efficient in influencing us to buy.

What does influence us to buy is either the **alleviation of pain** – or the attainment of some kind of pleasure.
Feature, Meet Benefit. Benefit, This Is Feature.

Features aren’t bad things. They’re good. But all by themselves they’re dry, boring, and tasteless. They lack depth and emotion.

A feature has to be accompanied by a benefit to make it personally meaningful to a potential buyer.

**Features** answer the question, “What is it?”
**Benefits** answer the question, “What does the buyer get out of it?”

Knowing that, what could our car salesman have done to more effectively show that minivan to our family?

Alleviation or Attainment

Think about our family of van-shoppers. What’s their pain? Primarily, their pain is a crowded car full of kids who tend to fight and wiggle when they’re packed in like sardines. If you could fix that problem, you’d have a real chance to make a sale.

What might Mom and Dad like to **attain** that would feel wonderful to them? More room in the car, the kids co-existing peacefully, and maybe plenty of space for all the people or things that need to be hauled. Imagine the peace and comfort!

Now if you could combine an attractive feature (what is it) with a pleasing benefit (what the buyer gets from the feature) you might just make a sale.

So what could our salesman have done to sell more effectively? He could have paid better attention to the family situation that was right in front of his face – and sold to them more empathetically.

Instead of, “This van seats 7 and has a DVD player”, he could have said…
“You’re going to love this! This van seats five in the back – everyone will have plenty of their own space so there’s no squabbling over who’s touching who or who’s on whose side. It should make for a much more relaxing ride for Mom and Dad. Oh – and the DVD player tends to keep the kids entertained during those longer trips, too. I think you’ll find traveling in this much more peaceful and enjoyable for the whole family”

Do you see the difference?

“When seats 7 and has a DVD player.”
Meh.

“Provides peace, comfort, and more pleasant travel.”
Hooray!

Bridging The Gap

As a non-professional salesperson, here is an easy way you can make sure you’re selling benefits and not just being a feature preacher.

I call it The Benefit Bridge and it’s super simple.

The benefit bridge takes those important (but dry/dull) features – and makes them personally meaningful to your prospect by either alleviating pain or allowing the buyer to attain something they want.
Just add any of the phrases below after the feature to force yourself to use a benefit.

so that…
in order to…
which allows you to…
which makes it…

As you can see, you could easily come up with countless numbers of your own benefit bridges in addition to the ones above. As long as they attach a personal meaning to the feature. Let’s look at a few more examples…

Let’s say you’re telling your friend about WordPress. You could say…

“It has a really intuitive user interface.”

Or you could say…

“It has a really intuitive user interface so that you can start publishing right away without having to learn HTML or CSS.”

Which one would be more likely to influence you to take action? What about…

“Pizza Shack uses a thick thermal delivery bag.”

vs.

“Pizza Shack uses a thermal delivery bag in order to insure that your pizza arrives at your home just as hot and fresh as when we pulled it out of the oven.”

And lastly…

“Subscribe now to receive updates.”

vs.

“Subscribe now to learn how to build a loyal audience and get noticed in a sea of look-alikes.”
The Roles of What and Why

Remember that in selling, the feature answers the question, “What is it?” The benefit answers the question, “What does the buyer get out of it?” – and to make them work together, you use a benefit bridge.

Go visit some of your online heroes sales pages – or go examine some of your offline heroes’ sales materials. You’ll notice that the successful ones spend more time selling benefits than they do listing features.

This doesn’t mean they don’t talk about features – they do. But they spend their time driving home the benefits much more.

When you’re buying a car with anti-lock brakes, you’re not buying brakes – you’re buying safety.

When you buy a $200 concert ticket, you’re not buying two hours worth of music – you’re buying an unforgettable group experience.

And when you’re buying a meal in a five-star restaurant, you’re not buying a full belly – you’re buying status, or atmosphere, or an experience.
Principle 2: How Not To Spray and Pray

Your business is flourishing. You have a loyal customer base of raging fans, sales are up, the money is flowing, and your business is steadily growing.

At least that’s the business owner’s dream.

But that’s not what’s happening just yet, is it? At least not to the extent that you’d like.

After all, we all want to improve. We want today’s results to be better than yesterday’s – and we want tomorrow’s results to be better than today’s.

But it doesn’t always go that way. A lot of businesses struggle to grow and bring on new customers. If that describes you, then you need to know that there’s something you can do to about it.

But first, let me ask you a question…

If you had to name just one thing in your market that, more than any other, is the biggest barrier to your ability to sell more and grow… what would it be?

Seriously take a moment and think of your answer before moving on to the next page.
It’s Not What You Think

If you really took the time to come up with an answer (and I hope you did), I would wager that you, like most people, probably answered with something related to having a high level of competition in your market.

After all, it’s hard to name a business that isn’t faced with serious competition, right? Plus, it just makes sense that the number one thing that stands in the way of you selling more should be the fact that your prospect has many other choices when it comes to getting what they want or solving their problem.

But what if I told you that competition is not the problem?

(By the way… that is what I’m telling you.)

To Broadcast or Engage - That Is the Question

The real reason you’re not selling or growing more comes with some good news and some bad news.

The good news is that it’s something you have complete control over – and therefore can change pretty easily.

The bad news is that the real problem might be within you. Specifically, it could be the way you look at your business or your market.

Switching from broadcasting to engagement will allow you to save time, money, and no small amount of frustration.

So what is that problem? The real problem is targeting.

When it comes to sales and marketing, most businesses do what I call spray and pray.

That means they spray their messaging out to the world and hope it sticks with a certain number of people. And after they hope it sticks with a certain number, they have to pray that whatever that certain number of people is – that it’s enough to sustain their business.
That’s no way to do business. At least it’s no way to do business successfully. Especially if you’re in an already crowded market space.

It’s much faster, more cost-efficient, and less maddening to do the work and get to know your potential customer base intimately – and then specifically target them with messaging that will be meaningful and useful to them. That’s called target marketing.

The primary difference between the two is focus.

Getting To Know the Right People

The questions you really need to ask yourself are: Who are you as a business and who are the right target customers for you?

I know. As simple as those questions are, they’re tough to answer. It would be great if someone could just hand you the answer in a sealed envelope like on the Academy Awards – but that’s not the way this works.

You’re the only one who can answer those questions, and doing so will take time and effort.

So while no one but you can solve this puzzle, the first steps toward figuring it out are actually pretty easy. It all begins with focus.

Five Tips for Focused Sales and Marketing

Here are five tips that you can use to begin targeting the right potential customers for you.

1: Narrow Your Focus
This simply means that you change the way you look at your targets. Start thinking about personally engaging specific groups of people with specific messages instead of broadcasting generically to the world. Your goal should be to attract only the people who will connect deeply with you and your business. You don’t need lukewarm well-wishers. You’re looking for raging fans.
2: Grow Thick Skin
When you begin focusing in on the right prospects and quit trying to please everyone, guess what happens? Some people aren’t going to like you, your business, or your products. No matter how nice you are or how stellar your work is, someone isn’t going to like it. And that’s fine.

I’ve always said that if you went to the mall and started handing out $100 bills, someone would be mad about it. Accept that you’ll never please everyone and you’re well on your way to pleasing the right ones.

3: Just Like In School: Don’t Copy
Be careful that you don’t (even unintentionally) become a knock-off of someone else in your market. Pay attention to your competition, learn what you can from their successes – but be absolutely pig-headed about not copying their moves.

Which would you be more likely to pay top dollar to see:

- Aerosmith or an Aerosmith tribute band?
- The original Mona Lisa or a copy of the Mona Lisa painted last year by some guy named Gus?

Copies are usually obvious – and are always less interesting than something original. If you do what everyone else does and you’ll be lost in a sea of sameness. Do something different and you stand out in a crowd and create a much more productive sales environment.

4: Be Loud and Proud
On my blog, we call it authentic. You could also call it genuine or real. But whatever it is that makes you who you are – whatever makes your company and your offerings unique and different… that’s what makes you interesting.

Don’t gloss over those things. Accentuate them. Quirks and all.

Unique is memorable. Same is forgettable. Which would you rather to be?
5: Market and Sell to Your Best Customer
Who is your most loyal customer or follower right now? I mean who really gets you and responds well to everything you put out into the world? That's the person who you should use as a mental avatar when you’re creating new products, services, or messaging.

Create offerings for and market to your one perfect customer. The odds are that the things that attracted that one perfect customer to you are the same types of things that will attract similar customers to you in the future.

**Bonus #6: Fish In a Barrel**
Go where your prospects like to be. Ok, so this is common sense. But it’s also something most businesses drop the ball on.

Once you’ve defined your target customers, do some research and find out where they congregate. What do they read? What websites and forums do they frequent? Where do they shop? When you know those things, selling becomes much easier. For instance…

Mailing coupons for baby formula to a nursing home or a monastery isn’t an efficient use of time, money, or resources. But putting those same coupons in the hands of a birthing coach or an OBGYN is brilliant.

Make a list of places your target customers tend to be and you will have no shortage of ideas about how to market to them. In fact, when you understand who your targets are and where they tend to be, it becomes downright obvious.

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**Become A Discriminating Salesperson**

People who don’t understand sales think that it’s a “take whatever you can get from whoever is willing to give it to you” type of proposition. That couldn’t be more off track. One-time sales won’t sustain your business. Raging fans who come back to you time and time again will.

Put these five tips into action and start targeting the right prospects. Over time you'll see the difference in your bottom line.

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Principle 3: Understanding Why They Buy

The previous two principles taught you how to sell benefits instead of features—and then we discussed who you should be selling to.

Today we’re going to cover what might be the most important topic of all: Why people buy.

Simple But Powerful

This report was written to familiarize you with a few basic but powerful sales concepts. That being said, if you take nothing else away from this series, let it be this phrase:

People buy for their reasons – not ours.

It’s a widely used phrase about buying motives, and I wish I knew who I could attribute it to—because it’s brilliant.

It’s brilliant because it’s simple and true.

If You Can’t Stand The Heat, Don’t Sell The Kitchen

Years ago, my wife and I were looking for our first home. When our real estate agent showed us different homes, we noticed that he spent an awful lot of time showing us the kitchens and talking about all the fantastic features of those kitchens.
We found that to be a bit on the weird side because while neither of us had anything in particular against kitchens, it was nowhere near the top of either of our priority lists. My wife was more interested in the master bedroom and bathrooms – and I wanted a big basement and a nice yard.

Had our agent known that (or bothered to pick up on it while we openly talked about it in front of him) he might have been able to cut the time of his sales cycle in half. And if he consistently cut his sales cycle in half, he’d have made more sales… and more money.

See? The basics really are vitally important.

What our agent failed to understand is that prospects don’t buy because of the features the salesperson thinks are cool.

Prospects also don’t buy because of your superior product or your low price.

**Do You Know What You Don’t Know?**

Most businesses feel very confident that they understand their prospects’ reasons for buying… but in many cases, they’re mistaken.

To see if you’re on the right track or not, answer these 4 questions honestly…

1. Do you lose a lot of sales based on price objections?
2. Do you have trouble getting people to respond to you? (email/phone)
3. Are you frustrated by the fact that some competitors seem to be doing better than you?
4. Do you think the “bad economy” is primarily to blame for your low sales?

If you were honest in answering – and you have at least two or three “yes” answers in there, I have some bad news. You’re not very in tune with the buying motives of why your prospects choose to buy something.
The Real Reasons They Buy

1: They Buy Because They Understand What You’re Selling.
This means that you’ve very clearly and simply explained the features and benefits of
your offering. Whether you talked with them one-on-one or explained it in writing – you
have thoroughly explained and clarified what your offering is, what it does, and how it
can help your prospect.

2: They Buy Because The Value is High and The Price is Fair
Value is different than price. Value is about relative worth. A service that saves you 100
hours but only costs you $200 is a great trade off. It’s high in value. Price is just price.

If value is high, people will pay more for it – as long as they price is perceived as being
fair in comparison to the value received.

3: They Buy Because There’s Something Different About You
Call it what you want: Niching down, differentiation – whatever. Prospects can see
when you have a different attitude or culture than everyone else, and that’s a big deal
these days. What is that little extra buh-zing that you can provide that no one else can?
Figure it out and make sure others can see it.

4: They Buy Because They Believe You Will Impact Profit or Productivity
It’s your job to show them how what you offer can impact productivity and profitability.

5: They Buy Because They Understand the Selling Relationship
A lot of people have misplaced guilt over selling. I suppose it has something to do with
getting paid for doing it – which makes no sense at all to me.

This goes back to the popular but wrong idea that selling is something you do to
someone. In reality, selling is something you do with or for someone.

Your prospects need to know that there’s a reciprocal relationship in the selling
process. They buy something from you that makes their life or business better – and in
return you get money to make your life or business better.

There’s no reason to pretend that’s not the case. You’ll find that as long as your
customer is receiving value, they will take great pride in seeing you succeed as a result
of their patronage.

Seal the Deal With Integrity
6: They Buy Because of YOU
Perhaps the most powerful reason of all – people buy because they like you, trust you, and have faith in you. It takes time to develop credibility and trust, but once you do, the relationship can’t help but follow.

The simple truth is that when you reach out to get to know someone on a meaningful level and you serve them well over time, they become a fan… and if you’re lucky, a friend.

Which brings me to another of my all-time favorite sales sayings…

*If you can’t make a sale, make a friend.*

A non-client friend can still think highly of you and tell everyone they know about you even if they never give you a penny of business. And remember – today’s non-client friend is tomorrow’s client. Plus… it’s the right way to live.

**Use It or Lose It**

Implementing these concepts is relatively easy. Before you engaging in any sales or marketing efforts, simply create questions based on the six points above to double-check whether or not you’re properly focusing on the buyer.

1. Have I thoroughly explained my offering?
2. Am I offering substantial value?
3. Have I clearly differentiated myself from my competitors?
4. Does my offering clearly impact the buyer’s productivity or profitability?
5. Have I been honest about, and made my prospect comfortable with, the selling relationship?
6. What have I done to engage with and endear myself to my prospect?

If you come from a place of servitude and understand the reasons prospects buy, you will sell to more people and you will have happy, repeat customers. Period.
And Lastly...

Thank you.

Thank you for reading this, thank you for sticking your neck out and doing something cool with your life, and thank you for caring.

I sincerely hope this report changes your view of selling and helps you secure tons of new customers.

Something Else For You...

I’d like to extend an offer to you right now.

After over 20 years of high-level sales and marketing experience, I started my blog for the same reason most people do: To help others with the expertise I’ve developed over the years.

So I sincerely mean it when I say that you should feel free to contact me with questions. I’m happy to help whenever possible.

And for more extensive or longer-term guidance, I provide Clarity Coaching on a first come, first serve basis. I even have several clients who I mentor much more extensively than that.

If at any time you get stuck or feel like throwing in the towel - consider that you might just need some guidance. If you find yourself in that spot, reach out to me and we’ll talk about possible solutions.

Talk soon!

-- Gary Korisko
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