



Selling in the 21st Century

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Is selling as we have known it changing? If there has been a change, in what ways might it be affecting our sales approach? Are customers changing the way in which they make a purchasing decision? If so, are customers looking to be treated differently in the sales process?

We are currently working with more than 300 companies ranging from manufacturers to retail dealerships. These businesses are reporting a surprising trend that could be summed up as follows; “Salespeople looking to pick the low hanging fruit (waiting for the easy sales) are no longer able to earn the living they did in years previously.”

So what does this sentiment mean for someone earning their living in sales? Simply put, the older ways of doing business are changing. Just today a business owner exclaimed, “Not a single person entered our dealership last Saturday!” This is not the first time we have heard this statement. The days of sitting in a store and waiting for a customer to walk or phone in are being replaced with a new breed of salesperson.

The new breed of salesperson is looking at *how* they conduct outbound calls and increasing their customer appointments. Veteran salespeople that have made a good living helping customers that phoned in or walked into their businesses/showrooms in the past are finding themselves highly frustrated by the lack of traffic flow of recent times – many of which have left the business due to this very reason.

There is a choice to grow and adapt or suffer the consequences of choosing a methodology that is largely becoming a thing of the past. The new breed of salesperson is learning what to say and how to change their approach in conducting an outbound call making the calls more fun and profitable. (If you would like to know more see page 188 of the book, [*The Seven Evolutionary Levels to Profound Selling.*](#))

If you are working an exhibition or promotional event customers are growing quite weary of the same old greetings. A store owner today commented on a call, “How do you greet a customer that holds their hand up in the middle of saying hello and says, “*We’re just looking!*”? The good news is this store owner is looking to become the new breed of salesperson. She is adapting and learning how to adjust to the changes occurring in the vocation of selling by asking what she could do differently.

“ABC” is gone? The old adage of do the ABC’s of selling is gone. If you don’t recall this axiom, it stated that the ABC’s of selling means, **A**lways **B**e **C**losing. Guys, try to imagine using this approach on a first date. Instead of establishing a foundation to the relationship you pick your date up, close the car door, start the engine and turn to your date and ask, “Say, how would you feel about driving to my place and taking a shower together?” This is placing the close in front of the relationship. ABC is great as long as there is enough trust to support asking for the sale, or in this case a shower.

The days of coercion, manipulation and control are being meant with customers that are less tolerant of this treatment. This older breed of salesperson is, as we are being told, finding themselves leaving the profession of selling.

Are you finding customers are more apathetic? Are you experiencing more finicky customers? If so, this aligns with the 11,000 calls/comments we are hearing. The good news – you can evolve – *if* you so desire. What will you choose – a *new* vocation or *evolution* in the profession of sales?

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