

Relationship skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

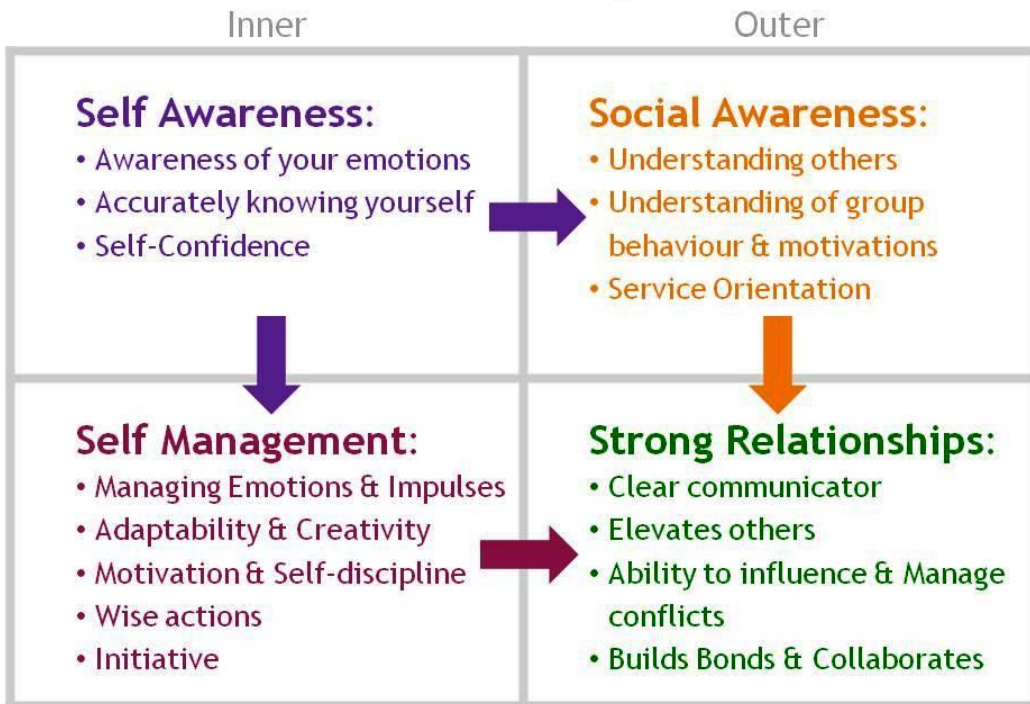
- Communication
- Social engagement
- Relationship-building
- Teamwork

Skills

- People Skills
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Review:

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Discussion about Relationships thru Sales ... Dan Pink

Pink makes a very convincing case that in the modern age we must all be adept at sales to be successful. He goes into detail about how even if we are not directly selling merchandise, we are always selling ourselves. I don't work in sales but I was very interested in learning how to better sell myself; that is the new reality we live in. This will be a review and summary of each of the three sections of the book.

Part One: Rebirth of a Salesman

Dan Pink begins by citing a study that shows 1 in 9 Americans work in sales. However, he also shows that the other 8 work in sales as well; what he calls "non-sales selling." Pink's claim is that we all work day in and day out to influence, persuade, and move others to act in a manner we desire. That is the main point of *To Sell is Human: Moving others to part with their resources*. Whether it be money, time, attention, or a decision in our favor, much of what we do amounts to moving others.

Caveat Venditor

We're all in sales now. Some people are uncomfortable with this fact, but Pink clearly shows that in this new age of hyper connectedness, we are actually better off in many ways. In the past, sellers had the power. If you went into a car dealership 30 years ago, chances are the salesman knew much more than you about the specs of whatever car you were interested in. Today with the internet, it's not uncommon for buyers to know more than sellers. Even if a seller screws you over, there are many platforms for you to let thousands of others know via social media and review sites to warn others to avoid a person/company. Everyone is a couple of quick taps on their phone away from buying and leaving a review. We've gone from *Caveat Emptor* (buyer beware) to *Caveat Venditor* (seller beware).



There are three reasons more of us find ourselves in sales:

1. Rise of small entrepreneurs. In this new economy more of us are running side hustles or finding ways to create our own jobs through an internet business or other means. This means we must become adept salesmen.
2. Elasticity. Even if you don't work directly in sales, established companies demand a breadth of new skills from employees. Many of these skills are linked to skill in sales. Pink notes that the CEO of Atlassian says "We try to espouse the philosophy that everyone the customer touches is effectively a salesperson." Your image sells the company.
3. Ed-Med. The fields of education and medicine which includes everyone from community college instructors to registered nurses is now the largest job sector in the U.S. economy. Pink asserts that teaching and healthcare demand sales abilities from employees.

Part Two: How to Be

The New ABCs of Sales (It's no longer "Always Be Closing")

- A-Attunement
- B-Buoyancy
- C-Clarity

These are the three qualities one must have in order to be successful at either sales or non-sales selling in the new landscape of the 21st century.

Attunement is the ability to bring one's actions and outlook into harmony with other people with the context you're in. This means one must be effective at perspective-taking.

Attunement hinges on 3 principles.

1. Increase your power by reducing it. This means essentially seeing the world through the customer's eyes and taking his perspective.
2. Use your head as much as your heart. In a 2008 experiment at INSEAD business school in France, researchers simulated a negotiation over the sale of a gas station. One-third of the negotiators were instructed to imagine what the other side was feeling, one-third was instructed to imagine what the others side was thinking, and the final third was the control group. The group who imagined what the other side was thinking managed to make a deal that satisfied both sides 76% of the time. Perspective-taking is crucial.
3. Mimic strategically. Matching our mannerisms and vocal tones to the other person is fundamental to attunement; just make sure the other person doesn't notice. A Dutch study found that waitresses who



repeated diners' orders word for word earned 70% more tips than those who paraphrased orders. If you know anything about the Dutch you know that they are cheap, so this means a lot.

Buoyancy is the ability to stay afloat amidst an ocean of rejection. Anyone who sells must contend with rebuffs, refusals, and repudiations (and if you're approaching women in the States, outright insults).

Buoyancy is essentially Pink's word for dealing with rejection and maintaining your stride.

There are 3 components to buoyancy which apply before, during, and after any effort to move others.

1. Before: Interrogative Self-Talk. There was a thread on this forum about talking to yourself and nearly everyone who commented agreed to self-talk. We humans frequently talk to ourselves. The best form of self-talk is to move from making statements (e.g., I can do this, I got this, I'm the greatest) to asking questions (can I do this?, can I make a great pitch?, can I talk to her?). There are two reasons for this. Number one, by asking the question you elicit an answer, it requires you to think about the question you just asked. Number two, this sort of interrogative self-talk may elicit intrinsically motivated reasons to accomplish your goal.


2. During: Positivity Ratios. Positive emotions broaden people's ideas about possible actions, expanding our awareness to a wider range of thoughts making us more creative. Studies show that positive emotions can expand our behavioral repertoires and heighten intuition. Pink claims that there is a ratio of emotions best suited for people which is 3-to-1 positive to negative emotions.

3. After: Explanatory Style. At the end of a day, how you think about it can go a long way in determining whether you succeed. Explanatory style is a form of self-talk that occurs after an experience. How we talk to ourselves matters. In a study done by the University of Pennsylvania, researchers found that salespeople with an optimistic explanatory style sold more insurance and kept their jobs longer.

Clarity is the capacity to help others see their situations in fresh and more revealing ways and to identify problems they didn't realize they had. This third quality hinges less on problem solving and more on problem finding. In research done at the University of Chicago, researchers found that people most disposed to creative breakthroughs in art, science, and other endeavors tend to be problem finders. "The quality of the problem that is found is the forerunner of the quality of the solution that is attained" concluded Jacob Getzels. Today, both sales and non-sales selling depend more on creative, heuristic, problem-finding skills.

Pink gives a quick example. Suppose fifteen years ago you were in the market for a new vacuum cleaner. You would have had to go into a store and speak to a salesman who likely knew much more than you about the product. Today, you can hop online and check out the specs of whatever vacuum model you want. But what if you've gotten your problem wrong? Maybe your real aim isn't to buy a vacuum cleaner, but to have clean floors. Maybe the problem is the screen on your windows aren't keeping out the dust, maybe your carpet collects dirt too easily and you need a new one, maybe you shouldn't buy a vacuum but instead join a neighborhood cooperative that shares appliances, or maybe you can hire a cheap cleaning crew.





There is one cool exercise in this chapter that I've used with good results. This is a tool to clarify others' motives using 2 irrational questions.

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 meaning `not ready at all' and 10 meaning `totally ready,' how ready are you to [insert difficult task]?
2. Why didn't you pick a lower number?

The second question catches the person off guard. The person moves from defending their current behavior to explaining why, on some level, they want to behave differently. It allows the person to clarify their motives.

Part Three: What to Do

This section focuses on three key abilities concerning what to do in sales: to pitch, to improvise, and to serve.

Pitch The purpose of a pitch isn't necessarily to move others to immediately adopt your idea. The purpose is to offer something so compelling that it begins a conversation, brings the other person in as a participant, and eventually arrives at an outcome that appeals to both of you. This chapter zeroes in on 6 new alternatives to the elevator pitch including the one-word pitch (reduce your essence down to one word e.g., Obama's 2012 slogan "Forward"), the question pitch (Are you better off today than you were four years ago?), the rhyming pitch (easy to remember), the subject line pitch (regarding e-mail), the twitter pitch (cuts through PR babble and forces companies to summarize what they do in 140 characters), the Pixar pitch (once upon a time...).

Improvise The techniques of improvisational theater are critical for anyone who wants to move others. The old method of sales relied on stable scripts (if the customer says this, you should say that) but today it has given way to complex and unpredictable conditions that favor improvisation. This chapter delves into how to listen to offers and how to make your partner look good in the process.

Serve This is the sort of feel-good preachy final ability Pink closes out on, and it is very persuasive. He writes that sales and non-sales selling are ultimately about service. If you believe in your product (or yourself, or your company, or whatever), you will be more likely to move others to believe in it too. Pink speaks of service in its best form--improving the lives of others and in turn, improving the world. This can happen if we follow two principles: Make it personal and make it purposeful.

The secret to sales is to remember who we are serving and why we are serving them. In sales, we do better when we move beyond just trying to make a sale and remember that we are serving a person. Raising the salience of purpose is one of the most potent methods of moving others.

