

21<sup>st</sup> Century Sales Training Presents:

# Six **Useless** Ideas Most Sales Programs Teach!

Plus Special Bonus:  
The Top 10  
Principles of  
Sales Success!\*



**By: Len Foley**

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\* A *FREE* excerpt from:  
Sales Without the Sucker Punch!

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## Contents:



1. Introduction [Click Here](#)
2. Six Useless Ideas Most Sales Trainers Teach! [Click Here](#)
3. Bonus Chapter: The Top 10 Principles of Sales Success! [Click Here](#)
4. Second Bonus Chapter: “And here’s a real world example of the 10 principles in action...” [Click Here](#)
5. Third Bonus Chapter:  Anatomy of a ridiculous sales pitch! [Click here](#)

Introduction to:  
**Six Useless Ideas Most Sales  
Programs Teach!**



It's no secret: Most sales professionals are unhappier and unhealthier than ever before. Why? **Because they're operating in hostile, unwelcome selling environments where many of their customers are out for *blood!***

There's no denying it: The average consumer is bombarded with more sales messages than ever before: billboards, radio commercials, TV, magazines, the list goes on.

And whether you're a small business owner, retail clerk, dentist, lawn care specialist, chiropractor, hairdresser, CPA, or door-to-door magazine salesperson, there's something you need to know:

**Yesterday's sales training no longer applies to today's fast-paced environment. What once worked for your predecessors won't work for you!**

In fact, some sales trainers promise results that can't be delivered in any 21st century selling environment. And if you're planning on investing in any new programs, at least know what you're getting yourself into...

See, I'm a professional sales trainer. Every day I'm on the front lines, experimenting and testing every principle I teach. If something doesn't work, I toss it aside and look for something

that will work. I can't afford to waste time on useless ideas.  
[Click Here](#) for just a few of the "useless" ideas that most sales  
courses teach...

# Useless Idea #1: You need to become a “Motivated Seller”



Take an idiot and motivate him. What do you have? A “motivated idiot.”

There is nothing worse than a really bad salesperson with a lot of motivation. Have you ever heard the phrase: “Nothing will make a bad product fail quicker than good advertising”?

If you don’t know what you’re really selling, if your technology is outdated and you’re headed in the wrong direction with almost every person you speak with, why would you want to become “more motivated” and move yourself into the wrong direction faster?

It amazes me how many people will work really hard doing all the wrong things right! They spend years tinkering with outmoded systems and wonder why they keep getting second-rate results.

[Click Here](#) for Useless Idea #2

## Useless Idea #2: You need more “sophisticated” sales techniques.



I've spent eleven years and *countless* thousands of dollars studying all the best sales courses I could get my hands on. I read all the books, listened to all the tape programs, and have been to many seminars.

I studied each program like a detective, methodically pulling out the best techniques from each system and applying them immediately into every situation I could imagine.

But the more I studied these programs and practiced the various techniques, the more frustrated I became.

### **Nothing I found seemed to work!**

In fact, most sales training programs aren't designed to work. And if you need proof, try using a fancy closing technique with one of your kids or try “information gathering” with your spouse!

If you can't get away with those so-called “skills” with the people you love the most, why on earth would you use them with your customers?

Yet that's precisely what most salespeople do.

They employ manipulative strategies and “techniques” on their customers that they wouldn't dare use on their families and friends.

It's no surprise that the profession of selling ranks just above postal workers and tax collectors!

[Click Here](#) for Useless Idea #3



## Useless Idea #3: You need to learn how to “close” people.



The “sales close” is one of the worst inventions to enter the domain of professional selling.

Closing techniques are nothing more than an assault on human intelligence.

Using a hard close is like using a sledgehammer to pull out a delicate fossil. People aren’t machines—they don’t have particular buttons to push in order to get them to respond a certain way.

If people were really that predictable, if sales were really nothing more than finding the correct “lever” to pull and then tugging on it with all your might, then selling people would be a lot like sticking money in a slot machine (and just as disappointing).

One of my favorite “idiotic closing techniques” is called the Porcupine Close. It’s the equivalent of ramming a red-hot poker into the ear of your client. The Porcupine Close goes something like this:

A woman walks into a store and asks the salesperson, “Does this dress come in blue?”

The salesperson nods, asking, “Would you like the dress in blue?”

Put simply, the porcupine close is answering a question with a "leading question" that forces the client into the direction you want him or her to go (in other words, it predisposes the client to say "yes" to your offer).

I once witnessed a "smooth" salesman using the porcupine close on a woman looking at stereos:

She asked, "Does this model come with professional sounding tape-to-tape dubbing?"

The salesman smiled, and asked: "Would you like a model that came with professional tape-to-tape dubbing?"

The woman looked at him like he had three heads, and said: "Of course I want professional tape dubbing...**WHY ELSE WOULD I BE ASKING YOU ABOUT IT?**"

The salesman got caught using one of the most widely used, moronic closing techniques ever devised. It's so blatantly manipulative and underhanded that I'm amazed it's persisted for so long in so many sales training methods.

Could you imagine a wife saying to her husband, "Honey, would you mind taking out the trash?"

And the husband responds, asking, "Would you like me to take out the trash?"

Or imagine asking a hot dog vendor, "Do your hotdogs come with relish?"

"Would you like your hotdog with relish?"

It just doesn't make any sense. Why not simply answer: "Yes, our hotdogs come with relish...relish, mustard, sauerkraut, and onions. Would you like me to make you one now?"

(To check out more “Idiotic” closing techniques, be sure to check out my free article: “The Top 5 (Most Idiotic) Sales Techniques”:

<http://www.21stcenturysalestraining.com/idiotictechniques.htm>

[Click Here](#) for Useless Idea #4

## Useless Idea #4: You need to find the “perfect” product or service.



A lot of people blame their products or services for poor sales performance—and sometimes they’re right. But even the world’s most fantastic product won’t move if it’s preceded by an offensive, self-centered pitch.

Here’s a true story:

Two young men spent an evening telemarketing for a newspaper.

They both called prospects from the same list, using the same script, selling the same product for the *same* price...

Yet one man sold nothing and managed to offend almost every person he spoke with—while the other man outsold everyone else in his department and had some of the most rewarding conversations of his life.

What is the difference between these two men?

And how could their similar behaviors produce such diametrically opposed results?

When you learn what you’re really selling the answer becomes self-evident.

(To find out what you’re *really selling*, check out my free report:

**“How any ordinary business professional can turn into an unstoppable SELLING MACHINE!”**

⇒ <http://www.21stcenturysalestraining.com/mail.htm>

[Click Here](#) for Useless Idea #5

## **Useless Idea #5: You need to learn how to “handle objections.”**



A poor salesperson is an objection waiting to happen. Learning how to “handle” these objections is like learning how to bail out a rowboat after the boat has sunk.

Knowing how to correctly sell eliminates all objections because your client, customer, or loved-ones have absolutely nothing whatsoever to object.

[Click Here](#) for Useless Idea #6

## **Useless Idea #6: You need to work harder as a salesperson.**



Even people with extensive training and university degrees get it wrong. (And yes, even people with six figure incomes and half-million dollar homes—who could be making much more, get it wrong, too).

They think selling is hard work and they think the harder they work, the more sales they'll make. In my system, the exact opposite is true. The less you work, the more the system works for you.

**[Click Here](#) for the Bonus Chapter:  
“The Top 10 Principles of Sales Success!”**

# ***Special Bonus Chapter:*** **“The Top 10 Principles of Sales Success!”**

(A special excerpt from: **Sales Without the Sucker Punch!**)



Okay, here it is: no fluff, no lies, no B.S. Here's exactly how you sell, **step-by-step**, in today's competitive environment:

## **Principle One: Keep your mouth shut and your ears open.**

This is important.

For the first few minutes of any sales interaction:

1. Don't talk about yourself.
2. Don't talk about your products.
3. Don't talk about your services.
4. And above all, don't recite your sales pitch!

Obviously, you want to introduce yourself. You want to tell your prospect your name and the purpose of the visit (or phone call, etc.), but what you **don't** want to do is ramble on about your product or service. (After all, at this point: what could you possibly talk about? You have no idea if what you're offering is of any use to your prospect).

## **Principle Two: Sell with *questions*, not answers.**

Remember this: Nobody cares how great *you are* until they understand how great you think they are.

Forget about trying to “sell” your product or service and focus



instead on why your prospect wants to buy. To do this, you need to get fascinated with your prospect; you need to ask questions (lots and lots of questions) with no hidden agenda or ulterior motives.

Many years ago I was selling CD's at a music festival. It didn't take me long to figure out that it wasn't my job to sell the CD's, it was my job to get the earphones on every person that walked by my booth!

I noticed right away whenever people sensed I was attempting to "sell" them a CD, their walls of defense immediately popped up and they did everything in their power to get as far away from me as they could.

So instead, I made my job about introducing new music to anyone who wanted to put on the earphones. Once they heard the music, they either liked it or they didn't. I didn't do any "selling" and made more money that week than any other CD hawkers at the festival.

Back then I didn't know anything about sales but I knew enough about human nature to understand that ***sales resistance*** is an oxymoron... the act of selling CREATES the RESISTANCE! Which leads us into the next principle...

### **Principle Three: Pretend you're on a first date with your prospect.**

I'm sure you've experienced it a hundred times. You walk into a store and the clerk says: "May I help you?" and how did you respond? "No thanks, just looking." It's as if the response were genetically embedded into your DNA. It's a survival response. Like blocking your face when you see a Frisbee hurling towards your head.

When you learn what you're really selling and stop trying to **convince** or **persuade** your customers into doing something they may or may not want to do... you'll see your customers

**trusting** you as a valued **advisor** and wanting to do more business with you as a result.

And how do you do this?

Get curious about your prospects. Ask about the other products or services they're already using. Are they happy? Is it too expensive, not reliable enough? Find out what they really want. If not from you, then perhaps from someone you could recommend. (Note: you're not conducting an impersonal survey here; in other words, don't ask questions for the sake of asking them, ask instead, things that you're really curious about).

**Principle Four: Speak to your prospect like you speak to your family or friends.**

There is never any time that you should switch into the "sales mode" with ham-handed persuasion clichés and tag lines.

Affected speech patterns, exaggerated tones, and slow, hypnotic sounding "sales inductions" are never acceptable in today's professional selling environments.

Speak normally, (and of course, appropriately) like you would when you're around your friends and loved ones.

**Principle Five: Pay close attention to what your prospect isn't saying.**

Is your prospect rushed? Does he or she seem agitated or upset? If so, ask: "Is this a good time to talk? If it's not, perhaps we can meet another day." Most sales people are so concerned with what they're going to say next that they forget that there's another human being involved in the conversation.

**Principle Six: If you're asked a question, answer it briefly and then move on.**

Remember: this isn't about you; it's about whether *you're right for them*.

**Principle Seven: Only after you've correctly assessed the needs of your prospect (meaning: you've gotten over to *their* side of the world) do you mention anything about what you're offering.**

I knew a guy who pitched a mannequin (I'm not kidding)! He was so stuck in his own automated, habitual mode; he never bothered to notice that his prospect *wasn't breathing*. Don't get caught in this trap. Know whom you're speaking with before figuring out what it is you want to say.

**Principle Eight: Refrain from delivering the three-hour product seminar.**

Don't ramble on and on about things that have no bearing on anything your prospect has said. Pick a handful of things you think could help with your prospect's particular situation and tell him about it. (And if possible, reiterate the benefits in his own words, not yours).

**Principle Nine: Ask the prospect if there are any barriers to them taking the next logical step?**

After having gone through the first eight steps, you should have a good understanding of your prospect's needs in relation to your product or service. Knowing this, and having established a mutual feeling of trust and rapport, you are now ready to bridge the gap between your prospect's needs and what it is you're offering. You're now ready for...

**Principle Ten: Invite your prospect to take some kind of action.**

This principle obliterates the need for any "closing techniques" because the ball is placed on the prospect's court. A "sales close" keeps the ball in *your* court and all the focus on you: the salesperson. You don't want the focus on you. You don't want the prospect to be reminded that he or she is dealing with a

“salesperson.” You’re not a “salesperson,” you’re a human being offering a particular product or service.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Note: These principles illustrate the ideal *business-to-consumer* sales interaction. For higher-end *business-to-business* products and services, the same basic principles still apply (you’ll just need to incorporate them into your own multi-step process).

**Second Bonus Chapter:**  
**“And here’s a Real World example of  
the 10 principles in action...”**



*“We are so convinced that sales is pitching, we accept low levels of sales success and think nothing of it. Put on your selling hat and your personality changes. Suddenly you are the goal-striver, the attacker, the shuck-and-jive pitchman or your business.”*

**- Jerry Vass, *Soft Selling in a Hard World***

Okay, so you asked for it, and now you got it: here’s a real-world example of the **10 principles** in action:

**Salesperson:** Hello, my name is Michael Stevens from the XYZ Corporation; we specialize in web merchant accounts for the small business owner. The purpose of my call is to gain a better understanding of whether or not our shopping cart program could help automate your online sales. Do you have a couple minutes to talk about the system you’re currently using?

**Prospect:** We’re not using any system right now; we take all our orders over the phone and it seems to work very well for us.

*(Note: at this point, the typical “sales response” would go something like this: “Oh, you’re not using an online system? Did you know our company could save you thousands of dollars in merchant account fees, not to mention the time and effort spent hiring and training employees to take all the orders, blah, blah, blah...”* But this response is not only ineffective; it’s also rude and presumptuous. Right now, the salesperson and customer are thousands of miles apart. There’s no relationship between these two people or even the possibility of a

relationship (as yet). A pitch, at this point, would be as preposterous as a proposal for marriage on a first date.



You may be saying to yourself: “***Whaddaya mean a pitch would be rude and presumptuous? Who cares how far away the prospect is? The prospect said he didn’t have a merchant account... So why shouldn’t the salesperson deliver his pitch?***”

Sure, the salesperson could deliver his pitch at this point, but why take the chance? Why not spend a little more time discovering where the prospect really is... and use principle 3 and gain a deeper understanding of the prospect’s current situation.

See, the prospect may very well need a merchant account. But at this stage of the game, he has no *emotional investment* in anything the salesperson has to say. The salesperson needs to gain trust and credibility from the prospect; in other words, he needs to get over to his *prospect’s* side of the world:

**Salesperson:** That’s great. I’m glad you’ve found a system that works for you. And to be honest, I’m not sure our service would be a good fit

for your type of company. But if I could take just a few minutes of your time, I'd like to ask some quick questions about whether or not anything we offer would make sense for you.



**Prospect:** Sure... I guess, but make it quick.

(Now it's the salesperson's job to ask pointed, *relevant* questions that gets the prospect talking about his favorite subject, namely: *himself*. And the prospect's second favorite subject: namely: *solutions to his problems*. This is an art as well as a skill and takes practice to pull off with any degree of sincerity. But with enough patience, you'll be surprised how much progress you can make in a relatively short period of time. Remember: this isn't only for getting better at your job, it's also for getting better at every relationship you're in).

Note: at this point, I could include a detailed account of the salesperson-prospect interaction, but I think you get the point. The bottom line: the salesperson **must get over to his prospect's side of the world!** And how does he do that? Simply: with curiosity, attention, and questions, lots and lots of pointed, relevant questions.

I'm sure by now, you're saying to yourself: "**But what if the prospect isn't so nice? Some people aren't so receptive to all these crazy questions!**"

**My Response:** It's true. Some people want the bottom line without all this **getting-to-know-you** nonsense. But let me ask you this: Would you want a doctor to prescribe you a medicine without first properly diagnosing your problem? These questions aren't for the sake of writing the prospect's 1,000-page biography; they're so you'll become a better-educated advisor and offer the prospect solutions to his problems (namely: things that matter to him and his business).

Of course, you'll have some prospects gripe: **“Okay, okay... just what the hell are you trying to sell me here?”**

**My Response:** I'm not trying to sell you a thing; at this point, I'm not even sure whether our product (or service) would be a good fit for your type of company. If you'll just give me a couple minutes of your time, I'll ask you a few simple questions that help us both find out whether my company has anything to offer you...

“But what if someone cuts me off and says: **‘Just send me your catalog (or brochure, URL, etc.)!’**

**My Response:** I'll send you whatever information you'd like. But if you'll just give me a couple minutes of your time to find out what you're needs really are, I'll be able to send you the *precise* solutions you might be looking for...

We could go on and on with examples of how to get to your customer's side of the world (and in my seminars we go into this in much greater detail). But for right now, what's more important than “what-to-say” -- is the **mindset** behind how you approach everyone you speak with.

In fact, (and you'll need to trust me on this): if your mindset is to make your prospect's needs *more important* than your own needs, you'll be far more successful and make much more money (without, of course, the hassle and stress of traditional sales approaches) – that much I promise.

Earl Nightingale said it best: **“If you want to solve your own problems, help other people solve their problems.”** It's simple, but



true. Most people only care about their own problems. And if you care about their problems, too, you'll find yourself being invited to their side of the world as a trusted advisor, confidant, and friend.

And as an old mentor once told me: **“You want to solve big problems for yourself? Then find even bigger problems to solve for your prospects!”**

## ***Third Bonus Chapter:*** **“Anatomy of a Ridiculous Sales Pitch...”**



A few months ago, one of my clients sent me a “telephone pitch” for me to critique. It went something like this:

“Hello, my name is Bob Franklin from the Jones Corporation. We specialize in web based inventory management. We’ve been in business for the past twenty years. Our clients include **AT&T, Microsoft, and Bell South.** We’ve won numerous awards for our outstanding customer service and we’ve got the quickest response rate out of anyone else in the industry...” (After going on for three paragraphs like this, he concludes): “And in an effort to assess your needs as a customer, I’d like to offer you a free half hour consultation at your earliest convenience... When would you like to get started, this Tuesday or next Friday?”

Do you notice anything peculiar about this pitch?

Before you answer, here are a few things I have to say about the “traditional” sales pitch:

- The traditional sales pitch is an answer to a question the prospect never asked.
- The traditional sales pitch says to your prospect: “Hey, I don’t know you, I don’t know the first thing about why my product or

service would be right for you, but despite all that, here are a few reasons why **I BELIEVE** you *should* buy it..."

Keeping that in mind, read his pitch over a couple more times and give it some thought. When you're finished, take a look at the following critique I sent to him:

Dear Bob,

First off, if I can be a bit blunt here: Your approach on the phone will alienate 99% of your target audience.

Think about it, in the first 5 or 6 lines all you do is talk about yourself and what your company offers. Nobody really cares what your company offers, (and I mean **NOBODY**) they only care about what **THEY** should be *GETTING* and how listening about **YOUR** company is taking up their valuable time.

Now as harsh as that sounds, think about it another way: Even if you happen to hit the one client in 100 who **IS** looking for the very thing you're selling -- you still haven't come up with an adequate system for **DISCOVERING** who that person actually is.

To use the analogy of a restaurant: It's like you're bringing out every dish on the menu without bothering to ask the customer whether or not he's hungry.

Imagine a doctor offering medication without ever having diagnosed her patient?

You'd call such a doctor crazy. But that's what most phone solicitors do in sales. They prescribe their solutions without bothering to ask if their prospects have any problems.

And in your particular case -- to make matters worse -- you're willing to offer free consultation (potentially wasting many hours of your time) without ever having QUALIFIED the client as a viable prospect.

And how do you qualify your prospects? Simple, Do you remember the first question in my book: How do you convince your customer that your way of looking up is the "right" way up?

You need to go to your customer's side of the world first.

In other words, you need to: **ask more and tell less.**

Spend less time telling your prospect how great you are and find out how great (or not great) they are. This will eliminate hundreds of wasted hours with prospects that have no interest in what you're offering.

The best scripts are 90% questions and only 10% answers.

They keep your customer talking (and wanting to talk more because the other person is actually *listening*).

Also: write a script like you talk. Saying things like: "And in an effort to assess your needs as a customer..." sounds awkward and stiff. Keep your words and sentences short and easy to understand. People know when someone's reading a script and they don't like it.

And also remember this: There are no "perfect pitches" because people's situations continuously change. The best scripts are solid (in structure) but fluid (by design).

A script's job is to bring you closer to your prospect, and them closer to you...

Bob, don't feel too bad about all this: your sales pitch is not at all uncommon. In fact, it's the kind of script most salespeople use.

But here's why they don't work: Those kind of scripts aren't designed for you or me or someone we might know; they're designed for **everyone...** *everyone* and *anyone* who will listen; they're impersonal and cold.

The kind of scripts I advocate aren't designed for "everyone" they're designed for someone... *someone* you want to know more about, *someone* you want to help, *someone* you may be sitting next to right now.

Good scripts are for real people; they're not canned... and above all, they have something particular to say about a person's particular situation.

Generalized scripts that speak to "everyone" don't speak to anyone.

Forget about a mass-marketing approach (which should be left to your advertising department) and learn how to connect better with your customers. You'll be better off in the long run, and your customers will be much happier as a result.

==> In fact, if you're tired of selling the **OLD WAY**, check out my Free Report: "How Any Ordinary Business Professional Can Turn Into An Unstoppable Selling Machine!" Click on:



# **STOP SELLING THE OLD WAY!**

**FREE Report Reveals:**

"How Any Ordinary Business Professional Can Turn Into An Unstoppable Selling Machine..."



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