

## Nine Secrets of Superstar Salespeople

by Peter Lowe

- **Secret #1 - See Selling as a Service**

Selling is a service. Superstar salespeople view selling not as something they do "to" their prospect, but something they do "for" them. Superstar saleswoman Carole Hyatt co-founded and acted as chief of sales of four corporations. In her best-selling book, *The Woman's Selling Game*, she advises, "The essence of selling is simply this: find out what somebody needs and provide it... Selling is all about thinking of the other person's needs rather than of your own desires."

- **Secret #2 - Establish Rapport with the Customer**

- **Remember their name.** Addressing people by name is a compliment. When you forget someone's name or even worse, call them by the wrong name you send the message that they were forgettable.
- **Send thank-yous.** My good friend and superstar salesman Tom Hopkins recommends sending personal thank-you notes on at least ten different occasions. He always sends them after an initial telephone contact, a personal contact, a demonstration or presentation, a purchase, a referral, or a product change. Most good salespeople do this. But here is where Tom stands out as a superstar salesman: he also writes to prospects who refuse to buy along with an invitation to contact him for further information. He even sends a note after they buy from someone else! And then he offers to keep in touch with them in the future. That extra-personal effort has paid off for Tom in extraordinary selling success.
- **Smile.** A smile tells people you like them, are interested in them, and enjoy them. What an appealing message to send! An ancient Chinese proverb says: "A man without a smiling face must not open a shop."

- **Secret #3 - Listen Up!**

In all the years I have spent in sales, I have discovered that more sales are made on the basis of listening than of speaking. How can this be? The key to making a sale identifying and filling a client's needs and desires " can only be accomplished by listening. When you speak, you give out information; when you listen, you receive information. Listening clues you in to your prospect s needs and desires, and enables you to anticipate his reservations and objections.

- **Secret #4 - Set Concrete Goals**

Goal-setting is the precondition to success in every venture in life. It is absolutely vital to succeeding in sales. Goal-setting not only forces you to focus on what s most important, but also helps you measure your progress.

Consider the example of Mary Kay Ash, the Chairman of the Board of Mary Kay, Inc., and is one of the greatest salespeople of all time. When Mary Kay first started working as a saleswoman with Stanley Home Products, she had hardly any sales experience, two young children to support, and a rocky start. She watched her colleagues succeed in her profession, but she felt stymied. So she began to set goals for herself high goals. She



borrowed \$12 to pay her way to the company's national convention, and on the final night, when that year's "Queen of Sales," the woman who had achieved the most in her sales career, was named, Mary Kay made a decision. She went to the receiving line to shake hands with the Queen and told the company CEO, "You don't know who I am tonight but this time next year you will, because I am going to be the Queen of Sales." And she was. Mary Kay Ash went on to set even bigger goals and to meet them.

- **Secret #5 - Adopt the Attitude of a Superstar**

As my dear friend Zig Ziglar says, "You cannot consistently perform in a manner that is inconsistent with the way you see yourself." How can you develop the attitude of a superstar? Here are a few strategies to put this secret to work in your own life.

- **Cultivate optimistic thoughts.** There is scientific evidence suggesting that your thoughts affect every cell in your body! Every time you think positive, empowering thoughts, your body, mind and spirit will respond. You will feel more motivated and energetic.
- **Replace negative thoughts with positive action.** Try this challenge: for the next month, every time you feel the temptation to entertain negative thoughts, immediately begin prospecting. I guarantee your negative thoughts will be replaced with new leads and clients!

- **Secret #6 - Preparation Precedes Success**

There is no way around it: virtually every aspect of the sales process, from the initial prospecting to the final close, requires practice and preparation. Preparation can make the difference between gaining a lifelong client and losing the sale.

- **Know your product.** You should be prepared to answer every question a customer throws at you about the product, your servicing, its financing, and how to upgrade.
- **Know your industry and market.** To increase your selling power, build your knowledge base of the industry, the major players and suppliers, and future trends. Superstar saleswoman Danielle Kennedy once advised, "Become a student of the market you wish to penetrate."
- **Know your prospects.** Not only should you seek to expand the range of your clients and prospects, but also increase the depth of your knowledge of their needs, interests and buying habits.

- **Secret #7 - Enthusiasm is contagious.**

If you wish to succeed in sales, you must be enthusiastic about the product or service you are selling. When you are excited about the product you offer, when you use it yourself, when you are firmly convinced that its possession will help the owner, your enthusiasm will be contagious. Your prospect can't help but be interested in the object of such excitement.



- **Secret #8 - Honesty is Always the Best Policy**

You may already know this secret, but I assure you, honesty makes all the difference between a superstar salesperson and a flash in the pan. The primary reason a customer buys from a particular salesperson is that they trust and respect him. Establishing a relationship of trust is the necessary first step in selling. Honesty and integrity are the most important assets a salesperson can possess.

- **Secret #9 - Use Failure as Fuel for Future Success**

Rejection and refusal are the occupational hazards of selling. They happen to everyone even to superstar salespeople. The difference between the superstar and the so-so lies in how they respond to the refusals. Superstar salesman Tom Hopkins puts it this way: "The single most important difference between champion achievers and average people is their ability to handle failure and rejection." Analyze why you failed, then upgrade your skills in that area.

Applying these nine principles will radically increase your effectiveness and long-term sales success. Put the secrets of superstar salespeople to work for you!

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