

## Everyone is in Sales

By Tom Hopkins

As a public speaker and sales trainer, I have taught millions of career sales professionals how to effectively sell their products and services. But, more importantly, I have helped them understand that they must sell themselves first. And that's a lesson I would like to share with everyone on the planet.

Everyone is in sales. You may not want to believe me because you think “selling” is a nasty word or dishonorable profession. Perhaps you've had a bad past experience with a salesperson who matches Hollywood's description of the stereotype—pushy, manipulative and slick. All I can say to that is, please don't pre-judge this topic. Understanding it can mean the difference between spending the rest of your life living in mediocrity or living the successful life of your dreams.

Whether you like the term or not you are involved in selling. You start selling the moment you open your eyes in the morning. That's what self-motivation really is. You sell yourself on getting out of bed on time. Completing just that one simple activity can make or break your day.

You sell yourself on keeping your skills fresh, on saving money, exercising, eating properly and doing all those things that you know will make you a better you—help you to live a longer, happier, and healthier life. The most important sale you will ever make is the one you make to the person in the mirror. Once you believe in yourself, anything is possible.

Before you go out to sell yourself to others, though, you have to do what every professional salesperson does—prepare. It's human nature to judge others. We're sizing ourselves up in comparison to the other guy or gal all the time. Because of that, things like looking sharp matters.



It's like we're all playing a game with points. You lose points on bad hair days and gain them when your shoes are shined. When interacting with others, you want to keep your points on par with or higher than theirs if you want them to “buy” you. People like to do business with people who are like them.

If you're not having much success in getting what you want out of life, take a glance in the mirror. Would you buy estate planning services from that person? If not, give serious consideration to making some changes in how you present yourself to others.

So, who do you sell to besides yourself?

If you're in a relationship, you sell yourself to your spouse or significant other. You want them to “buy” the value of the bonds you have created every day, not just on the day you get married. People who fail to continue selling themselves to the other in relationships often bring about the end of those relationships.

If you have children in your life, you sell those kids on everything from your values to doing well in school to eating healthy foods and picking up their toys. That is unless you're one of those domineering parents who get things done through fear. Please note that when that's the case, as soon

as those kids get out from under your watchful eye, they will not likely continue to “own” your values because you didn’t ever sell them.

You sell your co-workers on your character and your dependability. When they “buy” you (spelled “trust”) the work gets done quickly and efficiently.

You sell your friends on where to have lunch, what movies to see, books to read, or recipes to try. In these instances, the word “sell” might be substituted with the word “recommend” but it still means selling.

At the very least, you sell your clients on how professional and competent you and your entire team are.

Every person on the staff of a business is in sales. The people who answer the phones for a business are in sales. They are the initial point of contact between the business and the client. If they represent the company well with a cheerful voice, professional demeanor and do their job correctly, the client’s perception of the company increases. If they answer gruffly or as if they’re distracted, how important does that client feel?

You are in sales no matter what your title is.

When your title is business owner or estate planner, it’s your direct responsibility to serve the needs of the people who will trade you their money for your services. However, before anyone gets to enjoy the benefits of your skill at selling the product, they need to buy you. Theodore Roosevelt is known to have said, “Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.” You have to sell yourself first.

And, how do you do that? Well, when you’re selling yourself, you know the product better than anyone else on the planet, don’t you? Make a list of the benefits you bring to the table when discussing your services. I don’t mean the benefits of estate planning services, but your very own experience and knowledge that another estate planner might not have. Even if you and 10,000 others are selling the exact same product, the difference in working with you is you. It’s critical to be well-prepared to sell yourself first.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

**Tom Hopkins** is recognized as “America’s No. 1 Sales Trainer.” His sales training books, audios, and videos have launched the careers of millions of sales professionals worldwide. His how-to selling skills are proven effective in all types of industries and economic times. Tom has authored 18 books on selling, salesmanship, and success. To learn more about how his nuances of selling can make a positive impact on your career, read his blog: <http://www.tomhopkins.com/blog>.



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