

BookReview.com: *Perfect Selling*

Reviewed by: John Lehman
As Seen On:



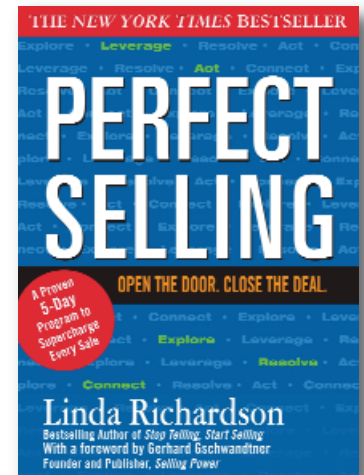
Business

Title: *Perfect Selling*

Author: Linda Richardson

Rating: Excellent! ★★★★★

Publisher: McGraw-Hill



I can't think of a better pocket guide for sales people than this little book. It's "don't sell, help them buy" approach is not entirely new, but this is a concise, practical, easy to use presentation of techniques that work. And it has a great tag line: "Open the door. Close the deal." The five steps--"Connect," "Explore," "Leverage," "Resolve" and "Act" provide a clear organization of the material. There are brief explanations, examples of hypothetical applications and great review check sheets at the end of each chapter. My experience is that business people, and particularly those in sales, do not have the time or inclination to read many books. And when they do they want something that is easy to grasp, quickly, that will make a difference to their lives the next day. This book delivers.

I come to this with many years experience in sales training for small businesses and also large ones (owned by corporations such as W.R. Grace and Dow Chemical). "Perfect Selling" is directed to those already committed to doing it. That is often not the case with lawyers, accountants, business owners and even customer representatives. These people need a reorientation on the importance of sales (not only as a source of revenue, but also as a way to understand the needs of customers that help shape the products and services they offer). Without the proper attitude, I'm afraid this type of person feels hypocritical, as if selling were taking him or her away from their real job. Selling is everyone's job. And in that way I would like to have seen at least a page or two relating selling to marketing, advertising and public relations. I feel that success comes from a corporate sales culture, not merely individuals who assume that this is their task alone.

That's not a criticism of the book. It meets its objectives fully and focuses on areas that need most attention. Two things that I feel really valuable are: 1) the importance of doing background research on prospects from their web sites, 2) debriefing--either by self-assessment or with a partner--after a sales call. This book provides excellent points to check in order to do both. I might have brought up the distinction between "open" and "closed" questions before talking about objective questions, current situation questions, technical questions and future and personal needs questions. But that is minor. I love the terms "Constructing," "Prefacing" and "Drilling Down" and the advice to, "Resolve objections with your customers, not for them." Pages 153-154 offer a great, selling action-plan in a nutshell. If I were still active in sales, I'd tape that to my computer monitor, the front of my appointment calendar or to the sunvisor of my car. Like a great poem, it says everything.