



**Contractor**  
**Selling .com**

**The**

**21 Truths**

**About**

**Sales**

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Service Contractor Edition

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## 21 Sales Truths

As a sales professional, you are a combination therapist, teacher, comedian, and coach. Although, no printed text could capture the energy and spontaneity of your style, we can capture the essence of what the successful benchmarks are in any sales training approach.

The truths we hold here are indeed “self evident.” You can argue with the results that you get, but can’t argue with the way we cause these things to happen to ourselves. In that spirit, we conclude this introduction with 21 “Sales Truths” that provide a glimpse into The Total Immersion Sales System and sets the stage for the skills and insights that follow.

### 1. Leave Your Family In the Truck.

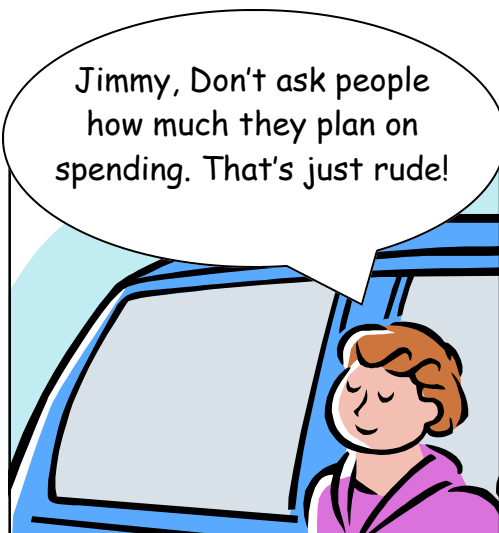
Selling is no place to stroke your ego or to get your needs met, It is only a place to get paid. The purpose of selling is to make money. You'll achieve that purpose when you put your ego aside and focus your energy on what it takes to close the deal. The things we were taught when we were young like...

“Don’t talk to strangers about money.”

“Never ask someone how much money they make.”

“You could have gotten a better deal on that somewhere else.”

These things that are programmed into us are the things that kill a sales professional. As a professional sales person you WILL need to ask strangers about money and you WILL need to ask where they will find the money to pay for your purchase and you WILL need to stop thinking that it is okay if your customer shop at 5 other places before they can make a decision. These things were taught to us by our parents and family. When you enter the sales arena, leave all the dysfunctional things you have learned about the way people should buy things behind. Leave you family in the truck.



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2. If selling isn't fun, get out of the industry.

When you use are at your finest in selling, there will be times that the hardest thing for you to do will be to keep a straight face. This is good. Roll with the punches and have fun.



You can have fun by thinking about the way you “crashed and burned” on sales calls. Then it is even more fun to see yourself a couple weeks later, handling the exact situation you failed at before and now handling them with ease. Of course, the maximum amount of fun you can have in sales are when you are finally making money.

Have fun or get out!

3. Your sales call is a sit-com played by a therapist.



Buying is an emotional experience for the customer, but shouldn't be one for the salesperson. Becoming emotionally involved in a sales call makes it harder for you to close. Keep your composure and objectivity, as a therapist does. A therapist allows the patient to heal themselves. They do this by being an excellent listener, not a talker. Your customer will often times sell themselves if you just shut up and let them.

Also, think about your sales call being a sit-com that you are directing. The buyer and the seller (you) are the players. You also need to be the director of this sit-com that you are putting on. If your customer were to sit down and watch the “show” for the next hour, it had better be entertaining or else they will turn the channel to a show that will entertain them. (Your competition) Don't let your customers “turn the channel” on your presentation. Entertain them by engaging them.

Make your calls like a sales “Theme Park” that is interactive and encourages audience participation. If you are doing all the talking during your calls, you know that you are failing. Your customer must talk about 70% of the time for the show to be a success.

4. Never sell anything. Let the customer sell you.



Use the system to get the buyer to ask you for an appointment. When the customer asks you to give them more information, ask them what will happen after you give it to them. You need to set up every customer interaction so that the customer is committing to you how important that it is to resolve their problems. If you do not get this type of commitment, then you are setting up your next “think it over.”

Most salespeople think they are controlling the call by doing a “dog and pony” show with slick literature that covers a myriad of topics. It is your job to get the customer to sell you on the one thing that it will take for you to sell this job to them. Then it is your job to deliver like a laser beam only that one thing. If you try to convince people they will become defensive. Instead, help them feel their pain vividly. Let them discover how you can eliminate that pain.

5. Never answer questions unless you know why they are being asked.

Stop all the game planning and “tricks” you hope to play on your customer. Just listen very carefully to what is being said to you and ask yourself, “How is what I am about to say next leading me closer to getting a yes or no decision?”



The answer to this is usually to not answer your prospects directly but first find out why they are asking about it. Make a rule for yourself: Never answer a question unless you know why it was asked. You will save yourself from a lot of “blindsided” collisions with your customer later on. During this process, you should feel a bit uncomfortable on your calls since every customer and problem is different.

This discomfort that you are feeling is actually a very good thing. It is the indication that you are treating each situation as unique and not just “templating” a solution on to your customer. Stop over planning and just work off the situation that your customer is putting in front of you right now.

6. Be a third party at the selling event.

The clearest perspective is the view from the ceiling, where you are detached observing the seller (you) and the buyer.

Don't wait until after the call is over to look at yourself and ask...

- A. Why are you doing all the talking.?
- B. Is the customer really telling the truth?
- C. Why are you allowing the customer to control the call.



See yourself from a third person point of view and ask yourself in real time the tough questions that need to be asked. Coach yourself while your on the call.

7. The first problem is never the real problem.

Your buyers have learned over the years to protect their vulnerabilities by not voluntarily revealing their real problems. They will say such things as...

- A. "We're just getting prices."
- B. "We're just looking into this..."
- C. "We we're just wondering what it would cost..."

These are all the reasons the customer will tell you at first why they decided to call you and have you come out to there home for the call you are on right now. The real reasons are as individual as snowflakes such as...

- A. They have experienced several repairs that are starting to add up.
- B. The system is costing too much to operate.
- C. They have just received a pay raise and now can afford a new unit.
- D. The old unit was too noisy and they are sick of turning up the remote control.

There are many real reasons why someone decided to have you come out to their home and shop for a new system. If you want to know why, just ask them.

8. Defuse all bombs before they blow.

You keep getting the same objection with your service or product every time you go on a call. Rather than wondering when your buyer will "lower the boom," bring it up yourself in order to defuse it on your own terms. The first rule of "avalanche prevention" is to trigger smaller, planned avalanches, thereby eliminating any possibility of a major, unexpected downslide.



If you are always getting an objection to your price, ask the customer, "Before I tell you the price, what will happen if our price is higher. It usually is." Make your customer think, "Why is this person telling me this? Their installation and service must be pretty good if he is already telling me it's more money." Don't worry, you can't lose what you never had. If your price is higher, let you be the one to say it first.

Imagine this. How about if you made all the objections first before your customer made them. Then you asked your customer why you still sell 80% of all the jobs you go on even though you know these things are questioned.

9. If your competition does it, stop doing it right away.

If you do what your competition is doing, where is the edge? Be unique in how you present your product and yourself. This is the biggest reason people need to think it over after every call. You simply didn't listen to all the problems and the results they are causing the customer before you made your presentation.



Then you decided to make a presentation that looks pretty much the same as your competition. You must have a different, unique, one of a kind approach that makes people think, "I would be crazy to not do business with this person."

Differentiate or die. If you look and act the same as your competition, in your customers mind, your are the same. Be different, even if it is uncomfortable.

10. When your thumb hurts, you hit yourself with a hammer.

Take responsibility for the way your buyer is or isn't behaving by setting firm agendas about what is supposed to happen next and questioning the way they are proceeding through the transaction. It is a privilege to take responsibility. Examples of the need to take responsibility starts when your customer is saying things like this...



THEM: "We need to get other prices."

YOU: "What were you hoping to hear from someone else that I haven't covered?"

THEM: "Your price is too high."

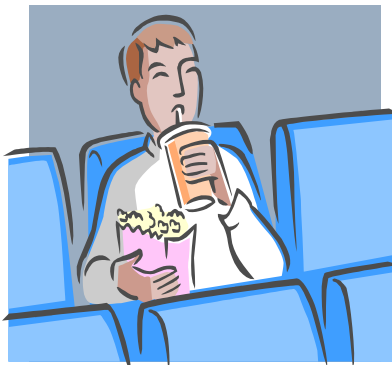
YOU: "I haven't done a good job of explaining the full value of our services"

There are no bad customers, only bad salespeople. Remember to leave your ego at the door. If a customer is giving you the feedback you need to make a sale, then don't defend, argue or interrupt what they are saying. Apologize for not doing enough of whatever it was you needed to do, and start doing it now.

11. Don't eat all the popcorn before the show starts.

Don't reveal product knowledge too soon. Wait until the customer has "sold" you on their commitment to resolve the problems that they are bringing to you. Only then, are you allowed to reveal your knowledge.

When you do reveal your solutions, reveal only that which solves the specific problem that they are having. Don't talk yourself out of the sale by saying too much.



When the customer tells you it's time to buy through the signals they are giving you, shut up and stop selling. You can only lose the sale from here. Listen for the keys to when a customer tells you, "It's time." It is never too soon in the process to shut up and sell the job.

The only thing that will shock you is how easy it was to let the buyer do all the work. You don't have to work hard to get every sale. In fact if you do, you know that you are missing several clues that will make getting more sales easier.



## 12. Salespeople don't get thrown out, they bailout.

Under pressure from the buyer, most salespeople end the sales interview on their own, without any help from the buyer. Why are you leaving so soon.? Your job is not over until you get a yes or a no.



When you get a no, that is just an interesting first negotiating position. Now is the time to actually begin selling. As a matter of fact, a good salesperson “sets up” their first no by asking the customer to purchase something that they think is “way to much” money. (Sometimes the customer actually says YES to this)

Now the professional salesperson knows how far he can go and to get their first no. Take responsibility and find out how much more value you would have to add to get a yes. When a salesperson bails out after getting a no, the customer is undoubtedly disappointed that the salesperson didn't put up more of a fight.

Here are some statistics provided by a 1994 University of Notre Dame study done on selling big ticket items...

**44%** of all salespeople ask for the sale **1 time** and then leave.

**24%** ask **2 times**

**14%** ask **3 times**

**12%** ask **4 times**

**6%** ask **5 times**

60% of all sales are made after the 4th try. Which means that 94% of all salespeople don't give themselves a chance at 60% of sales available to them. Can you see why there is such a high failure rate of salespeople?

The answer is to not just keep asking, (although if you did you would see a better result) but to find a different way to ask for the sale each time. This way the salesperson would feel comfortable in asking more often and so would the customer. Take one more crack at asking for the sale before you walk out.

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### 13. Stop doing free consulting for your competition.

Be of service. Go the extra mile. Do whatever it takes to satisfy your customers. Let them dump on you. Just get a higher level of commitment when you do anything for a customer. When a customer asks you to send them some literature in the mail or fax over something, ask them, "If I do send it over, what would happen after that?" Get some small commitment from the customer when you do something for them, otherwise, you'll train customers to expect it for free.

Another thing. When you leave behind your proposal for the customer to "think about it," you are actually doing free consulting for your competition. Your customer will eventually show your proposal to your competitor and now they know how much they have to charge to always "just beat" your prices.

What's worse is that your competitor is also seeing your great warranties and service and may use this information to make their company better. Do not leave behind proposals with customers unless they have said yes. If they say no, there is no reason to leave it behind and if they want to think it over, the best time is to do that while you are there. If they need more time, tell them you will be happy to come back when they will make a decision.



### 14. Always let a buyer feel good about themselves.

Even when a buyer takes a shot at himself (knowingly or not), bail him out. Help people feel OK about themselves. This is the only time to bail a customer out. The customer must always feel "okay" about themselves during the entire process. When you create a dissonant situation, make sure you also have a solution for this problem you have brought up. If you sense they feel anger or pressure, let them know that you feel it too. Ask them to take a "time out" to start over again if things are not going right.

However, do not reveal your solution unless you have received a commitment from the buyer that they are ready to consider it.

15. There is no value to positive feedback unless it's sold.

Rejoice in the "no's." Learn from your lessons. Ask the customer when you get a no what it was you did wrong. Then ask them if there is any chance of "starting over" and trying to get it right this time. Say something like, "Can I stop being a salesperson and speak off the record with you about something?" If they say okay then ask them, "If you were me, and your truly wanted to get this job, and you knew you would do the best work, what would you do to get it?" Then shut up and listen.

There is absolutely no value to positive feedback if you are not getting the job. When a customer makes statements like, "Your presentation was by far the best and now we have a lot to think about." Let the customer know that although you appreciate their kindness in telling you that, you have indeed NOT done a good job. Tell the customer that if you were doing such a good job, you would be getting the sale, not a "think it over." Ask them what is was that you said that made them have to "think it over?"



It's okay to tell the customer the truth in selling. In fact if you do, you will definitely be doing something different than your competition. Not lying to yourself.

16. Ask your customer for help and they will give it to you.

The way to make people feel comfortable being around you is not to come across like the "Shell Answer Man"-too polished, with all the answers. Learn to struggle naturally and people will want to bail you out. Be not-OK on purpose. Nobody wants someone who is arrogant and too confident to succeed.



Think of the winning teams that you absolutely LOVE to see fall flat on their face. Everybody loves an underdog so you are best to play that part in your show. If you are not sure what it would take to get this job, simply ask the customer. At least you have established a budget for the work you are trying to sell.

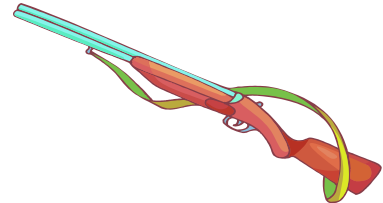
Odds are the customer does not fully understand all the value in your price and now is the time to reveal it to them.

17. People buy for their reasons, find them before presenting your solution.

Create an emotional situation to allow the customer to truly be involved with your sale, If the customer will not reveal the real reason they are hoping to purchase your product, they are giving you the ultimate job review right as you sit there.

They are trying to tell you that your approach is not working and that they are hoping you will just be quiet for a moment long enough to ask them why they are truly making this purchase. When a customer says something like, "We're replacing this unit because she's getting old." you need to clear up this mystifying situation with something like, "I can appreciate that it is getting old but so is my mother and we don't get rid of her. What's the reason why an old unit means you need to get rid of it?"

18. Sell with a laser beam, not a shotgun.



Every feature and benefit you add to the list of reasons your buyer should buy adds one more possibility for an objection. The buyer may be frightened by your shotgun approach to sales. This approach is very easy to spot in an amateur salesperson.

In the shotgun approach, the salesperson tells the customer everything about the features and benefits to all the products they are trying to sell them. After they have used their sales "shot gun" and gone through reams of literature, literally reading each major bullet point and then asking the customer something like, "Did I cover that well enough for you?" They then ask the customer to pick out the "Pellets" that were important to them. Meanwhile the customer cannot even come close to remembering all the points that were covered.

The customer will usually find a way to cut short this type of presentation and get rid of the salesperson as soon as they shut their mouths for one minute. When a salesperson is doing a good job, they will find out what is important to the customer first and only present that. It is ridiculous to start telling a customer that your new unit has a 10 year parts and labor warranty unless they have first found out if that was important. If it was not important then you have just given your customer a reason to think it over and get rid of you.



19. If you are not closing sales, it IS your fault.

You don't need a positive mental attitude to be a great sales professional. People who jump up and down and are perpetually happy all the time scare people. It's not the real world to be in a profession where you get told "no" everyday and shout, "I love it, I love it, I love it! "

Allow yourself the time you need to be upset with the fact that you blew another one. Don't get upset with the customer. Odds are, if a better salesperson was on that same job, they would have sold it. The odd thing is they probably would of even sold it for more than you were quoting.

Learn to replace your depression with the resolution that you will be 100% committed to finding a different way to sell. You should only remain depressed if you are not even trying to experiment with a new alternative.



20. The moment you get angry is the moment you'll start to improve your sales results.

There's a point most people reach in sales. This a point from which there's no turning back. A point when you're angry enough not to put up with the baloney buyers have been throwing at you for years. This is the point where you decide that you will gain control of the sales process. You decide to take action, fail forward and begin your journey to success.



One thing is for sure, if you have no passion to succeed then your won't. You cannot hide the way you go about your job any longer once you have reached this point of no return. The biggest enemy I have is a sales person who "thinks" they are doing "alright" but they are really not. Wake yourself from this state of self-delusion and take action to change things now.

21. If what you are doing now is not working, you would be closer doing the exact opposite of what you are doing now.

This truth is one of the most comedic things I have ever learned. It is a truth because the principle of failure is so profound and so predictable. Let's face it, if your current sales program is giving you mediocre results or just spiraling you down a hole that you cannot get out from, then doing the opposite of what you do would probably shake things up and at least make you see things from a different point of view.



The best sales professionals in the world who work in the contracting industry know this. They do not participate in the "traditional" way of bidding or estimating. No, they restrict themselves to just going on opportunities instead. Change the game you are playing and this time, play by your rules, not the customers.

Want to try something different? Join our community of top sales professionals right now.

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# 18 Questions to Check Your Sales IQ

1. Did I make the buyer convince me that they were serious about purchasing?
2. Did I make the buyer tell me a list of reasons why they needed to get this done and also why right now?
3. Was I careful to listen to the needs of the buyer and hold back my solutions until I made my presentation?
4. During the call, who talked more, the buyer or me?
5. Did I find out where other companies or our company have failed the buyer so I didn't repeat those same mistakes.
6. Did I find out what the buyers impression of my company was and why they decided to give us an opportunity?
7. Did I find out if the buyer was ready to decide today and all decision makers were present before I made a presentation?
8. Did I explain the process I was going to use in making my presentation to the buyer before I proceeded?
9. Did I create 6 options including the best and worst options for the buyer to compare and contrast so the first price seemed too high and the last price too low?
10. Did I offer more service, warranty and solutions in order to differentiate myself sufficiently from my competitors beyond comparison?
11. Was I careful not to lie, stretch the truth, or exaggerate the benefits that my service or product provides?
12. Did I shut up after I presented my options and let the buyer think?
13. Did I maintain my pace when the buyer had an objection?
14. Did I ask for a decision after handling each objection the buyer had?
15. Did I take responsibility with the buyer for the results I received both good and bad?
16. Did I find out why the buyer chose the option they did?
17. I let the buyer know how important referrals were to me and I asked them what would they do to get more people to do business with?
18. I have a clear future at the end of this call. A yes, a no or a date I will get a decision?

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