

PART ONE

THIS IS SILVER BULLET SELLING

COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

P1: OTA/XYZ P2: ABC
c01 JWBK253-Bartick

August 18, 2008

7:45

Printer Name: Courier Westford, Westford, MA

CHAPTER ONE

You Don't Have to Be a Natural-Born Salesman

BEEEEEP BEEEEEP BEEEEEP BEEEEEP. I open one eye. The green numbers on my clock radio shout 3:00 A.M. "This sucks!" I think as I struggle to free one arm from the warmth of the covers and slap the snooze button. "Seven more minutes of blissful sleep, and then I'll get up." BEEEEEP, BEEEEEP, BEEEEEP, BEEEEEP. 3:07 A.M. "No . . . just one more snooze." Then reality hits . . . "I have to get up. I can't be late. I need this job. I need the money!" I can hear my wife's voice in my head: "We have bills to pay!"

For the past three months I have been waking up every morning at this godforsaken hour and crawling into my car to deliver the *Wall Street Journal* to a bunch of windbags who make more in one hour than I do in a week. After rolling, rubber-banding, and tossing 163 papers onto manicured lawns, I head back to our apartment. When I get back home at about 7:30, I am on kid duty because my wife Kelly is off to teach high school in southeast San Diego.

I plop my three-year-old daughter Alicia down in front of the TV while I shave, shower, and get dressed. Then I drag my sorry butt out of the house to drop her off at my in-laws' before heading off to my day job: G.A. Bartick, Mortgage Broker. Selling mortgages is what I'm supposed to be doing. It's a 100% commission job and I haven't closed a deal in over six weeks. I'm going broke being a broker. That's why I'm delivering papers at three in the frickin' morning for a hundred bucks a week. Kelly's teacher salary barely pays the rent.

SILVER BULLET SELLING


Previously I had a nice job working for Nordstrom as a ladies' shoe salesman, but I wasn't that good at it. So I did what many salespeople do that aren't that good at sales—I went into management.

I spent over eight years learning Nordstrom's secrets about how customer service leads to great sales. Nordstrom is known as a great customer service organization, but don't kid yourself. It's a *sales* organization that uses fantastic customer service to generate over \$8 billion in revenue annually. Nordstrom was a great training ground, but I had my eyes on loftier goals. I still believed I could make it big in the field of sales.

First I thought I could become rich selling real estate, so I studied, got my license, and got a job with Jelley Real Estate in Del Mar, California. "This is going to be great!" I thought. "I'm going to learn everything there is to know about the real estate market and people will buy from me!" Well, it didn't exactly turn out that way.

I was sitting at my desk on the last day of the month (which was also the last day of the pay period). My phone rang. It was my sales manager asking me to stop by his office at the end of the day. At 5:00 P.M., as I sat in his posh office, he told me he loved my attitude, my work ethic, and my product knowledge, but he'd been looking at the sales reports and I had only sold one house in the past six months. And then he said as he looked toward the door, "G.A., I'm sorry, it's just not working out."

So I soothed my bruised ego and, with my wife pushing me out the door, I set out to find another sales job. In about three weeks I got a job selling eyewear. I thought, "This is going to be fantastic! I'll learn everything there is to know about eyewear, and opticians, optometrists, and ophthalmologists will buy from me." Eight months into this gig the call came from my sales manager. "The call" always came on the last day of the pay period and, by now, I knew all too well what to expect. My managers all said the same thing: "I love your attitude. I love your work ethic and your product knowledge. But I have been looking at the sales reports and I'm sorry, G.A., it's just not working out."



You Don't Have to Be a Natural-Born Salesman

5

That was 1996. Having a wife and a young child with another on the way, I had few options and even fewer sales skills. I was pounding the pavement every day and getting my butt kicked because I didn't know what I didn't know. I was really just winging it when it came to sales. I was selling on attitude, personality, and desire, without much to show for it. I was hunting without a bullet in the chamber and just shooting blanks. My gift of gab (yes, GAB are my initials) was no longer enough to help me reach the lofty personal and financial goals I had set for myself. Something had to give. We couldn't survive much longer on credit cards, and living in San Diego on Mrs. Bartick's pay as a teacher was not going to cut it. That's when I got the lucky phone call. It couldn't have come at a better time.

On the other end of the line was Michael St. Lawrence, Founder and President of a new sales consulting company named OutSell. Michael had just written the best-selling sales book *If You're Not Out Selling, You're Being Outsold*, and his fledgling company was taking off. Michael was the best friend of my brother Paul (the other author of this book), and he was calling because he was looking to hire training consultants with sales skills, success, and swagger. He knew about my desperate situation, so there was no use in stretching the truth. I told him I could certainly satisfy his swagger requirement, but wasn't so sure about the skills or success. After all, the sad truth was that I had failed in four prior sales jobs.

To my relief, Michael told me not to be too concerned about the lack of sales skills; he could teach me that part. In fact, he told me he knew my sales skills sucked and he was calling me because he was in a bit of a bind himself. He had just sold a huge training deal, but he didn't have the staff to deliver it. After a brief conversation on the phone and a follow-up face-to-face interview, he invited me to try out for OutSell. So I went to Marshalls department store and bought myself a new suit—on credit, of course—and gave it a shot.

I was one of 30 people trying out for 10 spots. There were professional speakers, facilitators, and sales professionals with impressive resumes and fancy degrees. I was way out of my league and was afraid of being embarrassed. We started on a Monday and for the next three days Michael led us through a sales boot camp. On Thursday I arrived early in order to work

on a homework assignment we had been given the night before. Michael was in his office and he called me in “to have a little chat.”

As I walked in to his office, I couldn’t help thinking, “Here we go again: the death march.” I knew the conversation with Michael would end with the words “I’m sorry, G.A., it’s just not working out.”

I really can’t explain what happened next. Maybe it was because Michael was my brother’s best friend or because I had known him from the day I was born, but somehow Michael saw the sales professional inside me and told me I had made the team—as long as I was willing to put in the hours to learn the sales skills I sorely lacked. Michael sat me down and explained to me that there are no shortcuts and no quick fixes and, most importantly, I had to learn the six basic steps of the sales process. I shook his hand enthusiastically and I’ve been a successful salesman ever since. As it turned out, those six steps changed my life.

\$500 Sales Tip!

You don’t close a sale, you open a relationship
—G.A. Bartick

