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## SUCCESS AND YOUR SALES CAREER

**M**ost books on sales *end* with a chapter on success. This book *begins* with one.

Typically, authors of books on selling assume that by the end of the book the reader will have all the tools and will be ready to push the “launch” button, get the desired result, and become the winner he or she was born to be. In putting this book together, I realized a different approach was in order.

After personally training more than one million salespeople and coaching many more on my Internet radio talk show, I can say without any hesitation that most salespeople come to books, tapes, and other resources *already* in possession of at least some of the tools they need . . . and are *already* sitting on top of what is known in the trade as a “performance plateau.” In other words, they’ve got a problem exceeding their known or perceived limits.

*Translation:* No matter how high or low their performance plateau may be, most salespeople do have such a plateau. They get just a little too comfortable with where they are. And they stagnate.

This book is about breaking up that stagnation by getting more second appointments.

This book is about specific skills that will help you schedule a higher percentage of second meetings with the people you meet for the first time.

This book is, in other words, about strategies for *changing* what you're doing right now.

As a matter of personal experience, I can assure you that changing what you're already doing is not always easy. But bringing about change is essential if you plan to break through your personal performance plateau—wherever it may be.

To implement meaningful change, people must first overcome what I call the “complacency challenge.” And that's why this book begins, rather than ends, with a chapter about success and what it means to you.

### THE COMPLACENCY CHALLENGE

If I am going to ask you to change the way you're selling, or to change the expectations and the results that you get from your sales efforts, then I must first give you some strategies for overcoming the challenge of being comfortable right where you are. Otherwise, you will (alas) be statistically unlikely to implement the ideas for generating more second and subsequent appointments that appear in the later chapters. As a practical matter, we have to address the complacency challenge before we address the second-appointment challenge. If you doubt this, consider the sobering fact that studies have shown that *fewer than 10 percent* of all people who buy books designed to help them improve their life or career ever finish reading the book!

If you're motivated enough to have picked up this book and started reading, we've already got a little bit of traction on overcoming complacency. Now I want to challenge you to make the most of that momentum by taking a few moments with me to examine where you are in your sales career right now, and where you would like that career to take you.

### A WORD ABOUT SELF-SABOTAGE

Self-sabotage is a fancy term for having a fear of success. Many salespeople suffer from this problem without even realizing it. It's one of the big reasons that people experience career plateaus in sales.

I consider myself an expert in the field of identifying and battling *success phobia*—because I myself am a recovering success phobic.

The truth is, I have literally “failed my way to success.” What do I mean by that? I mean that I made some big mistakes in my selling career, mistakes that I was able to turn around by reprogramming some very dangerous negative thinking patterns. These were damaging, self-perpetuating internal mental patterns, patterns that I eventually realized reflected a fear of achieving above a certain level in my career. Thank goodness I was able to get over them! If you’re like most salespeople, you’ve got some negative thinking patterns to address, just as I did.

Why would anyone be fearful of sales success? There are many reasons, perhaps as many different reasons as there are people who become salespeople. What’s more important than the *why* is the *how*. We become fearful of success as a result of the things we say to ourselves . . . without using our mouths. If you think of the brain as a tape recorder, and monitor what it “plays” on a regular basis, you may realize that it’s sending you messages like the following:

- “Why would this person want to meet with *me* again?”
- “Sure, I closed the sale, but one thing’s for certain—good times never last.”
- “It seems like a good opportunity, but there’s got to be a catch. There’s no free lunch.”
- “That was pure, dumb luck.”
- “I should be thankful for what I have—life could be a whole lot worse.”
- “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”
- “This is too easy.”
- “What makes me think I’m so good?”
- “That person/department/organization—is working harder than I am. They probably deserve this deal more than I do.”
- “Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong.”

Those are just a few of the examples of negative self-talk that I’ve helped people (including myself) to turn around over the years.

Just so you know what you're likely to be up against . . . why not take a moment and write down at least four "self-sabotage" messages your brain might play automatically when the time comes to set a second or subsequent appointment and get the sale.

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Once you can recognize negative self-talk, you'll find that it's much easier to replace it with positive self-talk. For instance:

- "I know I can help this person."
- "People who decide to meet with me for a second time are glad they did."
- "I'm the sort of person who can make the best of any situation."

Now write down at least four positive self-talk messages you can say to yourself when you set a second or subsequent appointment and get the sale.

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### TO THE IMPORTANCE OF OVERCOMING SUCCESS PHOBIAS

As you will learn, setting more second and subsequent appointments is nothing more—or less—than mastering a series of sales skills. It's something you can learn, practice, and develop expertise in. Like many such skills, though, to implement them on a consistent basis, you must prepare yourself psychologically for the positive results you are likely to bring about in your life.

*Translation:* If you're still stuck in a self-sabotage mode, what you're about to learn in the chapters of this book won't do you much good.

There are some psychologists who will tell you (for a hefty price) that the fear of success is the result of low self-esteem or a lack of self-confidence. Actually, that's just the tip of the iceberg. My experience in breaking through self-imposed limitations suggests that

fear of success starts when we embrace a set of negative preconceived notions—ideas that can be called *disempowering beliefs*.

These beliefs are the ideological principles that make negative self-talk possible. They tend to be short, universal-sounding statements. They may sound like this:

- “Life is tough.”
- “Only the strong survive.”
- “Success is difficult to achieve, and it’s only for the gifted.”
- “Some people have all the luck.”
- “I was born on the wrong side of the tracks.”
- “Look what my parents did to me.”

The principle that it’s nearly impossible to attain success is so deeply ingrained in our thinking that when we *don’t* encounter insurmountable situations, when success without undue hardship *does* come into sight, we instinctively sabotage our own efforts, play those negative messages on our mental tape recorder, and stop short of realizing our dreams.

Removing negative self-talk is easy. Start by deleting the “apostrophe” and the letter “t” from the phrase “I can’t.”

### TAKE A DEEP BREATH . . .

To start moving past your personal success plateau, begin by taking the first of a series of deep breaths . . . and giving *honest* answers to each of the following questions:

1. Are you finding fewer *new* customers now than you did when you first started selling at your current job?
2. Is your base of existing customers and the amount of business you get from them “flat”—or growing more slowly than it once did?
3. Does everything in your sales process seem to take longer than it used to?
4. Do you find that you’re slower than you used to be on following up on new leads or referrals that you receive?
5. Do you feel less happy or fulfilled than you were when you started out as a salesperson?

6. Have you stopped doing something that once worked well in your sales efforts?
7. Is your lifestyle and general quality of life of a higher quality than it was when you were growing up?
8. Is your income currently more than that of your parents? (After you adjust it for inflation.)

(Keep taking deep breaths—we're almost done.)

9. Do you have the overall feeling that life in general, and your career specifically, could be better?
10. When you finally do reach a goal that you wanted, do you feel that you no longer want it as much?
11. Do your accomplishments come only when there is a deadline?
12. Do you downplay and downgrade your accomplishments when someone offers you praise?
13. Do you feel any sense of guilt when you achieve a level of performance that's higher than your peers?

### **CHANGE THE MESSAGE, CHANGE THE RESULTS!**

If you answered "yes" to any one of these questions, you are probably sending your brain *mixed messages* about your professional objectives. Part of you is picking up the phone and getting ready for meetings . . . part of you is holding back and undercutting your own sales achievement.

Mixed messages get in the way of the goal of setting more second appointments with prospects. In fact, mixed messages get in the way of the larger goal of success as a salesperson!

For all but a few of us who have chosen a career in sales, the reason we send these mixed messages has to do with our early years and our upbringing. The simple fact is that most of our parents are or were middle class or lower-middle class, and as such had certain levels of economic and social stature. Generally speaking, when we experience life that is well within these levels we feel quite comfortable.

As we progress in life, we eventually reach a point in our careers where we find that, the further away we get from these

preprogrammed economic and social stature positions, the more pronounced our discomfort becomes. In extreme cases, we actually begin to back down and away from success until we unintentionally sabotage our future success . . . so that we stay within (or at least in close proximity of) our past comfort levels. The tape that's playing inside our heads plays the necessary messages louder and louder. "Be careful . . . you could lose it all!" "What makes you think you're so good?" "Be happy with what you have!" and so on.

This chapter will help you see where you are in relation to those messages and empower you to make a *choice* as to where you want to be and allowing yourself to achieve that level rather than any preprogrammed level.

### **MASTERING THE PROCESS—AND GETTING THE APPOINTMENT!**

Consistently getting a second or subsequent appointment, like any other result, is a process. We can implement that process and get good results—once we turn off any other, unproductive processes that may be in operation. Fortunately, that's not too hard. With relative ease, we can totally change our self-limiting message to a self-empowering message.

Throughout this book, I provide success messages and assignments for you to use to overcome most or all of the self-limiting thoughts and beliefs that may undercut your self-confidence, your desire to achieve, and your ability to set second appointments or other meetings with sales prospects. Take advantage of these exercises . . . starting right now!

### **HERE'S OUR STARTING POINT**

Believe it or not, our prospects and customers have similar fears and insecurities when we make attempts to sell to them. (You'll find out much more about this phenomenon in later chapters.) So think about that for a minute. Here we sit with our own self-limiting messages, and we're trying to convince people to meet with us who have a set of negative messages all their own.

Why *shouldn't* our prospects feel insecure? We salespeople ask them to invest in products, services, and solutions that cost

Getting the second appointment and making the sale in two calls requires a skill set that can be learned.

more than a month, year, or lifetime of their salary . . . and then we send them *our* fear and insecurity signals (subtly or overtly), so they get the message “I don’t really believe in what I’m doing or in my own ability to succeed!” Then we wonder why they don’t want to see us again or buy from us.

What I am about to share with you will change the way you think and sell. It’s an easy six-step process that, when followed, will free you from the self-limiting indecision that reinforces the fears and insecurities of our prospects, and holds our own careers in place.

It’s time for another deep breath; get plenty of oxygen to your brain. Ready?

### ***Step One***

Ask: “What is happening right now in my career that is limiting my performance or causing a problem?”

#### **Possible Responses:**

- Call reluctance (will think of any reason not to pick up the phone).
- Unwilling to try new techniques and tactics.
- Empty sales funnel.
- Prolonged slump.
- Heavy competitive pressures.
- All the other possible responses.

Write *your* answer(s) here:

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### ***Step Two***

Ask: “How is this situation making me feel?”

It’s best to be very specific about the actual feeling(s) that you are experiencing. Ask yourself the simple but very powerful question: “When I experience (the competition stealing my customers) how does that make me feel?”

*Note:* Basically, there are only four feelings—Happy, Sad, Angry, Scared—each with its specific qualifiers.

#### **Possible Responses:**

- Angry: It’s costing me customers and market share.
- Sad: I am below quota again this month.
- Scared: If it continues I’ll be on probation.

Write *your* answer(s) here:

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### ***Step Three***

Proceed immediately by asking yourself: “What is this costing me?”

This answer can be articulated by using a dollar amount or by descriptive words and phrases.

#### **Possible Responses:**

- Angry: “Three sales this month alone that’s \$325,000 in revenue and \$6,000 in commission checks.”
- Scared: “My attitude is in the tank. I am totally embarrassed at each sales meeting when I’ve got to ’fess up to the fact that I am losing customers to the competition.”

Write down your feelings and what your self-imposed limitation(s) are costing:

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***Step Four***

This is the tricky one: You must identify what resources are available now that you can use to resolve this situation.

Is there another salesperson in your organization who is an expert in beating the competition? If there's a sale that you just lost, can you call the prospect and ask some pointed questions as to why they selected the competition and not you? Does your marketing department have any information that you could use to better prepare yourself for the next attack from your competition? Is there some way that you can find out about the competition's products and their approach to selling? Can you find out something specific about the competitor's salesperson that is costing you customers?

There are plenty of places to look for information that could help you turn the situation around. Take a moment now and write down a minimum of 10 resources available to you for possible solutions. Don't stop until you've got all 10, and keep breathing nice and deep.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Step Five***

Now—look at this list and select the single most *difficult* item to accomplish. Next, select the three actions that would be the *easiest* for you to accomplish. Finally, organize the remaining six in order of difficulty, with the least difficult first.

### ***Step Six***

Make a personal commitment to tackle the easiest three action items within the next five business days.

Make a personal commitment to tackle the six action items you prioritized at some point in the next 15 business days following that.

Finally, agree to tackle the most difficult item on the twenty-first business day.

## **KEEP YOUR COMMITMENTS**

The process that you just completed has been used by professional sports and business coaches and has been refined, tested, and proven over the years on many top performers. This process will help you build your *personal accountability*—and will help you send confidence signals to customers and prospects that make it very easy for them to continue a business relationship with you. Here, and in the chapters that follow, Coach Steve Daily will serve as your personal success coach. That means he will challenge you to follow through on what you've learned . . . and to keep your commitments to yourself. It's our job to help you get to the top of your mountain . . . so that when you get there, you can coach someone else to the top.

With the purchase of this book, you have been given a free trial period to embrace my second *Appointment Success Portal*. To start your membership, go to: [www.gettingthesecondappointment.com](http://www.gettingthesecondappointment.com) and click on: Success Portal.

Tackling the  
easiest task  
first builds  
confidence for  
facing the more  
difficult  
decisions that  
will ensure your  
sales success.

### ***FROM COACH STEVE***

Let's talk in a little more depth about *self-sabotage*.

Another phrase for self-sabotage is "failure avoidance." Yet, failure avoidance sounds, at first, like a reasonable objective. Many of us view failure as a negative experience and therefore (consciously or unconsciously) attempt to avoid it.

But let me appeal to your logic for a moment: When did you ever accomplish anything in life that was truly significant, without failing in your first—or even many subsequent—attempts?

Failure is *not* the opposite of success. Failure is, necessarily, *part* of any meaningful success we achieve in life.

If you attempt to achieve anything in life that is new, more, different, better, then you also necessarily will have experiences that you have never had before. It is completely unreasonable to expect yourself to execute anything perfectly in your first attempt. Even if you could, you would likely wonder if it was luck the first time. Let go of the unrealistic, self-limiting belief that failure is a bad thing. Failure is a part of any victory. Without the abrupt feedback of failures, you would not learn. Without the contrast of failure, you would not recognize victory. Without the experience of failure, there would be no wisdom.

Read Tony's stories. He is one of the most successful sales trainers and sales performers in the world. His techniques, ideas, principles, and viewpoints have impacted the success of thousands. Yet, he readily and eagerly shares with you his failures and "less-than-successful" experiences so that he can underscore the wisdom gained. Tony failed on his way to success.

And you will, too. As countless people have proven: The faster you fail, the faster you will succeed.