

Chasing Quota 2

By Walter Brown

A ROADMAP FOR SALES PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

Some time ago I wrote a book called CHASING QUOTA – A Roadmap for Anyone Who Manages Sales People. Readers said they liked the book, but a number of them asked me an interesting question – What can I give to my sales people that mirrors the advice you gave to me?

Here is my answer.

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CHAPTER I

WHO SHOULD BE IN SALES

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MAYBE *YOU*, IF YOU

- LOVE TO WIN
- HATE TO LOSE
- LIKE MONEY A LOT
- LIKE PEOPLE, AND VICE VERSA
- BELIEVE STRONGLY IN YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

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- TRULY HELP PROSPECTS FIND SOLUTIONS
- CAN PERSUADE
- CAN TOLERATE INCOME RISK
- CAN HANDLE REJECTION

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CHAPTER II

NEW ASSIGNMENT – GETTING STARTED RIGHT

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MASTER IT NOW.

YOU WON'T GET ANOTHER CHANCE TO LEARN WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW WITHOUT THE PRESSURE FOR SALES PRODUCTION.

PASS SOME TESTS BEFORE YOUR TRAINING ENDS BECAUSE YOU WILL SURELY BE TESTED IN THE FIELD.

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LEARN THY TERRITORY.

LEARN ITS HISTORY, ITS CUSTOMERS, ITS POTENTIAL, ITS STRONGEST COMPETITORS, AND MORE.

DON'T EXPECT A BIG INHERITANCE.

NO MATTER WHAT YOU WERE PROMISED, BE PREPARED TO BUILD A NEW PIPELINE FROM SCRATCH.

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NEGOTIATE YOUR QUOTA WELL

ELSE YOU MAY HAVE TO LIVE A WHOLE YEAR WITH TOO MUCH QUOTA.

LOOK FOR SUCCESSFUL MODELS.

WHO ARE THE TOP PRODUCERS? HOW ARE THEY DOING IT? WHAT LESSONS CAN YOU BORROW FROM THEM?

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DON'T BE AN ORPHAN.

IF YOU ARE WORKING ALONE (REMOTE OFFICE, REMOTE TERRITORY, ETC.),
TAKE TIME TO BUILD INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS, STARTING WITH YOUR BOSS.

SPEND ENOUGH TIME PLANTING.

EARLY ON, BEFORE EVERYONE EXPECTS YOU TO BE HARVESTING.

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SCORE SOME POINTS EARLY.

GET ON THE SCOREBOARD TO PROVE THAT YOU CAN.

VERY FEW REPS SURVIVE A SERIOUSLY POOR START.

MAKE THE EARLY DAYS COUNT.

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CHAPTER III

WHAT TO DO ALL DAY - PLANTING

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SALES SUCCESS CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN EIGHT WORDS:

BUILD A GOOD PROSPECT PIPELINE, THEN HARVEST THAT PIPELINE.

IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE DOING?

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HOW WILL YOU MAKE YOUR NUMBERS

FROM CURRENT CUSTOMERS OR FROM NEW CUSTOMERS?

FROM SINGLES AND DOUBLES OR FROM HOME RUNS?

MAKE A PLAN AND FOLLOW IT.

17

HUG THE RIGHT PROSPECTS.

YOU NEED A CLEAR PROSPECTING ROADMAP – A PLAN FOR BUILDING A GOOD PIPELINE. WITHOUT IT YOU WON'T FIND AND DEVELOP THE RIGHT PROSPECTS.

HUG YOUR CUSTOMERS.

DO IT OFTEN. HUGGING CUSTOMERS BEGETS MORE BUSINESS AND MORE CUSTOMERS.

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MINIMIZE COLD CALLS.

THE MORE COLD CALLS YOU MUST MAKE, THE WEAKER YOUR PROSPECTING ROAD-
MAP IS. FIND MORE EFFICIENT WAYS TO FIND NEW PROSPECTS.

YOU CAN'T HARVEST WHAT HASN'T BEEN PLANTED.

PLAN TO PLANT MORE THAN YOU NEED.

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CHAPTER IV

WHAT TO DO ALL DAY - HARVESTING

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WHAT CAN YOU CLOSE NEXT?

MAKE THIS YOUR FIRST AND LAST QUESTION EVERY DAY.

WATCH YOUR PIPELINE, NOT JUST YOUR SALES PRODUCTION.

SALES ARE THE END PRODUCT OF A PROCESS. THE BETTER YOUR PROCESS THE
GREATER YOUR PRODUCTION.

21

LISTEN.

YOU DON'T LEARN MUCH ABOUT YOUR PROSPECT WHEN YOU ARE TALKING.

LEARN EMPATHY.

THE MORE YOU CAN PUT YOURSELF IN YOUR PROSPECTS' SHOES THE MORE LIKELY THEY ARE TO BUY FROM YOU.

22

SELL PROPOSALS THAT *YOU* WOULD BUY.

WOULD *YOU* BUY YOUR PROPOSAL? IF SO, YOU PROBABLY KNOW WHY YOUR PROSPECT WILL BUY IT. IF NO, WHY ARE YOU SELLING IT?

HELP YOUR PROSPECTS MAKE GOOD DECISIONS.

GOOD FOR *THEM*. WHICH WILL IN TURN BE GOOD FOR YOU.

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EMOTION

MOST PROSPECTS MAKE EMOTIONAL DECISIONS WHICH THEY WRAP IN RATIONALE. SO SELL TO YOUR PROSPECT'S EMOTIONS. BUT SUPPLY A RATIONAL WRAPPER.

HOME RUNS

YOU NEED TO HIT THEM, BECAUSE IT IS HARD TO CRUSH YOUR NUMBERS WITHOUT SOME BIG DEALS ALONG THE WAY.

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GET HELP.

HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE FOR BIGGER DEALS.

JOINT SALES CALLS

MAKING JOINT SALES CALLS IS LIKE DANCING IN TIGHT SPACE – EACH OF YOU BETTER KNOW WHAT THE OTHER IS GOING TO DO NEXT.

25

DON'T FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR DEALS.

TOO MUCH OPTIMISM MEANS YOU WILL STAY WITH BAD DEALS TOO LONG. ALWAYS ADD REALISM TO THE MIX.

STAY OBJECTIVE.

A GOOD REP INVESTS EMOTION, WHICH CAN CAUSE A LOSS OF OBJECTIVITY. HOLD ON TO YOURS.

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EVERY PROSPECT'S THREE BASIC QUESTIONS ARE

WHY DO IT? WHY NOW? WHY WITH YOU?

KEEP IT SIMPLE – SELL TO THOSE QUESTIONS.

LOSE RIGHT.

IF YOU LOSE, YOU LOSE. LEAVE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS INTACT FOR TOMORROW'S BUSINESS.

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CHAPTER V

INSIDE YOUR HEAD (THE MIND GAME)

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YOUR INNER (MIND) GAME IS CRITICAL. FOR EXAMPLE:

IS YOUR HEAD REALLY INTO SELLING?

WILL YOU STEP OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

WHEN YOU ARE COLD CALLING

DO YOU FEEL MORE LIKE A PEST OR MISSIONARY?

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DO YOU BELIEVE

IN THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES YOU ARE SELLING? WOULD YOU BUY THEM IF YOU WERE IN YOUR PROSPECT'S SHOES?

WHEN YOU HEAR OBJECTIONS

DOES YOUR BELIEF IN YOUR OFFERING UNDERPIN YOUR RESPONSE? DO OBJECTIONS UNDERMINE YOUR CONFIDENCE?

30

ARE YOU SELLING

OR HELPING YOUR PROSPECTS SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS? SHOULD THERE REALLY BE ANY DIFFERENCE?

DO YOU TRULY KNOW

HOW YOUR PROSPECT GAINS FROM YOUR PROPOSAL? DO YOU CARE?

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IF YOUR ANSWERS ARE TENTATIVE

THEN YOUR INNER GAME MAY NOT MATCH YOUR VISIBLE GAME – WHICH WILL INEVITABLY LIMIT YOUR SUCCESS.

TO WIN CONSISTENTLY YOUR INNER GAME MUST BE CLEAR. AND YOUR VISIBLE GAME MUST FIT THAT CLARITY.

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CHAPTER VI

LIVING WITH YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

33

KEEP YOUR WORD.

KEEP YOUR COMMITMENTS – TO YOUR CUSTOMERS, TO YOUR MANAGEMENT, TO YOUR PEERS, TO EVERYONE.

COMMON LANGUAGE

IF YOUR TEAM HAS A COMMON LANGUAGE*, USE IT.

* LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE OR EVALUATE DEALS, BUILD PROPOSALS, DISSECT SALES CALLS, AND THE LIKE

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KEEP YOUR EXPENSE REPORTS CLEAN.

TREAT YOUR MANAGEMENT WITH RESPECT.

MOST OF THEM WILL EARN IT. MOST OF THEM WILL RECIPROCATE. DON'T HIDE FROM THEM: THEY ARE ENTITLED TO KNOW HOW AND WHAT YOU ARE DOING. THEY CAN HELP YOU. THEY ARE YOUR PARTNERS.

35

GUT CHECK YOUR BOSSES ON OCCASION.

YOU NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S ON THEIR MINDS.

SELL INSIDE.

SELLING INSIDE YOUR OWN ORGANIZATION IS JUST AS CRITICAL AS SELLING IN THE FIELD.

36

NEVER INFLATE A SALES FORECAST

TO SATISFY YOUR BOSS OR YOUR EGO. YOUR MANAGEMENT ONLY WANTS PLEASANT SURPRISES.

NEVER GET RANKED AT THE BOTTOM. REPS AT THE BOTTOM ARE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES.

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SALES MEETINGS

SHOW UP. CONTRIBUTE. BENEFIT.

TRY TO LIKE YOUR TEAMMATES.

IT WILL PROBABLY TURN OUT TO BE GOOD BUSINESS. IT WILL CERTAINLY MAKE THE DAY GO BETTER.

38

TALK TO YOUR COMPETITORS

REGULARLY. WHAT YOU LEARN FROM THEM CAN PROVE MORE VALUABLE THAN WHAT THEY LEARN FROM YOU.

BAD ATTITUDES ARE FOR LOSERS.

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AVOID MILITARY TERMS.

THE BEST SELLING IS WIN/WIN, WAR IS WIN/LOSE (AND OFTEN LOSE/LOSE).

BE PATIENT WITH FOOLISHNESS

IF IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE SALE.

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CHANGE IS NORMAL.

WELCOME CHANGES. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM.

COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S TURF.

SALES TERRITORIES OFTEN CHANGE HANDS. GET SOME OF THOSE CHANGES INTO *YOUR* HANDS.

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CRUSH YOUR NUMBERS AND YOUR MANAGEMENT WILL LOVE YOU.

MISS YOUR NUMBERS AND THEY MAY DIVORCE YOU.

EXPECT THE OCCASIONAL FLOGGING

BY YOUR CUSTOMERS, BY YOUR MANAGEMENT. SALES REPS ARE A CONVENIENT SCAPEGOAT.

42

SHARE THE APPLAUSE

WHEN THINGS GO RIGHT. TAKE YOUR SHARE OF THE BLAME WHEN THEY DON'T.

HELP YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

WHEN THEY NEED IT. IT'S SATISFYING. IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO. AND IT PAYS DIVIDENDS.

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CHAPTER VII

WHAT GOES WRONG AND HOW TO FIX IT

44

PROBLEMS ARE NORMAL.

SO DON'T WASTE ENERGY ON WHY THE PROBLEM CROSSED YOUR PATH. INVEST THAT ENERGY IN SOLVING IT.

DECIDE WHAT THE REAL PROBLEM IS

VERSUS THE SYMPTOMS, AND SOLVE THAT.

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IF YOU ARE NOT WINNING

IS YOUR PROBLEM *FINDING* DEALS OR *CLOSING* THEM? ONE IS A *PROSPECTING* PROBLEM, THE OTHER IS A *HARVESTING* PROBLEM.

IF YOU ARE NOT WINNING

IS *ANYBODY* WINNING, AND WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THEM?

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LIVING THROUGH A DRAUGHT?

FARMERS SURVIVE, AND SO MAY YOU, BY WORKING THEIR PLAN, STAYING PATIENT, AND WATCHING FOR RAIN.

TIRED OF PROSPECTING?

SO ARE WE ALL FROM TIME TO TIME. THE KEY IS TO KEEP DOING IT.

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DOES A COMPETITOR SEEM UNBEATABLE?

COMPETITORS ARE RARELY UNBEATABLE. YOU JUST HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW.

THE LEAPFROG EFFECT

VENDORS ARE ALWAYS LEAPFROGGING EACH OTHER. SO IF YOUR FROG ISN'T IN FRONT THEN MAYBE IT'S GETTING READY TO JUMP.

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BURNED OUT?

SALES IS A GAME WITH FEW TIMEOUTS. SO TAKE TIMEOUTS WHEN YOU NEED TO, BECAUSE NOBODY WILL CALL THEM FOR YOU.

CHECKPOINTS

CHECKPOINT YOUR NEXT DEAL ONCE A DAY, YOUR BEST DEALS ONCE A WEEK, YOUR PIPELINE ONCE A MONTH, YOUR RANKING ONCE A QUARTER, AND YOUR JOB ONCE A YEAR.

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COMMISSIONS

COUNTING THEM BEFORE THE DEAL CLOSES IS NOT SMART. AND SPENDING THEM BEFORE THE DEAL CLOSES IS WORSE.

KEEP OUT OF TROUBLE.

IT IS ALWAYS A LOT EASIER TO *STAY* OUT OF A HOLE THAN TO *GET* OUT OF ONE.

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NO WHINING.

YOU ARE PAID TO MAKE YOUR NUMBERS. IF YOU ARE NOT MAKING THEM, FIND A REMEDY. IF YOU CAN'T FIND A REMEDY, MOVE ON. AND DON'T WHINE ABOUT IT.

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CHAPTER VIII

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

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REMEMBER THAT 'NO' MEANS 'NOT NOW', NOT 'NEVER'.

A/B/C/ EVERYTHING

CUSTOMERS, PROSPECTS, PROBLEMS, TO DO LISTS, ETC. A'S ARE FIRST PRIORITY, B'S ARE NEXT, AND C'S ARE ALL THE REST.

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PLAN AHEAD.

IN SALES, TIME IS NEARLY ALWAYS YOUR SCARCEST RESOURCE. TREAT IT WITH GREAT RESPECT.

CUSTOMERS ARE LIKE GOLD.

MAKE SURE THEY GET TWENTY FOUR KARAT TREATMENT.

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TREAT EVERYONE LIKE A PROSPECT.

YOUR CUSTOMERS, YOUR MANAGEMENT, YOUR TEAMMATES, EVERYONE. SELLING IS A FULL TIME HABIT.

TRY TO BE A REALISTIC OPTIMIST.

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LEARN TO NEGOTIATE.

ROADBLOCKS

GOOD SALES REPS LEARN TO GET AROUND THEM.

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SOLUTION SELLING REQUIRES THAT YOUR PROPOSALS MEET YOUR PROSPECT'S NEEDS. **RELATIONSHIP SELLING** REQUIRES THAT YOUR PROSPECTS KNOW AND TRUST YOU. **THE COMBINATION IS NEARLY UNBEATABLE.**

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CONVICTION

PROSPECTS CAN FEEL THE POWER THAT FLOWS WHEN YOU SELL FROM CONVICTION.

WORK HARDEST TO MEET *PROSPECT'S* NEEDS, NOT *YOUR* NEEDS.

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TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR TERRITORY

MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN.

TIME

IN A GIVEN SITUATION, IS TIME YOUR FRIEND OR YOUR ENEMY? IF IT'S YOUR FRIEND, COAST. IF IT'S YOUR ENEMY, ACCELERATE.

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FIND WAYS TO MAKE THE JOB FUN.

MANAGE YOUR TERRITORY LIKE AN INDEPENDENT BUSINESS.

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MOTIVATE YOURSELF.

YOU HAVE TO KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE. OTHERS CAN ONLY HELP YOU *REMEMBER* WHY YOU'RE HERE.

CHAPTER IX

MOVING ON UP

FOR MANY OF US, SALES IS JUST THE FIRST STEP ON A LADDER. SO SOONER OR LATER WE LOOK FOR A WAY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP.

HERE ARE TWO SIMPLE RULES THAT WORK:

1. CRUSH YOUR NUMBERS.
2. ACQUIRE A STRONG SPONSOR (WHO IS HIGHER ON THE LADDER)

THINKING OF SALES MANAGEMENT?

HERE ARE A FEW SIMPLE TESTS:

1. WOULD YOU RATHER MOTIVATE PROSPECTS OR TEAMMATES?
2. WOULD YOU RATHER SELL OR HELP OTHERS SELL?
3. HAVE YOU COACHED ANYONE? DID YOU LIKE IT? DID THEY?

GO AHEAD, BE A SALES MANAGER. TAKE A PAY CUT.

APPENDIX

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT SALES JOB

TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN SALES YOU WILL NEED A *PLAYABLE HAND*, INCLUDING THESE CARDS:

- A HEALTHY MARKETPLACE
- COMPETITIVE PRODUCTS
- ENOUGH TERRITORY
- A GOOD COMPENSATION PLAN
- A STABLE EMPLOYER
- SUPPORTIVE MANAGEMENT
- REALISTIC GOALS – YOURS AND YOUR EMPLOYER’S

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TO TEST WHETHER A PROSPECTIVE (OR CURRENT) EMPLOYER IS OFFERING A *PLAYABLE HAND*:

- ARE THESE PEOPLE *WINNERS*? (REVENUE AND PROFIT HISTORY)
- IS THEIR SALES TEAM MAKING ITS NUMBERS?
- HOW WELL DO THEIR CUSTOMERS REGARD THEM? (A SOLID VENDOR HAS A SOLID CUSTOMER BASE)
- HAVE YOU INTERVIEWED ANY OF THEIR REPS, ESPECIALLY THEIR *TOP GUNS*?
- WHAT ABOUT TURNOVER? (GOOD SALES TEAMS HAVE LOW TURNOVER)
- WHAT SUPPORT WILL YOUR BOSS COMMIT TO HELP YOU GET OFF TO A FAST START?
- DO THEY WANT YOU TO BE A *HUNTER* OR A *FARMER*? (MOST OF US ARE BETTER AT ONE OR THE OTHER)
- DO THE *DETAILS* OF THEIR DEAL MAKE SENSE? (COMP PLAN, TERRITORY, TRAINING PLAN, ETC.)

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IF IT ALL CHECKS OUT, TAKE (OR KEEP) THE JOB.

IF NOT, KEEP LOOKING.

IF YOU ARE ALREADY IN THE WRONG JOB, START LOOKING.

DAYS SPENT IN THE WRONG JOB ARE LONG DAYS.

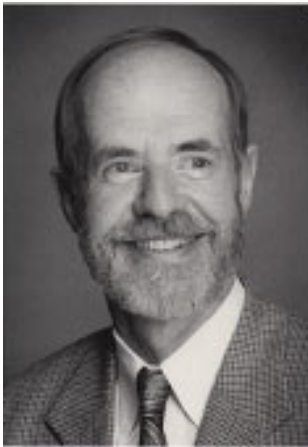
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FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO KNOW, TO WORK WITH, TO TEACH, AND TO LEARN FROM MANY OF THE BEST SALES PEOPLE IN MY WORLD, THE WORLD OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE. YOU ARE ALL IN THIS BOOK.

THANKS FOR THE LESSONS. *wfb*

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About the Author

A Graduate of Princeton University, Walter Brown has spent his entire career in the computing industry.

Beginning as a system engineer at IBM, he later co-founded a software marketing firm at the dawn of the software products industry, and was subsequently a principal in several related ventures.

Since 1979 Mr. Brown has been doctoring sales organizations exclusively in the computing industry. His clients have ranged in size from a few sales reps to a few hundred and are located throughout the world.

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Glossary of Terms

People in the world of sales do not always share a common language. And to the uninitiated our language may be obscure. For these reason I include this list of common terms, as I use them in this book.

Rep— In this book I use “rep” as a generic term for *all* sales people under your management.

Crush Your Numbers—Exceed your assigned sales quota by an unusually large amount.

Quota— A mutually agreed-upon standard for sales production over a given period of time. Normally, both reps and managers have quotas.

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Prospects—Prospective buyers who would agree that they are in some kind of evaluation or decision cycle with respect to your products or services.

Prospecting—The art and science of finding, and qualifying, active prospects. Otherwise known as building pipeline.

Pipeline—List of prospects who are actively being pursued at any given time. In short, “real” prospects.

Harvesting—The art and science of squeezing sales out of a prospect pipeline.

Hunters—Reps who are unusually good at selling to new accounts (versus to customers)

Farmers—Reps who are unusually good at selling to customers (versus to new accounts)

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Coverage—A measure of the quantity and quality of prospecting activity underway in a given sales territory during a given time period.

Carry a Bag—A rep with an assigned quota is “carrying a bag.”

Territory—the definition of where a rep can prospect for new business

Direct Reports—The number of people who report directly to you.

Pro Hires—Reps who had significant sales experience the day they were hired.

Deal—A specific piece of business being pursued with a give prospect.

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