

- 1: **Everybody Sells.** In the Old World of Work, there was a sales force. There were reps. And everybody could blame them when sales figures were down. It's no longer acceptable. In the New World of Work: we all sell. Why? (1) because we all see opportunities (2) we are all part of the chain of decisions with which a customer interacts. That's the commercial angle. But there's a pragmatic angle, too: if you know how to sell, you can sell your ideas and you can sell yourself. And above all you'll be a lot more essential to an organisation than the person who doesn't add value to their role by knowing how to sell.
Everybody Sells.
- 2: **Logic and Emotion.** We sell to provide for needs and wants. Cups of coffee, new cars and insurance policies. But needs and wants are both logical and emotional. The logical need for a 'cup of coffee to go' is a hot drink/shot of caffeine/wake me up. The emotional need then dictates which brand or coffee shop we choose. The logical need for a home is a basic survival need. The emotional need is a nice area for the kids/impress work mates/view of the mountains. When we sell, be it product, idea or ourselves we must remember there are two kinds of needs and wants. Both must be met for a successful sale. **Logic and Emotion.**
- 3: **The Number 1 Issue in Their Life.** When you finish that telephone call, when you leave that meeting, your prospect is immediately NOT thinking about you (well, 98% of the time anyway). It's not that they don't want to buy your solution, it's just well, there are few other things happening at the moment. The thing about selling is not just meeting or creating a need BUT making it **the number 1 need in their life at the moment.** And how do you do that? By asking questions which ensure they both realise the benefits of proceeding but also **the consequences of not acting.** E.g. *'and just out of interest what will your competition be doing if you don't improve your on-line ordering methodologies?'* **The Number 1 Issue in Their Life.**
- 4: **The Truth about closing.** Pick up a book at the airport on selling and big chunks will be dedicated to the art of closing. Too often this ought to be sub-titled, *how to try and get the order when you didn't do the early work.* Closing is not a magic technique, closing is simply the business of constantly checking that you are doing the right thing. *'Would that be a fair agenda for the meeting?'* *'Do you think you will be able to get your boss involved?'* *'Tuesday at 10am? Great!'* Closing is asking for confirmation. Keep closing. If you get what you wanted (the meeting, the budget information) all well and good. If you don't, that tells you that another question is needed. Of course there is one final close: that's for the order. But that should be easy if you have done all the other closes. **That's the Truth about closing.**
- 5: **More Ask, Less Tell.** You want your prospect to be engaged with what you are saying. To think deeper than just price and cost. To consider your points beyond the first conversation. How do you do that? Great questions. Understand, really understand their business. You need to become a **money-making machine** for them. If you can make them money they'll spend more money with you. **More Ask, Less Tell.**
- 6: **Know your activity levels.** How many seminars do you need to run? How many flyers do you need to send out? How many meetings do you need to arrange? **To get the business revenue and profit you need?** Know your stats, your figures, your activity levels. So that you know how many suspects (people you might do business with) you need to talk to in order to create some prospects (those who have been qualified i.e. have money and decision-making power and a need for your product). And some of those you will close and they will become customers. Know the ratios. **Know your activity levels.**

- 7: **Value not price. investment not cost.** Whether you sell cups of coffee or houses, consultancy or cranes there will ALWAYS be someone cheaper. So don't sell on price. Sell on the value you offer, which requires you and your team to head off to the mountains for a day and get clear: what is the value you offer? And once you have made the sale, ensure that the value promised is fully realised so the customer appreciates they have made an investment (in a great cup of coffee in amiable surroundings or a beautiful apartment or some cool focused strategic consultancy...) not incurred a cost with which they are not happy. **Value not price. Investment not cost.**
- 8: **Grab a tiny slice of the pie.** Your competitor owns one or two attractive accounts. How do you win them over to you? Not by tackling 'head on' for sure; that would require the decision maker/s to admit they had made a mistake in the first place which nobody likes to do. But your decision maker can often be sold on the strategy that it makes sound and secure business sense to have a second 'back-up' supplier i.e you. All you need to do is win some business in your competitor's account using that 'second supplier' logic. Be low-key and discreet. But when you are in there, be amazing and knock-their socks off. Your share of the pie will grow: easy.
- 9: **Get it sorted, once and for all.** The slide-decks are a mess. The case studies are lacking. And the meeting room needs re-decorating. Get it done; there are mutterings about no time. But. But. Every time a less than great slide-deck is used it causes damage. Lack of case studies cause lack of confidence. There are one or two things which are damaging the sales process time and time again. **Get it sorted. Once and for all.**
- 10: **Rehearse.** In what other profession do we spend so little time practising our skill? Musicians do it, footballers do it. Even 6 year olds do it for their school play. But we 'wing it' too often and the results show. Rehearse the pitch, the phone call, the objections you might get, the negotiation with purchasing. Until you as close to perfect as you can get. **Rehearse.**
- 11: **Objections are your next objectives.** When they say 'you are too expensive' that means you've got to (re-) explain your value. When they say 'we've heard some issues over poor support' that means you've got to give them confidence that your account management has improved considerably. An objection from your prospect is the next objective you must address. It's telling you exactly what to do next. What could be more helpful than that? Er... an order. I know. But this is the next best thing.
- 12: **Just don't sell a commodity.** Because by definition you will be selling on price and therefore you will have to make your money by volume. And only a few organisations have a business model to support that. Have courage to price sensibly, create difference and accept a lower volume but overall better profitability. At the very least do the calculations. **Just don't sell a commodity.**
- 13: **Get and use a calculator.** Never do anything in selling without using your calculator. Mostly for checking margin/profit calculation: selling price-cost=margin. Build in volume discount. Know exactly (not roughly) how much money you are making (or losing on this deal). But use a calculator to also note (1) how much more efficient your cold telephone calls are getting (2) how much time you have for each section in your presentation and (3) how many mailers lead to one enquiry. **Get and use a calculator.**
- 14: **Reminders.** Give the team simple prompt cards: key objections and how to resolve them. Handy closes. Negotiation tips. Reminders on up-sell and cross-sell. Couple of hours of investment now will be paid many times over. **Reminders.**
- 15: **Effort In Early.** Put the effort in early when you are selling. Work incredibly hard to get all the decision makers in the room. It's a lot easier than chasing one missing one for weeks in order to close down the sale. Work hard to find out what the budget really is. It's a lot easier than finding out much later it's simply not worth your time. **Effort in Early.**

- 16: **Stay focused.** It takes time for your target market to understand your benefits and why you are different. As a consequence we get impatient and change our message, hoping this new one will have impact (politicians do this all the time of course to their detriment). No: all it does is confuse. Sort your message. Communicate your message. Give it time and close the business. **Stay focused.**
- 17: **Hi-touch.** Even if you are selling technology, ensure your selling process is hi-touch i.e. using the full range of people skills. Why? They differentiate you (e.g. your courtesy), they allow you to get feed-back (as you are having more conversations) and it helps you build rapport (which makes selling a whole lot easier). **Hi-touch.**
- 18: **Pricing.** It's not the last thing you think about. Nor should it be given just a couple of minutes thought and a '10% off sticker added. No: the price point you give is everything; it bundles your company philosophy, your belief in your product, a short vs. long-term strategy all in one simple figure. It's worth giving a lot of thought to. Here's one simple challenge for you: go through every single price on your books and increase a few. Yes you can: they have more 'elasticity' than you thought. Try it. Sure, bit of work and a bit of courage needed. But a whole lot better than all those heavily discounted tenders. **Pricing.**
- 19: **Ask More Questions.** Ask about budget. Ask who decides. Find out exactly what they want. Find out what they need. Ask how they will decide. Ask about their time-scales. Check out the consequences of them not making a decision. Ask what the best way to communicate is, phone or e-mail. Ask what else they would like to know about you to give them total confidence in you as a supplier. Ask if *-assuming the solution meets their needs-* they will choose you. Yep, questions are power. Real power. **Ask More Questions.**
- 20: **Understand your m and Ms.** There are two kinds of marketing, both of which if not executed properly will make it very difficult to sell effectively. There's **Marketing** (with a big M): that's strategic marketing which asks fundamental questions such as: which market/s do we want to be in? What's our value chain? What critical differences compared to our competitors do we offer? And then there's **marketing** with a small m: that's generating leads via drive-time radio advertisements or flyers in the mall or whatever. That needs to be carefully thought through, carefully measured and above all reflect the thinking in Marketing. Get both m and Ms right and selling is a whole lot easier. **Understand your m and Ms.**
- 21: **Negotiate (1 of 2).** Negotiation is not a way to sell. *It is a way to optimise the deal for both parties once the sale has in principle been made.* This is a subtle point often not fully appreciated. Thus discounting to win business is not negotiation, it is business desperation. Having broadly agreed to do business together and deciding to offer a point or two of discount in return for an extra volume of business, now that's negotiation. Sell first, then negotiate. There are two aspects to great negotiating: mindset. That's this aspect. And mechanics: that's tomorrow. **Negotiate (1 of 2).**
- 22: **Negotiate (2 of 2).** The **mechanics** of negotiation are as follows: don't start negotiation until you have 'in principle' sold/only give something if you get something in return/ take your time: give slowly, give small and remember the negotiation is a lot about people and their psychology of wanting to feel they have 'got a deal'/ finally and most importantly time limit any deal: to this particular sale or this FY. Don't allow it to be open-ended. **Negotiate (2 of 2).**

23: **The Sales Pitch (1 of 2)**. When you do a presentation in a sales situation, there is only one reason for being there: to take the sale to the next stage, be that to the negotiation, to the short list or simply to getting the sale confirmed. There are three components: plan the pitch, do the pitch, review the pitch. And in doing the pitch there are seven stages. Planning the pitch is made up not only of assembling the best presentation possible (see tomorrow) but also rehearsing. Few sales people do enough of that: make sure you do. Rehearse the timings, handling the questions and your close. **The Sales Pitch (1 of 2)**

24: **The Sales Pitch (2 of 2)**. The best sales presentations unfold in a structured sequence: (1) The Wow: open with something strong to grab their attention, a teaser perhaps as to how much money you might save them (2) Briefly cover the agenda (3) then talk about them: their needs, their concerns (4) then talk your solution but in terms of how it addresses their concerns. Make sure everything is expressed in terms of benefits i.e. what it means not just raw features (5) have a thorough Q&A (6) summarise what they want and how you can provide it (7) close. Whether you won the business, lost the business, are simply unsure or have pleasingly moved on to the next stage, it is critical you review and learn from the process. There are two simple questions: what went well and we should do more of? What went less well and we should change or drop? **The Sales pitch (2 of 2)**

25: **Sales Kaizen**. All sales people can be made more effective. All sales messages can be made stronger. All sales process can be made more efficient. How? Through Kaizen: never-ending and continuous improvement. Use this checklist to tackle all the bases:

1. Everybody Sells. Point 1. Everybody is a salesperson, today.
2. Logic and Emotion. Point 2. There are two reasons people buy: you need to 'satisfy' both of them.
3. The Number 1 Issue in Their Life. Point 3. If the problem to which you have a solution becomes the number one thing in their life you will find it very easy to sell to them.
4. The Truth about closing. It's continuous. Not one-off. Point 4.
5. More Ask, Less Tell. Points 5 and 19.
6. Know your activity levels. Point 6. You need to understand the cogs in your well-oiled machine.
7. Value not price. investment not cost: Point 7.
8. Grab a tiny slice of the pie. Point 8.
9. Get it sorted, once and for all. Point 9.
10. Rehearse: point 10.
11. Objections are your next objectives. Point 11.
12. Just don't sell a commodity. Point 12.
13. Get and use a calculator. Point 13.
14. Reminders. Point 14. To train, train, teach, coach, educate.
15. Effort In Early. Point 15.
16. Stay focused. Point 16. Persistence pays.
17. Hi-touch. The 'old-fashioned' stuff works especially well in a hi-tech world. Point 17.
18. Pricing. Point 18. Apply some science.
19. Understand your m and Ms. Point 20. Not all *marketing* is Marketing.
20. Negotiate: points 21 and 22. Don't just discount.
21. The Sales Pitch: points 23 and 24. There's a purpose to a pitch: action.
22. Kaizen. You can always be better: point 25.

Nicholas Bate CV

Nicholas Bate is passionate about supporting people to ensure they realise and release their true and full potential.

After a career in sales and marketing in the IT industry, culminating in leading sector marketing for Research Machines, Oxford, UK Nicholas launched Strategic Edge. A small, premium consultancy, Strategic Edge specialises in creating long-term leadership competitive advantage for its clients including: Barclays, IBM, Marks & Spencer, Microsoft and Warwick University amongst others.

Nicholas earned a degree in Chemistry and carried out research in the field of Molecular Biophysics at Magdalen College, Oxford University and is an NLP Master Practitioner, MBTI (levels 1 and 2) accredited and a qualified (PGCE) teacher. As well as instigating the Strategic Edge research programme, he has spent time studying with many of the recognised practitioners in the fields of business and personal development. A pioneering 'thought leader', Nicholas has introduced and worked with his clients on a range of vital concepts. He was one of the 'first to field' with such important concepts as work-life balance; think global, act local and in his book of January 2008 was one of the first to call and recognise the severity of the 2008/9/10 recession.

Consistently rated as an inspirational yet highly pragmatic speaker, Nicholas teaches around the world (UK and continental Europe; USA and Canada; Asia) and is particularly skilled at working in an experiential and engaging manner. He works as a coach to many senior people in the industry.

He is the author of nine acclaimed books:

Being The Best: how to realise and release your true potential

Get A Life: how to achieve the work-life balance you are seeking

JfDI: Just Do It: the definitive guide to enabling your vision

Unplugged: the time for personal re-invention is now

Beat the Recession: a blueprint for success in tough times

Have it your way: how to influence

Instant MBA: MBA thinking, quickly.

Blackberry Fool: how to use the clever device with intelligence

How to Sell and Market your Way out of this Recession

He has an active and inspirational yet highly practical blog with a world-wide following.

Nicholas is a visiting lecturer at Warwick University Business School, teaching on the full-time, part-time and IBM specific MBA programmes. His specialist areas are leadership and entrepreneurial thinking.

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