

Book Review on
“How You Make the Sale: What Every New Salesperson Needs to Know”
by Frank McNair
(Review by Gary Tomlinson)
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Selling is not a black art. You don't have to sacrifice a live chicken at the full moon to the god of sales quotas to make a good living as an ethical, principled salesperson. You simply have to listen, process what you hear, and match your product or service to the problem that brought the customer into the market in the first place. You don't have to change your worldview to sell successfully. In fact, the more ethical and customer-focused you are, the more successful you will be in the long term. Sales people who value their customers and treat them with respect gain their trust and generate repeat business. For this reasons, I have chosen Frank McNair's *How You Make the Sale: What Every New Salesperson Needs to Know* for this month's book review.

McNair titled his book *How You Make the Sale* because he believes you can sell the product that interests you to people who you value while still maintaining your integrity, your sense of self, and your current wardrobe and personality. And while selling is difficult, it requires no super-human aptitude. Selling is a learnable skill and McNair's book can help you learn it.

McNair believes that selling is a process, a rather simple process that moves logically from beginning to end in a series of eight predictable and easily identifiable steps. The eight steps are simply building blocks where each step builds upon the previous one as the salesperson and the prospective customer move together from their first interaction until the final sale. Listed below are the eight steps and the associated questions his book answers for each of them:

- **Step One – Research Prior to the Sale**
 - How does my product/service compare to its competitors?
 - How do customers use my product/service?
 - What problem, real or perceived, does my product/service solve?
- **Step Two – Meet and Greet**
 - How do I greet customers in a way that buyers see me as a credible colleague?
 - How do I build rapport?
 - How do I get customers to invite me into their problem-solving process?
- **Step Three – Discovery**
 - How do I discover the problem(s) that drove the customer into the market?
 - How do I uncover the key purchase criteria that will drive this sale?
 - How do I help the customer clarify his/her problem?
 - How do I identify solutions that will best solve their problem?

- How do I discover the benefits of my product/service that are most relevant to this buyer?
- **Step Four – Features and Benefits**
 - How do I present my product/service in a way that I fully “bridge” from the features I have learned to the benefits that the customer cares about?
- **Step Five – Making the Case/Presenting the Solution**
 - How do I present the solution to the customer’s problem?
 - How do I use “trial close” to flush out objections so I can deal with them?
- **Step Six – The Objective is Objections: Dealing with Resistance**
 - How do I respond when the customer objects to my presentation?
 - How do I remember that “an objection is simply a request for more information?”
 - How do I circle back to Discovery to uncover the additional facts I need to solve the customer’s problem and make the sale?
- **Step Seven – Closing: It’s Okay to Ask for the Order**
 - How can I ask for the order in a way that is congruent with our collegial sales model?
 - How do we finalize our commitments to each other in a professional way?
- **Step Eight – Following-Up for Ongoing Profitability**
 - How do I follow-up for an on-going profitable relationship?
 - What other problems can I solve for this customer?
 - How do I stay in contact to make this customer a “customer for life”?

Selling can be learned! And McNair’s book will definitely help you learn it. This is an outstanding book for any new salesperson who is excited about the prospect of meeting people who have a problem and hatching out a solution that fits them both. It’s also an excellent book for sales managers looking for an effective teaching manual.

Enjoy this month’s selection, *How You Make the Sale: What Every New Salesperson Needs to Know* and share it with others in your life because as Alvin Toffler says; “*The illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.*”