

The Primer of

# **HIGH PROBABILITY<sup>®</sup> SELLING**

by Jacques Werth

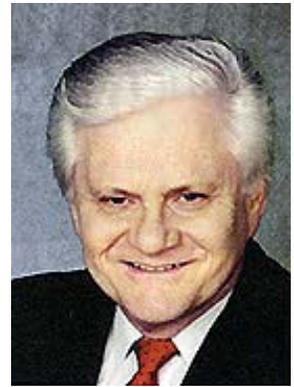


## Meet Jacques Werth

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Jacques Werth, the President and founder of High Probability® Selling, is a lucky man: He discovered his passion for selling early in life, and has enjoyed success in his chosen profession for over 40 years.

After four decades in the "sales game," Jacques has earned, and deserves, a comfortable retirement. But he continues to develop High Probability Selling, because Jacques truly believes that he can change people's lives. Consider him a man with a mission: To revolutionize the sales process through his system of "radically honest selling." High Probability Selling is based on the deceptively simple, yet statistically accurate concept that people buy from people they trust and respect.



## About High Probability Selling

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The High Probability Selling Process is based upon extensive research of the top 312 performers across 23 industries. They were an elite group—part of the top 1% in their respective industries—who typically out-produced the top 20 percent in their industry by a factor of 3 or 4. Werth and his team went out on sales calls with top performers, observing and recording everything they did. Their discovery? These sales stars had intuitively created a totally new sales paradigm. They didn't realize that they were different. Jacques Werth did. He collected the data, analyzed it, and put it together in this simple yet powerful sales training program—High Probability Selling.

For more information, visit our website at [www.highprobsell.com](http://www.highprobsell.com).

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## Table of Contents

Get Real with Yourself .....	1
The Top One-Percent Sell with Precision .....	3
Closing the Sale - Timing is Crucial.....	4
Are You Worth Another \$100,000 per Year? .....	6
Are Top Salespeople Born or Made? .....	8
The Power of Two - Marketing and Sales .....	9
Top Salespeople Win at the Numbers Game .....	11
Selling Beyond Fear:.....	13
Honesty Works Best - But It's Not About Morality .....	15
Can You Afford to Improve Your Sales Skills? .....	16
In Sales, Your Attitude is Important.....	17
The Sales Trainee .....	18
Most Salespeople Are Professional Wimps.....	19
Questions: Open-ended or Close-ended?.....	20
Are You One in a Million Realtors? .....	21
Are You a Victim of the Financial Services Industry?.....	22
What's Trust Got To Do With It? .....	24
How to Persuade Prospects to Buy - Elsewhere! .....	25
Execs' Top Priorities This Year: Acquiring & Retaining Customers .....	27
Top 10 Tips for Prospecting Success .....	28
Can You Afford to Improve Your Sales Skills? .....	30
High-Tech Selling: Is It Really That Difficult? .....	31
Finding the Sales Job You Want.....	33
Are YOU Guilty of using these Obsolete Sales Techniques? .....	35
The High Price of Comfort: Dramatic Results Require Dramatic Changes.....	36
The Ultimate Competitive Advantage: Trust and Respect.....	37
Sales Force Follies: The Tribal Wisdom of Many Sales Forces .....	39

Selling and Managing National, Global, and Major Accounts.....	41
Are You Stuck or Can You Get It?.....	43
Cross Cultural Selling .....	45
Buying Decisions: Are They Logical or Emotional? .....	46
Close Effortlessly without Pressure or Anxiety .....	48
Top 10 Reasons Salespeople Fail .....	49
Top 10 Tips for Prospecting Success .....	51
The Power of Good Timing .....	53
Telephone Prospecting- Is It a Waste of Time?.....	55
The Importance of Prospecting Lists .....	56
No More Cold-Calling? Well, Almost.....	57
Why Traditional Cold Calling Doesn't Work .....	58
High Probability Prospecting – Some Basics .....	59
Eliminate the Fear of Cold Calling and Rejection .....	61
"Interested" Prospects and Random Negative Reinforcement.....	63
Monkeys, Bananas and Sales Management .....	65
A Different Spin on Consultative Selling.....	66
Poison Words: The Top 6 Words that Sabotage Sales .....	68
Being "Right" vs. Being Rich .....	70
A Clearly Defined Sales Process Yields Big Results.....	71
Abandon the Idea that Prospects Need to Be Educated.....	72
Top Producers - How They Get There.....	73

## Get Real with Yourself

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Fifty-one years ago I began to study selling – not just because I'm a curious, analytical type, but because I've always had a burning desire to succeed. When I was young I learned that big money can be made in sales and I wanted "my share." Later, I realized that only a tiny percentage of the people who entered the sales profession make it big.

### *Disappointment*

Getting my first college degree, majoring in Industrial Sales, I aced all my sales courses. In my first sales job, I came to realize that what I learned in college didn't work for me. After taking many other sales courses, I learned most corporate and commercial sales trainers couldn't teach selling, either.

So, I set out to find the best salespeople, regardless of industry, to see what they did that other salespeople didn't do. Over the years, I've gone out on sales calls with hundreds of the best salespeople and learned that the top 1% of all salespeople don't sell the way the other 99% sell.

### *Discovery - Honesty is the "Magic Bullet"*

The most surprising thing I discovered is that most of the top salespeople are totally honest in their work. They're honest with their prospects and customers, and they're honest with themselves.

### *Numbers Don't Lie*

You have often heard that "sales is a numbers game." One of the big differences between the top salespeople and the other 99% is they know their numbers. Top salespeople keep records of their sales activities every day, and they analyze their statistics every day.

### *Don't Lie to Yourself!*

The biggest barrier to success for most salespeople is that they don't know their numbers, and they don't want to know. That makes it easy to lie to them.

In every company we work with, almost all of the salespeople think and really believe that their closing rates are at least twice as high as they actually are, except for the few top salespeople.

### *Get Real - With Yourself*

Most salespeople don't know how to sell very well, but they think they do. If they knew their numbers, they would have to face the truth about their skills. They would have to change what they're doing.

Change can be very uncomfortable. It's more comfortable to lie to yourself than to change what you do every day. That's why most salespeople fail, and those that survive continue to struggle to make a good living.

### *False Prospects*

Most salespeople spend most of their time with prospects that "have great potential," but seldom buy from them. The average salesperson goes through all of the motions that look like selling, but fails to bring in much business.

Average salespeople seldom truly qualify their prospects. They rarely dis-qualify their prospects, either. If they did, they would need to find new prospects – but they don't know how prospect effectively, efficiently and enjoyably.

*Real Relationships. Real Selling.*

We know what top salespeople do when they're selling. We know what works and what doesn't work. We know what top salespeople do to eliminate the rejection most salespeople have to live with and suffer with every day. We know how they eliminate objections so they don't have to "overcome objections." We know how they close dozens of times during each sales visit without any pressure on their prospects or themselves. Top salespeople develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with most of their prospects – without any phony "rapport building."

The essence of our book, "High Probability Selling," is how the top salespeople actually sell. It's about learning a selling process that makes it highly probable that you'll close the majority of your prospects. It's what you can learn how to do in our sales training workshops.

## The Top One-Percent Sell with Precision

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by Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

The Best Salespeople, the Top 1%, utilize a precise, highly organized sales process that leaves very little to chance. Each step of the sales process increases the probability of successfully closing the sale.

Here's the dictionary definition of PROCESS: A uniform series of actions designed to produce a specific outcome. In High Probability Selling, the ultimate 'specific outcome' is to close the sale; the 'series of actions' are the linear steps of the sales process. We train salespeople to use the Sales Questionnaire as a tool to keep the sales process efficiently on track.

For example, you're on your first appointment with a prospect. If you've used High Probability Prospecting, before the meeting your prospect agreed to the following: 1) to give you an hour of uninterrupted time; 2) he wants what you're selling; and 3) he'll buy- if you can meet his requirements for doing so. You begin to methodically get answers and fill in your Sales Questionnaire: The first series of questions ask the prospect to confirm his intention to do business (confirm he's in 'Buying Mode'). The next series asks the prospect to confirm his intention to buy from you- if you can mutually agree on terms.

At this point, you believe that you have a qualified prospect- with respect to their buying intentions and available budget. Next, you want to make sure that the prospect is trustworthy. If you're like 84% of people in the business world, Trust is the most important factor when deciding whether or not to do business with someone. You want to be able to trust and respect your customer, and they want to trust and respect you as well. To determine your prospect's trustworthiness, initiate the Trust and Respect Inquiry. Unless they're one of the 4 to 8% who cannot earn your trust and respect, proceed with the next steps in the sales process.

Clarify this prospect's role in purchasing your product and service. This is a familiar part of the sales process to all experienced salespeople: You want to make sure your prospect is the real Decision Maker and has purchasing authority. It's pointless to waste time in a meeting with someone who can't buy.

After you've confirmed that you're dealing with a trustworthy person who has purchasing authority, it's time to determine what they really want. These are your prospect's Conditions of Satisfaction: products and services specifications, delivery times, pricing, etc. Note that each time your prospects give you one of their conditions for the sale they must also give you conditional commitment to purchase- if you can meet their terms.

At this point, it is highly probable that you will do business with your prospect. When you follow the sales process step-by-step sequentially, the prospects tend to 'close themselves': They've made it clear what they want, and you've made it clear that you can provide it. Each step along the way, the prospect has confirmed his intention to do business with you.

Note that there are no 'magic bullets' in High Probability Selling. There are no 'Killer Closes'. Nothing is left to chance: You, the sales- person, control the entire sales process. By utilizing a structured sales process, you stack the odds in your favor, negotiate agreements that usually create satisfied customers and clients, and ensure the probability of your success.

## Closing the Sale - Timing is Crucial

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By Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

Waiting until the end of the sales process before closing a sale is akin to waiting until the last ten minutes of a flight to Venus before making course corrections. In both cases, there is a very low probability of success.

It is of little value to wait until after presenting your product or service to begin applying "closing techniques". You must create a sound foundation for the sale throughout the sales process. Without that foundation, salespeople feel pressured and trigger prospects' natural resistance: The probable outcome is lost opportunities and lack of sales.

Top salespeople, the Top 1%, close at the beginning of the sale, and many times throughout the sales process:

- They spend most of their time with people able, willing, and ready to buy - these are High Probability Prospects.
- They only do business with prospects they respect, and who, in turn, respect them: These are genuine business relationships, with both parties mutually agreeing to move forward each step of the sales process.
- This Mutual Respect results in Total Disclosure of the prospect's needs, wants and buying intentions- as well as Total Disclosure of the product's/service's benefits and limitations.
- Mutual Agreements and Mutual Commitments happen early, and often, throughout the sales process.
- These mutual agreements lead to Closed Sales: the 'Closing' is the sum total of the entire series of agreements. Closing must begin at the initial stages of the sales process.

During the sales process, almost any point of discussion provides an opportunity for a commitment. It's as simple as asking:

- "This system will produce at least 20% more sales by salespeople that utilize it. Is that what you want?"
- "Is it profitable to spend between approximately \$3500 per salesperson to achieve that magnitude of result?"
- "The system requires that your salespeople learn a new sales process. Is that acceptable?"

Each 'Yes' to questions like these is a commitment, and integrates 'Closing' throughout the Sales Process. Depending on your products and services, closing should occur between 25 and 45 times before consummating the sale.

If this sounds simple, it is. If it sounds easy, it is not. It requires preparation, so that every point of discussion is followed by a simple request for commitment or acceptance. It also requires a thorough understanding of a sales process that appeals to the way the human mind works.

By the end of the sales process, most prospects will have agreed that every one of your product's features is acceptable, and they also will have acknowledged your product's benefits to them. At that point, it is an easy, natural transition to ask the prospect what s/he wants to do to acquire your product or service. In most cases, the prospects will create the consummation of the sale. That is, they will design the final close for the salesperson's approval.

If this were a sales discussion, rather than an educational monologue, I would have asked for a commitment - a closing question - on each point. Go back through this article and see how many closing opportunities you can find.

## Are You Worth Another \$100,000 per Year?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Equation Research recently published data indicating that the difference in income between Top Salespeople and Low Performing Salespeople is nearly \$100,000 a year! Where do you fit in?

### Average Total Compensation of Salespeople\*

High-Level Performers	\$155,055
Mid-Level Performers	\$93,499
Low-Level Performers	\$64,990

\*Source: Equation Research:  
Sales & Marketing Management Magazine, May 2005

About 10% of all salespeople are in the High Level Performers category. However, within that ranking, the Top 1% earn anywhere from 5 to 15 times more than the average of that group.

What accounts for these substantial differences in performance and earning power? What does it take to earn that kind of money?

It's not working longer and harder, nor "working smarter." No one can work 5 times longer and harder than someone who is near the top of the profession, and no one is several times smarter. The Top 1 Percent are different from the rest.

The Top 1% utilize a different sales process that is radically different from the sales techniques that the other 99% use. The way they do business doesn't even resemble what most people think of as "Selling".

The methods of the Top 1% are not a closely guarded "secret". Our book, "High Probability Selling," describes how the Top 1 % does business. It's been on the market since 1993, and 100,000 copies have been sold, presumably to salespeople and sales managers.

Why haven't most sales pros "gotten it" yet?

David Wolfe, an expert marketing consultant in Reston, VA., offers this explanation: "Our brains evolved to resist change, in the interest of giving us stabilized connections to the external world. To do this, we simply block out information that conflicts with past experiences and beliefs. Psychologists call this behavior "denial."

Paraphrasing more of David Wolfe's writing: Most intelligent salespeople recognize the conflict between their beliefs and the new sales realities. They resolve these conflicts with confabulations about why they must stick with the "tried and true." The instinctive, subconscious parts of their brains tell them that they have survived by utilizing the old methods - and survival is the most powerful human instinct.

Philadelphia psychotherapist Dr. Wayne Diamond, who works with a large number of salespeople, has observed this resistance to changing sales beliefs in his practice. He describes it as "fear-based denial." Dr. Diamond notes that most salespeople are in such deep denial that they even deny that

they experience any fear. They use words like "uncomfortable," "uneasy," "awkward" and "anxious," which are all euphemisms for fear.

The cost of all this avoidance, fear, and denial among salespeople is well over a \$100,000 a year in lost income.

Can you find the courage to face and overcome your fears? If you don't overcome your aversion to change, how are you going to improve your earning power? What will it take? If you're not ready now, will you ever be ready?

## Are Top Salespeople Born or Made?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

That's the question that was posed by a writer for a major trade publication. He also asked me if salespeople should adapt their sales approach to the personality types of their customers. Here's how I answered him:

- A. Selling is a skill, comparable to accounting or engineering: Specific actions, properly applied in a proscribed order, produce the best results. Given enough motivation, almost any skill can be learned without formal training. Two of General Motors's top engineers never took an engineering course. Michael Dell didn't major in computers and dropped out of college.
- B. Similar aptitude patterns are seen in highly successful salespeople, trial lawyers and teachers. Salespeople who lack the right aptitudes and attitudes can substantially improve their sales skills, if they are willing to change their behaviors. The changes they need to make are simple, yet it requires a lot of self-discipline to make those changes.
- C. The type of training that is most likely to produce dramatic improvement is based upon the latest understanding of how the human mind works. It eliminates persuasion in favor of committed agreements.
- D. The theory that salespeople can assess a customer's personality type, and then adapt their selling techniques accordingly, has been widely promoted. However, we have never seen a salesperson that can demonstrate that skill.

No one (or customer) has a static personality; we all change continuously, reacting to stimuli as we receive them. It's hard enough to figure out anyone's personality type; it's extremely difficult to analyze and react to it moment-to-moment. I believe that only trained, experienced psychologists are likely to be able to make practical use of that theory.

*So, Are Top Salespeople Born or Made?*

We studied the top 1% of salespeople across 23 different industries. Some are self-made, learning what works best through intuition and experience. Many were trained, learned several selling systems, and eventually settled on the selling system that produces outstanding results. The ironic thing is that most of the top salespeople are doing the same things, and what they are doing is radically different from the other 99% of salespeople. Our conclusion is that top salespeople are clearly made.

## The Power of Two - Marketing and Sales

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Leads: Salespeople need them, and Marketing Departments (theoretically) generate them. In a perfect world, the salesperson's challenge would be to keep up with the flood of qualified prospects that Marketing funnels out to them.

In reality, however, the Marketing-Sales lead scenario often plays out like this:

"We work our tails to the bone getting the salespeople leads, but they hardly ever follow-up with the prospects, and we never hear about it if they do," lamented Andy, the Marketing Manager, during a recent training program.

"They give us loads of leads," agreed salesperson Bert, "but they're no damn good. Then, they want a full report on each of them about what transpired within a week after we get the leads. I'd rather do without leads than do all of that useless work."

What's going on here? Who's right - Bert, or Andy - Sales, or Marketing?

In many companies, the Marketing and Sales departments work at cross purposes, rather than bolstering each other's efforts. Each department is communicating different messages to different people.

The result? When Bert follows up on Marketing Department-generated leads, "...almost all of them indicate that they don't know if they will ever be genuine prospects," said Bert. "Yet, some of them try to get me to visit them, because they are 'really interested' in our products. If I waste time on low probability prospects, I won't be able to spend my time with prospects that are ready to buy or specify our products now."

Bert knows that a real prospect is someone who is ready, able, and willing to buy his capital equipment product- now. Following up with 'interested' prospects would be a waste of time. The need to justify his reluctance to pursue low probability prospects to Marketing, and his manager, wastes yet more time and causes unnecessary friction.

Marketing and Sales should be working together towards a common defined objective. Marketing creates Brand Awareness and communicates Product Knowledge to the market, generating acceptance among target companies. Salespeople contact the individuals at targeted companies who are responsible for Specifying and Buying its products.

The breakdown between Marketing and Sales occurs when the Sales cycle is left out of the equation. Sales should be consulted before marketing communications are sent out: Messages need to be targeted appropriately to different levels of Decision Makers who are at different stages in the Sales Cycle. Lead generation needs to qualify the prospects, and those not ready to buy should be entered into the Company database and receive continuous marketing messages.

Ideally, Andy and Bert would be working together to define and refine the Company's target markets and target Companies. They would work together to develop a detailed database of individuals at target companies who influence, specify, and authorize Buying for their products and services. Andy's Marketing Department would generate the universe of prospects, and Bert wouldn't be expected to

contact a prospect until Marketing had determined that the targeted company had entered the Specifying or Buying mode.

When good things happen, Sales and Marketing should both be able to rightfully claim that it was due to their efforts and expertise. That's the Power of 2.

## Top Salespeople Win at the Numbers Game

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

"Sales is a numbers game" is something most salespeople are taught from Day One on the job. That's very true. But - what are the numbers everyone is talking about?

In the Life Insurance Industry, most new agents are taught the "Standard Sales Formula - 100/10/3". That is, contact 100 people, get 10 appointments, sell 3 policies. That sounds like a winning formula, doesn't it?

In reality, less than 1 percent of the 1 million+ insurance agents in the USA can consistently produce those results. Other industries have their own bogus formulas.

Bogus numbers lead to bogus sales goals: They inevitably result in disappointment and discouragement. On the other hand, good numbers, based on 'real-world' sales activity in the field, can guide you through the sales process and lead to increasingly encouraging results. Top producing salespeople \*really\* know their numbers.

Most people, however, don't choose the uncomfortable route. They don't change very much of what they're doing, with the exception of performing a few sales techniques somewhat better. Yet, they expect their results to change dramatically. That's not how the world works!

In High Probability Selling, we track all sales activity, at every step of the sales process, from initial contact through to the signing of the contract. By monitoring and measuring the results of each discrete step of the selling process, you can constantly refine your selling skills. The result is steady, gradual improvement, until you are producing optimal results and have become a Top Performer.

Top Performers know the answers to every one of the questions below. In the last 6 months:

1. What is the average number of prospects that you attempted to call (dials per week?)
2. What percentage of those dials resulted in contact with a decision maker (not voice mail or a gatekeeper)?
3. Out of all the dialing you did in #1, what percentage resulted in talking to the person who could sign a contract, issue a purchase order, or cut a check? This number is crucial: This is the number of genuine prospects you contacted.
4. What percentage of those decision-maker contacts resulted in an appointment? This number is important for two reasons: 1) You need to know how many contacts it takes to secure an appointment, and 2) You need to gauge, measure, and refine your High Probability Prospecting offers.
5. What percentage of your appointments resulted in a sale?
6. What is the average number of sales appointments, per prospect, does it take for you to close a sale? Over the past 6 months, exactly how many appointments did you make, and keep?
7. What is your closing average per prospect? What is your closing average per appointment?

Top Performers can answer ALL of the above questions, ACCURATELY, at any given moment. Can you?

If you don't monitor and measure your sales activity, you're typical of 98% of the thousands of salespeople we've observed over the years. Most of those salespeople struggle with their jobs every day. Without knowing exactly what you are doing, and how much you are doing it, the probability of improving your sales performance is extremely low.

Yes, sales IS a numbers game. Keep statistics on EVERYTHING that you do- it's easy, once you get into the habit. Now is the best time to start keeping sales performance records.

Your statistics will enable you to understand, tweak, and improve your selling skills. The result? A dramatic improvement in your sales success.

# **Selling Beyond Fear: Courage is Not the Absence of Fear! Real Courage is Doing What You Are Afraid to Do!**

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

In the 17 years we've been training salespeople in High Probability Selling, we've known that what we teach scares people. What we haven't known is \*why\* our methods scare some salespeople into clinging to their old - but ineffective - sales approaches. Why can't so many salespeople change the way they sell?

After years of research, we've finally determined why so many salespeople can't change the way they sell: They're afraid of doing what really works!

Typically, salespeople mask their fears with macho attitudes. They think of themselves as heroic figures, persevering against all obstacles, fighting the good fight day after day. But, think about this: Who are they really fighting?

Through extensive research under the guidance of Dr. Wayne Diamond, we've concluded that salespeople's own fears are the biggest impediment to their success. Fear is the real 'enemy'.

This is where true courage enters the picture: We have to recognize and confront our fears before we can overcome them. Here is a 3-Step Strategy for overcoming your fears. (Note: "Uncomfortable, uneasy, and anxious" are other words for fear.)

## **1. Reality or Fantasy?**

The first thing you need to do is determine whether the fears you have are based in Reality or Fantasy. You can't beat what isn't real. You can't overcome what is real if you won't admit exists. If a fear is based in reality, facing it helps to overcome the fear. If a fear is based in fantasy, acknowledging the fantasy helps to overcome it.

What you resist persists. If you resist facing your fears, they will persist.

## **2. Acknowledge Your Fears**

<b>Typical Sales Fears</b>	<b>Reality</b>
The Fear of Rejection	The way you sell causes rejection
The Fear of Loss	You can't lose what you don't have
The Fear of Scarcity	Learn to find an abundance of prospects
The Fear of Being Intrusive	People who mind intrusion don't take calls

The Fear of Being Offensive	The timid way you sell offends prospects
The Fear of Not Being Believed	Practice full disclosure and be believed
The Fear of Being Disrespected	Directness and Authenticity get respect
The Fear of Failure and/or the Fear of Success	Needs professional guidance

### **3. Assumptions Are Sales Killers**

Assuming that you know how people will react often produces negative results. It doesn't matter if your assumptions are generally negative or positive. Both are condescending and/or insulting. Both are based on some or all of the fears listed above.

Assumptions are usually based on what you believe to be true, or what you wish was true. Our false assumptions may be due to past unsuccessful sales experiences, or they may be relics of personal experiences, recent or long 'buried'.

## Honesty Works Best - But It's Not About Morality

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Last week, I received three calls from people, all appreciative that I support the values of 'our religion'. One was a Born-Again Baptist, another was Mormon, and the third was Jewish. My response to each of them was the same: I don't follow their religion.

It's true that being scrupulously honest, direct, and authentic in business dealings is an essential component of High Probability Selling. It is also true that this has nothing to do with religion, and everything to do with utilizing a selling process that produces dramatic, positive results.

When I set out to determine how the top 1% of salespeople actually sell, I did not start out looking for a totally honest selling system. My sole intention in studying Top Performers was to ascertain what sets them apart. The most surprising thing that I learned is that most top salespeople are scrupulously honest- it's how they 'do business'. The statistics were too skewed to be coincidental.

Most people, regardless of their profession, don't understand the technology of honesty. Most salespeople, however, do understand the technology of manipulation; it's how they learned to sell. Convincing, persuading, and all other forms of manipulation- what most salespeople are taught- create resistance, a natural barrier to closing a sale.

Top salespeople, on the other hand, have mastered the technology of honesty. It's what works best. Honesty is not an abstract ideal- it's an imperative for successful selling and business transactions. That's why we teach it in High Probability Selling.

The High Probability Selling (HPS) process is based on extensive research. We observed 312 of the top salespeople, in 23 different industries, in order to develop the process. We kept copious notes. Two hundred sixty-one of them had intuitively, independently developed parts of a new, entirely non-manipulative sales paradigm. (The other sixty-one, and almost all of the lower 99% of salespeople were, and still are, using manipulative sales techniques.)

We don't preach or teach morality. I didn't start out looking for a totally honest selling system. It just turned out that most of the very best salespeople have mastered the technology of honesty because that's what works best. And, that's why we teach it.

## Can You Afford to Improve Your Sales Skills?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Most full time salespeople spend very little money (or none) to enhance their sales skills. The majority of salespeople - the lower 80 % - often say that they "can't afford" to invest in a sales course.

In contrast, most of the top 20% of all salespeople read several sales books and take at least one sales course per year. They constantly strive to enhance their sales skills. They invest in themselves, and as a result earn upwards of \$110,000 annually.

Ask ten salespeople that you meet during the next week what sales books they've read this year and what sales training they've taken. The probability is that most have not read a sales book in the past year. Most have not participated in a sales training course, unless their employer has required it- and paid for it. Are you among that 80% that do nothing to improve their sales skills?

Let's consider a stark reality: About 60 percent of the people who enter the sales profession leave within 3 years. In the Financial Services and Real Estate industries, that percentage spikes to over 80%. The most common reason is that they can't earn an adequate living. Of those that remain in sales jobs, less than half earn as much at the average truck driver.

Almost all salespeople who fail to earn inadequate incomes are among the 8 out of 10 that don't endeavor to improve their sales skills.

Here's an example of a salesperson on the fast track to failure. This week, a salesperson asked me if we would give him a 50% discount so he could do our training course. He said he couldn't afford the tuition because he just spent about \$2,000 on a one week vacation at the shore. People like him will never be able to afford much of anything as long as they are in a sales position, because improving their sales skills is not a high priority.

Some salespeople do make efforts to succeed, but the sales books and courses didn't provide them with much, if any, improvement in their performance. This is because they focused on sales methods that they already understood - even though those selling techniques are obsolete and ineffective. They're sticking with what's comfortable to them, watching the top 20 percent pass them by up the ladder of success.

Top salespeople earn more than the average corporate CEO. The reason is simple: Skilled salespeople are very rare. The results of their work are of vital importance to almost all businesses, so they're in great demand. Yet, most salespeople seem to think that they can acquire the skills necessary to earn that kind of money without spending any of their own money. Can't they figure out that if it were so easy, good salespeople would be a dime a dozen?

Recently I wrote about a highly successful salesperson who we trained; she took the High Probability Selling course 6 times. This is someone who earns a seven figure income. Of course she can afford the training - that's not the point. She feels she can't afford not to continuously improve her selling skills - that is the point.

## In Sales, Your Attitude is Important

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

A hard working salesman left his last call of the day, a large rural merchandise distributor, without making a sale. He started to drive back to the state highway on the narrow country road that the prospect's business was located on. After driving for about 10 minutes, he hit a ragged rock and got a flat tire.

When he opened his trunk he discovered that his jack was missing. "What am I going to do now?" he thought. He hadn't noticed any traffic since he turned on to that road. And it was about 30 miles to the next town.

Luckily, that prospect's place was only about 10 or 12 miles back down the road. As he walked, it began to get dark and cold - fast. He assured himself that the owner of that business would be glad to help out by lending him a jack. He'd probably even drive him back to his car.

After walking some more, the salesman mused on the situation a bit further: "While the prospect didn't buy anything, in fact he hardly gave me any time; he's probably a considerate guy. On the other hand, small town business people often don't like salesmen, especially salesmen from the city. In fact, they are usually pretty hostile." However, in this case, he was pretty certain this guy would take pity on him.

As the salesman walked, his thoughts darkened. But... what if he isn't such a nice guy? What if another salesman ruined it for him by ripping off this business owner and selling him some bad merchandise? Or, what if the man is just a mean bastard, and refuses for no reason at all?

What if he looks me in eye and says, "I have a very good jack, but I won't lend it to a salesman, even if you beg. Now, get the hell away from my building."

The now agitated salesman finally arrived back at the prospect's building, which appeared to have closed. There was still one car in the parking lot, and a light in a back window. He knocked forcefully on the front door. Then he waited a few minutes, but no one came to the door. So, he banged continuously on that door - harder and harder. The startled business owner finally opened the door.

The salesman looked him square in the eye, and shouted, "YOU CAN KEEP YOUR DAMN JACK. A REAL SALESMAN NEVER BEGS."

Our troubled salesman learned his lesson well - Good Salespeople Never Beg - even though his application of this maxim was a bit inappropriate in that particular situation!

Most salespeople are guilty of begging at one time or another, especially when starting out and feeling a bit desperate.

In High Probability Sales Training, we teach you to get off your knees, stand up straight, and insist upon honest, respectful relationships with your prospects and customers. Successful salespeople sell with dignity.

## The Sales Trainee

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

A young guy from New Jersey moves to California and goes to a big "everything under one roof" department store looking for a job. Instead of going to the Human Resources Department, he asks to see the store manager. He tells the manager that he wants a sales job: He can quickly determine if a shopper is a real buyer, and he can close most of the Buyers.

The manager says, "Do you have any sales experience?"

The young guy says, "Yeah, I was a garden equipment salesman back home in New Jersey."

Well, the manager liked the way the young guy spoke, so he offered to put him on trial for a few days as a Sales Trainee. "Start tomorrow. Just report to the floor manager on level one. I'll come down after we close and see how you did."

His first day on the job was rough, but he got through it. After the store closed, the store manager came down. "How many sales did you make today?"

"Just One."

The boss says, "Just one? Our salespeople average 20 or 30 sales a day, with an average gross of about \$1,500 each. How much was your one sale for?"

The new guy says, "\$111,447.23."

"Over one hundred thousand dollars? What the heck did you sell?"

"First, I sold him a small fishing hook. Then, I sold him a large fishing hook. Then he bought a new fishing rod and reel.

When I asked him where he was going fishing, he said, "down off of Costa Mesa". So, I asked him if he wanted to have his own boat down there. He said 'Yes,' so we went down to the boat department and I sold him that twin engine 21 foot Starcraft with a Sea Lion trailer.

But, his Honda Civic couldn't pull the boat, so I took him down to the automotive department, where he traded in the Honda on a 4X4 Chevy Suburban."

The manager said, "A guy came in here to buy a fish hook and you sold him a boat and SUV?"

The new Senior Sales Representative says, "No ... I forgot about the Tampons. He came in to buy a box of tampons for his wife, and I said, "Well, your weekend is shot, how would you like to go fishing?"

Hopefully, you're smiling. Now, think about it: Wouldn't it be great if you could learn to spot a Dream Prospect like the one in the story? Fewer sales with much higher Gross Revenues sounds good, doesn't it?

It's time to stop daydreaming, and time to learn how to sell like our young hero.

## Most Salespeople Are Professional Wimps

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Most salespeople are wimps when they talk to prospects and customers, but not when they talk to other people. Why do they wimp out when they talk to prospects and customers? Why are they so afraid that talking straight to prospects will be deemed offensive?

A lot of our trainees protest what they think is the "harsh" language of High Probability Selling.

In a recent High Probability Selling training course, several participants protested the way we teach them to talk to their prospects and customers. "It seems to be abrupt, harsh, even rude," said one student. "I understand the theory of being so direct but, talking that way isn't really me," he said.

Another student said, "I know it's beneficial for both the prospect and the salesperson to be straight with prospects. But, I think most prospects would be offended by that way of talking."

However, when salespeople talk that way to people who are NOT prospects, then they describe it as speaking "directly, forthrightly and honestly."

Here's what I told them. You have to give up on being the most courteous, most agreeable, and most accommodating salesperson on earth. That's not who you really are and that is not the kind of person whom the vast majority of prospects and customers trust and respect. Acting that way is a transparently phony.

We know that the two most important buying decision factors are whether or not the prospect Trusts you and Respects you. You need to be authentic in order to be trusted, and you need to respect yourself before you will be respected. Most salespeople need to learn how to do that - effectively and gracefully - in order to become highly successful.

## Questions: Open-ended or Close-ended?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Almost all salespeople know the "right answer" to that one. Or do they?

If you are practicing "Needs Selling," or any of its modern derivatives, such as Consultative Selling or Solution Selling, you're asking open-ended questions. You want to try to get your prospects talking about their needs, their problems, and their pain. You want to steer the conversation around to getting them "interested" in working with you, so that you can help alleviate their pain by helping solve their problems. Open-ended questions are designed to do that.

That sounds exactly right, doesn't it? It's just the way you want to sell. If that's the right way to sell, and it really works, and it's not so hard to do, why aren't you rich?

Why is it that most salespeople, almost all of whom ask open-ended questions, either fail or fail to achieve real success? Why do they struggle to meet quota? Why are so many salespeople unhappy with their work? Could it be that selling systems that rely on open-ended questions don't work very well anymore?

Now, I'm not saying that you should never ask open-ended questions. In High Probability Selling, there are specific times and specific circumstances when open-ended questions are entirely appropriate - but not many. Finding out what they want, what they are willing to commit to buy requires closed-ended questioning. Once a prospect has indicated that they want the benefits of your product or service, some open-ended questions are warranted.

You see, effective selling is all about commitments - mutual commitments. And, the most effective way to arrive at commitments is with closed-ended questions. The big problem is that most salespeople don't understand the theory and mechanics of commitments. In reality, commitments are what close sales. Closing is most effective when it opens the sale and drives the entire sales process. The High Probability Selling process typically involves at least 25 closing commitments, all arrived at with closed-ended questions.

That is how almost all of the top one-percent of salespeople actually sell. That's what makes the High Probability Selling different from the sales methods that you already know, and (maybe) still believe in. Can you afford to go on using ineffective sales methods to support your family and power your ambitions? Note the closed-ended question, then read it again- and give yourself an honest answer.

## Are You One in a Million Realtors?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

There are over one million active Realtors in the United States. Most of them survive by sheer tenacity. Few truly succeed and attain the income levels promised during recruitment events. What are they doing wrong and what can you learn from their Top 3 mistakes?

- 1) *Have a 'Winning' Personality: Many salespeople believe that their natural charms, gregarious natures, and 'can-do' attitude will inevitably lead to success.*

The evidence is clear - that is wrong! Selling is a skill; you're born with aptitude, but you need to acquire and refine a skill set in order to attain sales success.

- 2) *Make Your Own Luck: Neophyte Realtors tend to rely on open houses, work their "farms," and cultivate circles of acquaintances to acquire leads. Their mistaken belief is that sooner or later, they'll be in the Right Place at the Right Time.*

Being in the right place at the right time is not a matter of luck: A good salesperson knows that the only viable prospect is one who is actively in the market - now - and is willing to do business with you already. Top salespeople only spend time with High Probability prospects.

- 3) *Excellent marketing materials will overcome prospects' natural resistance to sales techniques.*

Elaborate graphics, presentations, and ad campaigns can't compensate for ineffective salesmanship. Slick marketing is inherently disrespectful. It implicitly sends the message that prospects are too dumb to understand real estate.

People want to do business with people they trust and respect. A winning sales strategy is to develop relationships of mutual trust and respect - immediately. That is the best foundation for closing sales.

Here's what you can learn from struggling realtors:

- If what you're doing isn't working well enough for you, it's time for a change.
- It's time to develop genuine confidence and self-esteem, based on utilizing a highly effective sales process. Learn how to treat prospects with genuine respect- and require them to treat you with respect.
- It's time to stop envying others' 'natural sales talent' and develop true competence in selling.

## Are You a Victim of the Financial Services Industry?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Most buyers want to do business with people they can trust. Being trustworthy is key to successful selling. Yet, most salespeople who work in the field of Financial Services have been deliberately and calculatedly misled by their employer- usually a Brokerage Company or Insurance Company. Is it any wonder that only 3 out of 20 people who enter the field survive?

You are a victim of the financial services industry, if you've been told that:

- **Plenty of people are making a lot of money in the business.**

*Truth:* About 15% are making a decent living selling financial services, the rest are struggling.

- **Most people really need your products and services.**

*Truth:* Most people may need your products or services, but most don't want to buy them. Unfortunately, insurance companies don't teach you how to find the High Probability Prospects that do want to buy insurance now. Rather, they want most of their agents to beat the bushes for the low probability prospects - because they work on commission.

- **You have to really want to help people in order to be successful.**

*Truth:* Most people don't want your help.

- **You need to become very knowledgeable about the technical aspects of financial services.**

*Truth:* It *is* helpful to understand financial services products. It is much more important, however, to become skilled at Prospecting (a form of Marketing) and Selling.

- **It's easier to learn how to sell than to learn financial planning.**

*Truth:* The reverse is true. It's easy to find highly competent financial planners who will work on your cases very inexpensively - because they don't know how to sell.

Salespeople new to the Financial Services industry are usually victimized by some, or all, of these Myths. The result? They work hard, they work diligently - and they sell very little. The neophyte salesperson is blamed for not being persuasive enough, being too thin-skinned, being overly sensitive, or just being lazy.

How do the top salespeople in the Insurance and Brokerage industries survive? How do they succeed in earning six and seven-figure incomes, against the odds? The sales stars that we've studied know how to:

- Define target markets - those willing, and able, to buy from you

- Develop a viable prospecting list: A true prospect must meet defined criteria
- Maintain contact with prospects - without annoying them
- When to make appointments - and to avoid wasting time with 'low probability' prospects
- Make the 'numbers game' work to your advantage
- How to dramatically boost the probability of successfully closing most sales

When you stop being victimized by the Sales Myths perpetuated by your industry, and stop victimizing prospects by perpetuating those myths, you will enjoy real sales success. When you differentiate yourself from your competition, know how to open and maintain real dialogue with prospects, know how to develop mutual trust and respect, and focus your selling efforts only on viable (High Probability) prospects, you can enjoy considerable success. You don't have to work harder; you have to more competently!

## What's Trust Got To Do With It?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

'Sales' and 'Ethics' are two words often considered to be a contradiction in terms - both inside and outside of the sales profession. "How can you tell when a salesperson is lying?" goes the old joke. The answer, of course is, "Their lips are moving."

Unfortunately, there is truth in jest: Our own research indicates that 97% of salespeople habitually and knowingly misrepresent their products and services. The salespeople that we've studied balk at being considered liars: They 'cleverly' just omit the negatives when extolling their companies' offerings. In their minds, using exaggeration, omissions, puffery, and trickery means they "can't get caught in a lie."

The fact that many salespeople deliberately lie while conscientiously avoiding being 'caught' suggests a commonly held belief that Lying is Wrong yet Necessary. This is a Sales Myth. Our research indicates exactly the opposite.

High Probability Selling has evolved out of studying the top 1% of salespeople in 23 industries. High ethical standards is a standout characteristic of these sales superstars: They tend to operate with 'full disclosure,' telling their prospects the negatives of their products as well as the positives. Most of the top one percent believe that their high ethical standards are an important factor in their success.

In his book, *Power vs. Force*, Dr. David Hawkins, a renowned research psychiatrist, makes the case that almost all people have a powerful intuition for detecting lies. People who are lied to by a salesperson don't necessarily know what the lie is; they just feel a strong distrust, and feel disrespected by the salesperson. Only people who ignore their feelings will buy under those conditions.

Our research validates the importance of Trust and Respect from the Buyer's perspective as well. We've found that the vast majority of people will buy from the salesperson that they trust and respect the most. Interestingly, Buyers' need to trust a salesperson tends to increase along with the purchase price. Unfortunately, most salespeople don't know the right way to tell the truth within the context of a sales presentation.

The numbers tend to support the theory that ethical selling is a key component to sales success. The average income of top sales performers is in the low to mid-six figure range. In contrast, the lower 99% of salespeople earn about the same as the average truck driver. Morally, being ethical is a choice; pragmatically, being ethical is vital to your success.

What does Trust have to do with Sales Success? The propensity of the top salespeople to tell the truth, coupled with the tendency of most buyers to do business with people they can trust, makes being trustworthy an extremely important sales strategy. Trust is a key factor in Sales Success.

## How to Persuade Prospects to Buy - Elsewhere!

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Selling is often dubbed "The Art of Persuasion". When was the last time a salesperson talked you into buying something that you didn't want? When was the last time a salesperson hard-closed you into purchasing, before you felt ready to buy?

We've asked dozens of CEO's the same questions, and they all believe that they're immune to sales persuasion. Yet, they've told us that they expect their sales forces to persuade, convince, manipulate, and do whatever necessary to increase their market share. What's wrong with that picture?

Salespeople, from the VP of Sales on down, will try to live up to the CEO's expectations. Most salespeople believe that their job is to do whatever it takes to increase sales within the (sometimes ethereal) ethical standards of their company.

### Example

The CEO of a Fortune 100 company told me that he is certain that his salespeople must be better persuaders than his competitors' salespeople: "That's their only function." His Marketing and Sales VPs are charged with providing the most convincing sales presentations, documentation and marketing materials in the industry. "It's all about them subtly imposing their will," he said.

Is that strategy working? Two of his three biggest competitors have better growth rates than his company's. When I asked him to explain that fact, his response was, "Our people aren't executing well enough."

*What's the problem?*

The top 20 percent of most sales forces is out there every day bringing in up to 80% of a company's business. The typical CEO's belief is that the 80% that aren't selling much just have to work harder. That's simply not true. They need to work more effectively.

The Top 20% usually sell without using any persuasion or manipulation. The Top 20%, either instinctually or deliberately, have refined their selling styles in such a way that they deal honestly and cooperatively with their prospects and customers. They've largely eliminated persuasion, cajoling, and convincing from their selling repertoire, since they've discovered it doesn't work.

*The Solution*

We studied hundreds of the top 1% of salespeople across dozens of industries: We found that most of the top salespeople had developed remarkably similar sales processes. We observed and documented the styles, nuances, and selling techniques that successfully bring prospects through the sales process all the way to Closing. Our discoveries evolved into High Probability Selling system.

"The Art of Persuasion" is not an effective way to sell. When was the last time a salesperson talked you into buying something that you didn't want? It's unlikely that persuasion convinced you to buy

before you were ready, and it's unlikely that it will work with your prospects, either. Don't "persuade" your prospects that they'd prefer to do business with the competition!

If you want to learn selling techniques that really work, you want to learn more about High Probability Selling.

## Execs' Top Priorities This Year: Acquiring & Retaining Customers

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Accenture recently published the results of their global study of Executive Priorities for 2004. Selling by Acquiring New Customers is Priority 1, and Selling by Retaining Customers is Priority 4. Selling is clearly a major concern among company executives.

Acquiring and retaining customers is usually a major priority - that isn't news. Top salespeople are in great demand - that isn't news, either. What would qualify as real news? If more CEO's succeeded in developing a highly competent sales force.

Most CEO's have no idea what it takes to sell in today's marketplaces, and their Sales Managers only think they know. Most sales managers have been placing their hopes in getting salespeople to work "smarter and harder." They've been hoping that streamlining sales procedures will produce the results they need - more sales. Has it worked? No. Will it ever work? No.

As long as sales managers stay grounded in the past, new Contact Management systems and Customer Relationship Management systems will merely automate obsolete selling practices. Huge cultural and economic changes over the past ten years have forced almost every business function to adapt and innovate. But not sales; most sales organizations are still being managed as if it's still 1990.

Most sales managers and their salespeople are stuck in the old "Needs Selling" paradigm. However, their prospects and customers are now in the "Wants Selling" paradigm. Sales managers and their salespeople need to substantially change the way they think and operate, if they're going to span the differences between the Old and New Sales Paradigms.

The traditional Needs Selling paradigm is briefly:

Find prospects who are interested in your products and services. Do whatever it takes to get an appointment. Then, do whatever it takes to get them to buy from your company. Let the service department handle customer satisfaction.

The new Wants Selling paradigm is briefly:

Only make appointments with prospects when they are ready to buy your products and services. Treat your customers with respect, and insist they do the same. Make mutual agreements and mutual commitments with your prospects and customers, honor those agreements and commitments, and insist they do the same. Base your business relationships on mutual trust and respect, and use that as the foundation for cross-selling throughout the company. Take personal responsibility for customer satisfaction and get plenty of referral business.

There is a world of difference between the Traditional and New Selling paradigms. Sales forces must learn new selling strategies and practices. Only then will company executives succeed in fulfilling their top goals - to acquire new customers and to retain their current customers.

## Top 10 Tips for Prospecting Success

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by Jacques Werth

To succeed in sales, you must be able to find and close a sufficient number of qualified prospects. That points up the reason most salespeople that do traditional "cold calling" fail. They fail because most of the appointments they make are with Low Probability Prospects who cannot be closed. Furthermore, their attempts to get an appointment with everyone they talk to causes so much resistance that most prospects will not talk to them again. That prevents them from developing a favorable relationship with most of their prospects.

The ability to prospect efficiently, effectively and enjoyably will enable you to meet with prospects that need, want and can afford your products and services- now. Your confidence will soar, and empower you to develop a consistently superior income stream.

Follow these 10 Tips for Prospecting Success:

1. Start with a highly targeted prospecting list, consisting of people or companies that are most likely to buy your type of products and services. Use a highly reputable list broker to find such a list. The cost should be no more than 25¢ per name. Start with a list of no more than 500 names. You cannot afford to develop your own list, unless you already have a book of business. In that case, call your existing customers as if they are new prospects.
2. Call every name on your list every 3-4 weeks. Understand that only a small percentage of your list will be ready to buy the first time that you call. Many more will be ready each successive time that you call. Most prospects will not want to meet with you until you have presented prospecting offers at least three times.
3. Present a "prospecting offer" of no more than 45 words that clearly states who you are, what you are selling, and two features of your product or service. Finish up with "Is that what you want?" Each time you call, change the two features. That will prevent most prospects from getting annoyed. It will also eliminate most of the rejection that is caused by traditional cold calling.
4. If the prospect says "No" or "I am not interested," you say "Okay, good bye." Do not press for an appointment. Do not try to engage the prospect in a conversation or ask any questions. That will be the most pleasant sales call they ever get. It will assure that less than 1% of the prospects will ask you not to call again.
5. Schedule your prospecting sessions for 3½ hours. Take a fifteen-minute break between each hour. That is more productive than five prospecting sessions of one hour each.
6. Tape yourself. Use a tape recorder with an open microphone to tape your side of each call. Start the tape when the prospect answers. Listen to how you sound. The goal is to hear yourself using your usual conversational tones. Do not try to sound like a professional salesperson. Do not come across as overly enthusiastic, unusually friendly or enticing. Just relax and present your offer without persuasion.
7. Always be in a "Disqualification" mode. Be determined to spend your selling time only with High Probability Prospects. Disqualify low probability prospects quickly and courteously. Don't allow desperation or anxiousness to deter you from that mission.

8. Accept the fact that prospecting really is a “numbers game.” The most important numbers are your Dials per Hour and the ratio of prospecting Offers to Dials.
9. Keep accurate records of your prospecting sessions. We have trained thousands of salespeople to be successful prospectors. The most successful keep accurate records. The act of keeping records will cause your subconscious mind to constantly improve your results. Ask us to email the “High Probability Prospecting Activity Record” form to you if you need it:  
JacquesW@highprobsell.com.
10. Telephone prospecting is the most productive way to build up your sales volume, with very little up-front expense and a minimum of marketing expertise. Start with telephone prospecting, and eventually you will get so many referrals from your existing customers that you will need to get an assistant to do your prospecting for you.

## Can You Afford to Improve Your Sales Skills?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Most full time salespeople spend very little money (or none) to enhance their sales skills. The majority of salespeople - the lower 80 % - often say that they "can't afford" to invest in a sales course.

In contrast, most of the top 20% of all salespeople read several sales books and take at least one sales course per year. They constantly strive to enhance their sales skills. They invest in themselves, and as a result earn upwards of \$110,000 annually.

Ask ten salespeople that you meet during the next week what sales books they've read this year and what sales training they've taken. The probability is that most have not read a sales book in the past year. Most have not participated in a sales training course, unless their employer has required it- and paid for it. Are you among that 80% that do nothing to improve their sales skills?

Let's consider a stark reality: About 60 percent of the people who enter the sales profession leave within 3 years. In the Financial Services and Real Estate industries, that percentage spikes to over 80%. The most common reason is that they can't earn an adequate living. Of those that remain in sales jobs, less than half earn as much at the average truck driver.

Almost all salespeople who fail to earn inadequate incomes are among the 8 out of 10 that don't endeavor to improve their sales skills.

Here's an example of a salesperson on the fast track to failure. This week, a salesperson asked me if we would give him a 50% discount so he could do our training course. He said he couldn't afford the whole \$745 tuition because he just spent about \$2,000 on a one week vacation at the shore. People like him will never be able to afford much of anything as long as they are in a sales position, because improving their sales skills is not a high priority.

Some salespeople do make efforts to succeed, but the sales books and courses didn't provide them with much, if any, improvement in their performance. This is because they focused on sales methods that they already understood - even though those selling techniques are obsolete and ineffective. They're sticking with what's comfortable to them, watching the top 20 percent pass them by up the ladder of success.

Top salespeople earn more than the average corporate CEO. The reason is simple: Skilled salespeople are very rare. The results of their work are of vital importance to almost all businesses, so they're in great demand. Yet, most salespeople seem to think that they can acquire the skills necessary to earn that kind of money without spending any of their own money. Can't they figure out that if it were so easy, good salespeople would be a dime a dozen?

Recently I wrote about a highly successful salesperson who we trained; she took the High Probability Selling course 6 times. This is someone who earns a seven figure income. Of course she can afford the training - that's not the point. She feels she can't afford not to continuously improve her selling skills - that is the point.

Can you afford to improve your selling skills?

## High-Tech Selling: Is It Really That Difficult?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Selling high-tech products and services is much more difficult than selling most other products and services: Truth, or just a popular myth?

Selling anything that is not a known commodity can be difficult. However, most of the difficulty is created by salespeople themselves. Here are some of the reasons why high-tech Sales seems so difficult - and how the typical selling process just reinforces that myth.

### **1. Most salespeople are unable to describe their product or service clearly and briefly enough.**

Most people take 20 to 30 seconds to decide whether they want what the salesperson is selling. Prospects get frustrated and annoyed at the salesperson who doesn't communicate with immediate clarity.

An effective prospecting offer should ideally be about 45 words. It takes many top salespeople about 2 hours to design an effective and concise prospecting offer. Most salespeople don't even know where to start.

### **2. Pressing prospects for an appointment before they are ready to buy greatly reduces the probability of ever getting the sale.**

Most salespeople believe that they should convince any prospect that has an apparent need for their products and services to buy. However, most prospects are not ready to buy the first time that the salesperson calls. Driven by the mistaken belief that they should be able to convince the prospect, the salesperson presses for an appointment.

The best route to ultimate success is to call each prospect every 3 to 4 weeks until they are ready to specify or buy your type of product or service - limiting each prospecting call to a maximum of 45 seconds.

### **3. Premature selling efforts leave a lasting negative impression, and dramatically reduce the odds of ever doing business with that prospect.**

'Forced' appointments and communications result in closed sales less than 14 percent of the time. When feeling pressured, prospects who don't commit to doing business on the first visit are even less likely to ever buy- then, the probability of ever getting the sale drops to 5 percent.

### **4. Most high-tech salespeople first approach a prospective customer at the end-user level in the organizations that they sell to.**

Most line managers don't have the authority to buy - they are 'influencers' who recommend. They usually don't have access to the funds, either.

The top 1% of the salespeople we studied usually initiate their sales process at the Vice President level. That requires a specifically tailored approach.

**5. High-Tech salespeople are fascinated with the features and benefits of their products and services.**

Most prospects only want to know what your products and services can do for them. If they determine that what you have is what they want, they will want to know how your particular product works - the features. Most salespeople honestly - and mistakenly - believe that prospects need to be educated before they can make an intelligent decision.

**6. Most high-tech salespeople focus on concrete product specifications and ignore their prospects' two primary motivators - trust and respect.**

In High-Tech sales, a common mistake is to deal with prospects on the basis of specifications, good presentations, logical arguments, convincing documentation, and factual economic justifications. Most prospects - including engineers and senior managers - have different motives. Their first priority is to deal with a salesperson that they fully trust and respect.

The top 1% of the salespeople know how to establish that kind of relationship in the first half hour of meeting their prospects - and to continuously reinforce it.

**7. Most high-tech salespeople acknowledge that they are weak closers.**

Salespeople assume that with enough education and information, prospects will logically determine that their product/service is valuable and worth buying. The top 1% of salespeople close a sale after the prospect has effectively closed him/her self. Starting with agreements made during the initial prospecting call, they arrive at dozens of mutual commitments throughout the sales process. The sum of those commitments is a closed sale - with absolutely no pressure on either party.

High-tech salespeople who are strong on product knowledge and weak on the 1-to-1 sales process help perpetuate the myth that high-tech Sales is Difficult. The truth is that selling high-tech products and services is easy, when an effective selling process is utilized with each and every individual involved in the buying decision.

High Probability Selling has trained salespeople in 76 different industries, including many types of high-tech products. I have personally managed sales staffs for several hardware and software companies. I have personally closed many millions of dollars in high-tech sales, including semiconductor production equipment, circuit board assembly equipment, electronic display hardware, technical information services, and manufacturing systems software.

## Finding the Sales Job You Want

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

I have hired and managed many hundreds of salespeople. In most cases, we spent a great deal of time and money recruiting them. Those few who called me directly almost always got an interview, even if we had to send them a plane ticket. The reason is simple: Sales managers want salespeople who are smart enough to apply their prospecting and selling skills to finding a job.

Understand that regardless of economic conditions, every large company, and many medium sized ones, has a multitude of job openings. Getting those jobs filled by suitable candidates is a long and tedious process, complicated by miles of organizational red tape. Managers who need to fill positions are often desperately trying to cope.

The fastest way to find the job you want, with a company you want to join, is to do it differently from everyone else. Find the companies - maybe only 2 or 3 percent of the companies you would like to join - that have a current need for your expertise. Find them before the job you want gets filled.

Here's how to sell your way into the job you want:

1. Develop your list of target companies.

Do a search on the Internet or at the library, and make a list of all of the companies that look attractive to you. You're looking for companies likely to employ people with your skill set. Make your list as big as possible - at least two hundred potential employers.

2. Design a "High Probability Prospecting offer." Include the following information:

- a. Your name;
- b. A short comprehensive description of your capabilities;
- c. Two outstanding functions that you can accomplish;
- d. A request for an appointment.

The prospecting offer must contain no more than 45 words. Example:

- a. This is Jane Salesperson.
- b. I'm an experienced, conscientious salesperson.
- c. I can find and make appointments with prospects that want your types of products and services and close most of them.
- d. Is that the kind of salesperson you want for your department?

3. Get the contact information of the 'decision makers'.

Call all of the companies on your list and get the names of the department managers that you want to call. While most receptionists won't give out that kind of information, you can usually get connected to someone in the sales department who will look it up for you. It works to tell them "I need your help."

4. Call all of the managers on your list and present your prospecting offer (number 2 above).

If the manager says he/she doesn't need anyone at this time, ask, "Do you know of anyone who does?" If not, say, "Okay, good bye."

If the manager asks you to send your resume, say, "I don't put my resume in the mail. I'll bring it with me if you want to meet. So, do you want to meet me?"

If the manager tells you to contact HR, say, "Okay, good bye." Don't waste your time contacting HR. Don't send them your resume unless you are the rat that is sure to win the race.

If the manager says "Yes," you say, "When?" However, be prepared to handle a preliminary telephone interview. Be prepared with a list of questions you want answered before you will commit to the appointment, also.

5. Don't accept the first job offer you get - unless it's the best position you could hope for. It's generally better to ask for a couple of weeks to think it over: People who use this system usually get from 3 to 5 job offers within a month!

You CAN find the sales job you want! Apply the principles of High Probability Prospecting to your job search: Define and target your market (employers likely to need your skill set), design a High Probability Prospecting offer (offer your expertise, using 2 of your skills as features), and qualify the potential employer (they either need you now, or they don't). If you diligently follow the process, you will achieve positive results - the sales job you want, at a company you'd like to work for.

## **Are YOU Guilty of using these Obsolete Sales Techniques?**

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

- Selling the Appointment
- Building Rapport
- Establishing Relationships with Potential Prospects
- Filling the Sales Funnel
- Don't Take No for an Answer
- Making Prospects Feel the Pain
- Persuading
- Convincing
- Overcoming Objections

The result of these sales techniques is rejection and frustration. Ready for something different?

### **Guilty of Holding These Outmoded Beliefs?**

- People Who Need Your Product or Service Can Be Convinced to Buy
- You Need to Educate Your Prospects Before They Can Be Sold
- Presentation Skills Are Very Important
- Good Prospects Are Created By Good Salespeople
- Helping Prospects is Most Important
- Sell Benefits Not Features
- Always Ask for the Order
- A Well Written Proposal Can Win the Sale
- Doing the Same Things a Little Better Will Get Great Results
- Your Industry Is Different from All Others
- You Must Be Able to Take Rejection: In Sales, It's Inevitable

If you still believe that persuading, cajoling, and razzle-dazzle presentations are necessary components of the sales process, you're probably wondering why you don't close more sales. It's not you, it's your outmoded sales belief system.

If you're ready to learn a more rewarding and effective way of selling, it's time to read High Probability Selling. Start selling more – and enjoying it more today.

## **The High Price of Comfort: Dramatic Results Require Dramatic Changes**

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Many salespeople are uncomfortable with the results of their sales efforts. Some of them spend time and money on sales training in an attempt to improve themselves. Do they succeed in improving their selling skills? Rarely.

Why doesn't sales training usually lead to improvement?

Ironically, salespeople often choose workshops focused on what they already know how to do. Training may emphasize practice in old standards such as handling objections, or teach a dozen "killer closes."

Most salespeople choose to improve on what they already know because it "feels comfortable." It's comfortable to think that if they can just get better at handling objections, it will make a huge difference in their closing rates. Or, they think if they learn new ways to ask for the order they will get more orders. What they fail to consider is that incremental improvements in their skills will only result in incremental improvements in their results. The dramatic improvements that they need and want remain elusive.

How can you achieve dramatic improvements?

In order to get dramatically improved results- much higher closing rates- you need to radically change what you're doing. Radical changes can be uncomfortable to learn, and uncomfortable to utilize.

Most people don't choose the uncomfortable route. They don't change very much of what they're doing, with the exception of performing a few sales techniques somewhat better. Yet, they expect their results to change dramatically. That's not how the world works!

Here's the good news:

If you are willing to tolerate the discomfort of changing your behaviors, the uncomfortable will soon become comfortable. Your new selling skills, attitudes and behavior will be far more comfortable than having to deal with continued disappointment and the hardships of incremental improvements.

Most salespeople who learn and fully apply High Probability Selling get over their discomfort within a few months. Selling the HPS way becomes comfortable and satisfying. High Probability Selling produces the dramatic results that come with radical improvements.

## The Ultimate Competitive Advantage: Trust and Respect

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Does your selling style address the most fundamental needs of your prospects? What are the most important factors to someone making an important buying decision?

Universities and market research firms have conducted numerous studies to determine the most important buying decision factors for people who make significant purchases. We gathered as many of those studies as we could find, and did simple correlation analyses to average out the results. Here are the results, in order of importance.

### Weighted Values\* of Buying Decision Factors (c)

1. Level of Trust in the Salesperson: 87
2. Level of Respect for the Salesperson: 82
3. Reputation of the Company or Product: 76
4. Features of the Product or Service: 71
5. Quality and Service: 58
6. Price (non-commodity): 16
12. Like the Salesperson (rapport): 3

\* Weight = percentage of people listing each factor in their top 5

The average salesperson knows how to effectively present 4 of the 7 factors cited above: Reputation (#3), Features (#4), Quality and Service (#5), and Rapport (#12). They try to handle the two most important buying decision factors, Trust (#1) and Respect (#2), by establishing Rapport (#12).

Building "Rapport" is an inherently manipulative tactic. Ironically, typical salespeople attempt to establish Trust and Respect, non-manipulative factors, by manipulating people. Building rapport doesn't establish trust and respect, it diminishes trust and respect. That's why only 3% of all buyers surveyed rate 'Like the Salesperson' as an important buying decision factor.

If Trust and Respect are so important, why don't most salespeople learn how to establish relationships of trust and respect with their prospects and customers? We've come to the conclusion that there are three reasons:

1. Most salespeople don't know that it can be done.
2. If they learn a process that develops that kind of relationship, they feel uncomfortable using it because it's very unconventional.
3. Trust and Respect are very personal emotions, and sharing emotions is commonly regarded as only suitable for intimate relationships. Most salespeople have a fear of intimacy. Yet, we've found that less than 1/2 of 1 percent of prospects and customers have a fear of intimacy.

Suppose you're faced with a very important buying decision. Let's say you have decided to relocate thirty miles away from where you live now, so that you and your spouse will both have shorter commutes to work. So, you need to sell your current home and buy a new one. To whom would you entrust the sale of your most valued possession? Are you going to entrust the sale of your house to a charming and friendly Realtor who tells you that they have the best marketing system, the best skills, the best negotiating ability, and affiliation with the biggest real estate firm? Or, will you hire the Realtor whom you trust and respect the most to sell your most valued possession?

Regardless of whether you sell to consumers or B-2-B, all sales are made to people. When the sales are significant, most people want to buy from someone they trust and respect. Why? Fear of loss is the most important buying motivation. You could lose tens of thousands in the hands of an untrustworthy Realtor. At work, choosing an unreliable vendor could cost you a raise, a promotion, or your job.

If you learn a process that establishes relationships of mutual trust and respect with prospects during your first conversation with them, you will have the ultimate competitive advantage. If not, hope to be the most persuasive salesperson your prospects meet- and hope that someone who practices High Probability Selling isn't your competitor!

## Sales Force Follies: The Tribal Wisdom of Many Sales Forces

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed on from one generation to the next, says that when you discover you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount.

In many sales organizations, the heavy investment in existing sales practices makes dismounting unfeasible, and these creative strategies are adopted instead:

1. Providing motivational seminars, tapes, and group sessions, to encourage riders to stay on their dead horses longer.
2. Threatening riders with termination when they can't get their dead horses moving.
3. Providing riders with stronger whips.
4. Determining how more successful organizations ride their dead horses. Then, adapting those methods as the company's new "Best Practices."
5. Determining that riders who don't stay on dead horses are lazy, lack drive, and have no ambition - then replacing them.
6. Appointing an intervention team to reanimate dead horses and assure that all riders are in compliance with approved riding standards.
7. Awarding professional certification plaques to riders who learn the best techniques to stay on their dead horses for long periods of time.
8. Reclassifying dead horses as "living-impaired."
9. Directing management to find new and better ways to inspire riders to charge their dead horses into battle.
10. Teaming several dead horses together for increased speed.
11. Donating old dead horses to a recognized charity, thereby deducting their full original cost. Then using the savings to buy new dead horses.
12. Proving that the reason for diminished sales results is a combination of macroeconomic circumstances and increased competition from other dead horse teams.
13. Developing contests and incentive plans to reward the best dead horse riders.
14. Enacting a strict dress code so that their riders look "professional."
15. Prohibiting riders from purchasing and riding their own live horses since that is not in accordance with the company's time-tested methods.
16. Promoting the most persevering of dead horse riders to manage and train new riders.

Did you chuckle as you read this? Salespeople stuck riding dead horses need a good laugh. Sales managers who read this and laugh in embarrassed recognition need to abandon their dead horses now.

If you're ready to abandon the 'tried and false,' if you're ready to commit to a sales process that really works, you're ready for High Probability Sales Training.

## **Selling and Managing National, Global, and Major Accounts It's Easier Than You Think!**

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Over the years, I've observed a couple of things about salespeople and managers charged with penetrating and managing Major Accounts. They experience additional pressures, reflective of the higher sales quotas and dollar volumes expected of them. They also mistakenly believe that distinctly different selling strategies are required to sell into key accounts.

All of the principles of High Probability® Selling are completely compatible with Major Accounts Selling. These principles greatly improve the effectiveness of most salespeople at every level when selling to major accounts. These same principles apply to sales managers when tracking, supervising, and coaching salespeople. Here are some of the most relevant High Probability Selling principles:

*Maximize market coverage, with fewer salespeople.*

No organization is always ready to buy or change suppliers. Maintain frequent telephone contact with all who influence the buying decision. However, spend sales time and resources on them only when they are ready to specify or buy your type of products and services.

*Major Account Selling is a Team Endeavor.*

All sales team members utilize a uniform sales process. The results of every prospect/customer contact are communicated to the entire team through a standardized communications system. Everyone knows their role; everyone is committed to the team's objectives. Team managers oversee all sales activities, eliminating duplication of efforts and maximizing closing opportunities.

*We sell to people - not to companies, corporations or organizations.*

Business entities are groups of people who are out to satisfy their own needs in service to a common objective. Appeal to their motivations on an emotional level while dealing with their logical reasons for buying. Almost all people buy for emotional reasons and then justify their decisions with logic.

*Many people may be 'influencers' in the final buying decision.*

The decision to buy can be influenced by myriad people, at many different levels within the organization - both positively and negatively. Meet each of them individually and develop strong relationships. Gauge the probability of winning the business from every person involved. Don't waste time with low probability prospects.

*Wants are senior to needs.*

Prospects buy based upon their priorities, not yours. Make appointments only with people who want to solve problems that your products and services address - now. They must be willing to commit the time and money necessary to solve those problems - now.

*The most important buying decision factors are trust and respect.*

Most people want to buy from someone they trust and respect. HPS has developed a process to develop a relationship of mutual trust and respect at the first meeting with most prospects.

*Closing is a commitment - the final commitment.*

Closing sales is a process. The closing process involves making a series of mutual commitments, beginning with an agreement established during your first contact with a new prospect. Establish 20

to 40 more mutual commitments during the sales process. "The Close" is the final commitment, wherein the prospects close themselves – without pressure.

Penetrating national, global, and major accounts is easier than you think. Remember that prospects and customers are just a group of people, who buy collectively in the same way that people buy individually.

Establish trust with each individual. Work with your other sales team members to share information and maximize efforts. Follow the linear, systematic High Probability Selling process with each person involved in the decision-making process as it progresses to the final buying decision.

When will you decide to learn and follow these principles? That is when major account selling will become less stressful, more enjoyable - and more profitable!

## Are You Stuck or Can You Get It?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Why do many salespeople remain faithful believers in obsolete selling strategies? We are talking about intelligent, successful salespeople. People whom, if they opened their minds to a totally new concept, could easily double their income without working any harder. That question has puzzled and frustrated us for many years.

We have trained a great many salespeople who have doubled and even quadrupled their sales. Most of them have recommended our training to a lot of their friends and colleagues. Usually a few of their friends and colleagues enroll in our training courses. But, that's not we expected.

We expected that, when our graduates went back to their companies and had dramatic increases in production, most of the other salespeople would demand to learn High Probability Selling. We expected that their managers would want to replicate that kind of performance by training their entire sales force. But, that doesn't happen very often. Most often, the other salespeople, and their sales managers will not believe that the tremendous increases in our graduate's sales productivity is due to learning a new sales process. Rather, they believe that the sudden success is due to luck, or a previously hidden talent, or to an increase in motivation.

We couldn't figure out why they just don't get the reality of it. David B. Wolfe, a new paradigm marketing strategist from Reston, VA, addresses this phenomenon in a recent essay. It seems to be a question of which of their needs is more important to them. The following is an excerpt from David's essay.

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How often do you find yourself pressing a point that you know to the core of your being is right, only to be frustrated because some people just "can't get it"?

Imagine you are walking down the street 450 years ago when a friend runs up to you and says it has been discovered that, "The earth is not flat! It's round, like a ball. Not only that, it turns around the sun!" You tell your friend to go home and sleep it off because you know that from the highest hill or mountaintop the panoramic view shows no sign of the earth being round like a ball, and you know from first-hand observation that every day the sun shines it rises in the east and sets in the west in its daily journey around the earth.

Would you believe that some people schooled in societies like our own still believe the earth is flat? To see for yourself, type in "Flat Earth society" at Google. Those who believe the earth is flat do so because they need to believe so. After all, belief follows need.

We believe what we need to believe to have guidance in our pursuit of a sense of personal validity, safety and comfort. Once such a set of beliefs is in place, challenges to them are usually met with fight or flight responses. We argue in defense of our beliefs or flee from notions that contradict them. We are prone to denying ideas that contradict our beliefs any landing rights in our minds.

Much like Copernicus's repositioning of the earth from the center of the universe around which celestial bodies revolve, most people of that day could not "get it." As Albert Einstein said, "A problem cannot be solved in the same consciousness that produced it."

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The essays of David B. Wolfe are archived at <http://www.idrm.com>. Click on "Epistles from Reston" in the left-hand navigation box.

The website for David Wolfe's new book is [www.agelessmarketing.com](http://www.agelessmarketing.com). You can read the Introduction and Chapter One (pre-edited version) on that website.

## Cross Cultural Selling

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

I have traveled to Japan 9 times and sold tens of million of dollars of high technology production equipment to Japanese companies. I also negotiated an agreement with one of Japan's largest manufacturers of automatic printed circuit board assembly equipment for one of my previous companies to become their exclusive distributor in North America. That one deal resulted in many millions in sales for our company.

Our present company, High Probability Selling (HPS), has an office in Osaka where we train Japanese salespeople in the HPS selling process. We do change how we teach HPS to accommodate the Japanese. However, the only changes we make that we teach HPS in the Japanese language, and we do allow for the bowing that is a customary courtesy in Japan. The Japanese language edition of HPS, by Forest Publishing Company of Tokyo, is now one of the best-selling sales book in Japan.

I've also visited and sold to companies in Canada, Mexico, France, Germany, Italy, England, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, Malaysia, Korea, Taiwan, and China. HPS works just fine in all of those countries without any significant changes for local customs and cultures.

While we have clients that we've trained in Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, and South Africa via our Distance Learning program, I've only met them by telephone. Obviously HPS works in those countries, if only with the salespeople who buy our training services. Since they recommend HPS to their associates, we infer that it's probably working for them, too.

I know that most salespeople believe that their circumstances are very different and more difficult than the circumstances of most other salespeople. In fact, we often hear from people throughout the USA that HPS might work okay for people in other regions of the country, but it won't work in New York, or the Midwest, or the deep south, or where ever they are from. Yet, we've trained salespeople from almost every state in the USA, and it works equally well in all of them.

I don't mean to imply that HPS is perfect, or that it's the only sales process that is universally effective.

## Buying Decisions: Are They Logical or Emotional?

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

"No one ever got fired for buying IBM," has been repeated, believed and acted upon thousands of times. That is a clear indication of how the emotions rule decision-making. The emotions involved are security, recognition and self-esteem.

Here's another real world example:

Back in the early 1980's, mounting components on the surface of printed circuit boards, rather than through the boards, was a "new" design and manufacturing technology called Surface Mounting Technology (SMT). The company I was with at the time was one of the leaders in providing automated SMT assembly equipment.

One of our salespeople told me that a major electronics manufacturer in his territory had just assembled a 6-person task force to implement SMT. The task force was headed by their VP of Manufacturing Engineering. The other five members were from product design engineering, manufacturing, purchasing, quality assurance, and mechanical engineering. I told our salesperson to set up a one-hour appointment for us with just the VP. We went to visit him a few days later.

When we arrived, we were unexpectedly shown into a conference room next to the VP's office where all of the members of the team were waiting for us. On one wall there was a 5'X 8' white board which was being used as a decision matrix. It had the names of our leading competitors on the left, with the model numbers of their equipment and their specifications. Our company was listed on the left side at the bottom of the chart - we were the last one in - and there was room for our equipment and specifications to be listed. Across the top of the chart, a physical or performance specification and a "Factor of Importance" rating number headed each column for that spec. They asked us for the specifications of each model of machine we had for SMT.

I said that we understood we were to meet with the VP to discuss their plans and we weren't prepared to provide all of the machine specifications they required at this meeting. I said that we wanted to meet with each of them separately and learn what their most important concerns were, and that we would follow up with all of our physical and performance specifications within a few days. They agreed to meet with us separately, for about 40 minutes each. During each meeting I spent the first twenty minutes doing a Trust and Respect Inquiry. Fortunately, they all passed and I had developed a deep emotional Relationship of Mutual Trust and Respect with each of them.

During the next twenty minutes, I learned that all of them were most concerned that the equipment that they bought would be reliable, easily programmed, easily fixed or replaced, and would meet their accuracy and throughput requirements. At each of those individual meetings we gave them a copy of our standard specifications and told them we would come back in a few days with the other specs they required, which were not included in our standard spec sheets.

When we came back a few days later, we were shown into the same conference room. When we sat down, we noticed that our machines had the highest ratings on their decision matrix. We also noticed that the Factors of Importance rating numbers for the physical and performance specifications had been changed to favor our machines. Thus, they made a "logical" decision to buy our machines.

What really happened was they felt that they could rely on us to supply them with equipment that would do the job they needed done. It didn't have to be the best; it just had to be dependable and not jeopardize their jobs or their reputations. Again, the emotions involved were security, recognition and self-esteem.

## Close Effortlessly without Pressure or Anxiety

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

High Probability Closing is not an event. It's an integral part of the entire sales process. We define "closing" as Mutual Commitment. Therefore, we request the prospect's commitment at every step of the sales process, and we make corresponding commitments. We close throughout the entire sales process - typically between 25 and 45 times.

Closing starts when we set the appointment and then ask, "If we can meet all of your conditions of satisfaction for (this product or service), what will you do?" If the prospect doesn't reply with "I'll buy it," or words to that effect, we immediately cancel the appointment, for now. However, we will continue to call the prospect every three to four weeks until he/she is ready to make a conditional commitment.

Most salespeople set out to contact a large number of people who have an apparent need for their products and service. Their objective is to convince every one of them to grant them an appointment.

If we don't get a commitment at any step of the sales process, we determine whether the commitment that isn't accepted is a deal breaker. If so, we terminate the sales process (perhaps temporarily) and we leave. Why? Staying and pitching to a prospect who does not make commitments almost guarantees the following:

- The probability that the prospect will buy on that visit is highly unlikely.
- You're wasting your time and the prospect's, thereby creating resistance to yourself and diminished respect. That leaves them with a negative perception of you.
- If and when the prospect does decide to buy in the future, it's most likely that he/she will buy from a competitor.

Think about how you would react if you were the prospect. This salesperson has given you all the information you need to make a decision when you were not ready to buy. Though mildly annoyed, you listened to their entire sales pitch. Now, when you are ready to buy, isn't it likely that you will check what his/her competition has to offer? If the competitor's salesperson appears equally competent and seems to have as good a deal, who are you most likely to buy from? Will you buy from the salesperson who is there now, or will you have him/her leave and call back the one who you wouldn't buy from before?

However, if the prospect is ready to buy and we do arrive at mutual commitment throughout the initial sales process, we hardly ever encounter any "think it over" objections at the end. The prospect has just made dozens of commitments and affirmations of their intention to buy every feature, benefit and detriment of your product or service. At that point the prospect is anxious to consummate the sales process and get the benefits of your products and/or services. They have literally convinced themselves of the practicality of those decisions. The human mind operates like a self-validating computer. It does not doubt its own data.

People who utilize this process attain very high closing averages - per number of prospecting offers and per number of prospect visits.

## Top 10 Reasons Salespeople Fail

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by Jacques Werth

We studied how the Top One Percent of Salespeople in 23 industries actually sell. They earn more than the average CEO, yet they seldom work as long or as hard. Almost all of the Top 1% utilize a consistent sales process with all their prospects and customers. Most of them print out their sales process in questionnaire format so that they do not have to memorize anything. That way, they can focus all of their attention on their prospects, rather than thinking about their next question or the next step in their sales process.

We have also studied how most of the other 99% of salespeople actually sell. Most of what they do is in direct opposition to how the Top 1% sell.

1. Most salespeople don't prospect efficiently, effectively and enjoyably. (See my previous article, "Top 10 Tips for Prospecting Success".) Therefore, they spend most of their selling time with prospects who will not buy.
2. Most salespeople do not utilize a consistently effective sales process. Therefore, each sales opportunity is handled differently, based on what they are comfortable doing. Their results are hit or miss. The Top 1% consistently do what has the highest probability of producing high closing rates.
3. Most salespeople believe that their primary function is to persuade and convince prospects to buy their products and services. Therefore, they utilize manipulative persuasion tactics, which most prospects resent. That creates sales resistance and results in low closing rates. The Top 1% know that persuasion and convincing are obsolete sales tactics. They utilize selling tactics that are compatible with the way the human mind works.
4. Most salespeople fail to get a conditional commitment to do business at the beginning of the sales process. Therefore, they waste too much time with prospects that have no commitment to buy.
5. Most salespeople neglect to determine the exact buying intentions of their prospects, including what their financial capacity is, when the purchase will occur, who makes the final decisions, etc. Therefore, they spend too much time and resources on low probability prospects.
6. Most salespeople attempt to do what they call "building rapport." However, what they are really doing is trying to get the prospects to like them, which is an inherently manipulative process. Most prospects are far more concerned about whether they can trust and respect you. Therefore, you must learn how to immediately develop that kind of a relationship.
7. Most salespeople do "sales presentations," rather than determining what their prospect wants, and why. Therefore, their prospects feel neglected and disrespected.
8. Most salespeople close at the end of their sales process. Top salespeople start closing at the beginning of their sales process – as in item 4 above – and continue to close throughout the process, as many as thirty times. The sum of all those commitments adds up to a relaxed, no-pressure close.
9. Most salespeople learn a few techniques for "overcoming objections" which are largely Manipulative Rhetoric. Top salespeople eliminate almost all objections with their sales process.

10. Most salespeople are locked into old beliefs about selling. Therefore, when they try to improve, they only improve on what they already know. That can only result in small incremental improvements. Top salespeople look to make dramatic changes in their sales process in order to get major increases in their sales productivity.

## Top 10 Tips for Prospecting Success

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by Jacques Werth

To succeed in sales, you must be able to find and close a sufficient number of qualified prospects. That points up the reason most salespeople that do traditional "cold calling" fail. They fail because most of the appointments they make are with Low Probability Prospects who cannot be closed. Furthermore, their attempts to get an appointment with everyone they talk to causes so much resistance that most prospects will not talk to them again. That prevents them from developing a favorable relationship with most of their prospects.

The ability to prospect efficiently, effectively and enjoyably will enable you to meet with prospects that need, want and can afford your products and services- now. Your confidence will soar, and empower you to develop a consistently superior income stream.

Follow these 10 Tips for Prospecting Success:

1. Start with a highly targeted prospecting list, consisting of people or companies that are most likely to buy your type of products and services. Use a highly reputable list broker to find such a list. The cost should be no more than 25¢ per name. Start with a list of no more than 500 names. You cannot afford to develop your own list, unless you already have a book of business. In that case, call your existing customers as if they are new prospects.
2. Call every name on your list every 3-4 weeks. Understand that only a small percentage of your list will be ready to buy the first time that you call. Many more will be ready each successive time that you call. Most prospects will not want to meet with you until you have presented prospecting offers at least three times.
3. Present a "prospecting offer" of no more than 45 words that clearly states who you are, what you are selling, and two features of your product or service. Finish up with "Is that what you want?" Each time you call, change the two features. That will prevent most prospects from getting annoyed. It will also eliminate most of the rejection that is caused by traditional cold calling.
4. If the prospect says "No" or "I am not interested," you say "Okay, good bye." Do not press for an appointment. Do not try to engage the prospect in a conversation or ask any questions. That will be the most pleasant sales call they ever get. It will assure that less than 1% of the prospects will ask you not to call again.
5. Schedule your prospecting sessions for 3½ hours. Take a fifteen-minute break between each hour. That is more productive than five prospecting sessions of one hour each.
6. Tape yourself. Use a tape recorder with an open microphone to tape your side of each call. Start the tape when the prospect answers. Listen to how you sound. The goal is to hear yourself using your usual conversational tones. Do not try to sound like a professional salesperson. Do not come across as overly enthusiastic, unusually friendly or enticing. Just relax and present your offer without persuasion.
7. Always be in a "Disqualification" mode. Be determined to spend your selling time only with High Probability Prospects. Disqualify low probability prospects quickly and courteously. Don't allow desperation or anxiousness to deter you from that mission.

8. Accept the fact that prospecting really is a “numbers game.” The most important numbers are your Dials Per Hour and the ratio of prospecting Offers to Dials.
9. Keep accurate records of your prospecting sessions. We have trained thousands of salespeople to be successful prospectors. The most successful keep accurate records. The act of keeping records will cause your subconscious mind to constantly improve your results. Ask us to email the “High Probability Prospecting Activity Record” form to you if you need it.
10. Telephone prospecting is the most productive way to build up your sales volume, with very little up-front expense and a minimum of marketing expertise. Start with telephone prospecting, and eventually you will get so many referrals from your existing customers that you will need to get an assistant to do your prospecting for you.

## The Power of Good Timing

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by Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

Steve was very upset when he called me a couple of months ago. "I did exactly what you taught me. I made 1424 dials and presented 171 prospecting offers. I got two appointments and I only made one sale. Am I doing something wrong, or doesn't High Probability Prospecting work in the insurance industry?"

How long did it take Steve to make those 1400+ calls?

"About thirty hours, over a period of three weeks."

How much time did he spend with the two appointments that resulted from all that dialing?

"About 7 hours."

How much commission did Steve make on the sale that he closed?

"About \$1,600," he reported.

So, Steve made \$1,600 for about a weeks' work- not too bad for a beginner. He averaged about \$43/hour.

"It's not very good, either," was his response, still quite upset. "What am I doing wrong?"

"Nothing that a little more experience won't fix," I told him. I suggested that he continue calling his list for another couple of weeks. Then, when he reached the end of the list, he should call the people at the beginning of the list again, this time with a different prospecting offer for the same product.

Steve calmed down and agreed to do that.

A month later Steve called again. "Well, I made 1537 calls in the past month, and presented 174 offers, mostly to the same people that I had called a month earlier. I made appointments with 5 High Probability Prospects, and closed 2 of them."

Steve was not complaining: He made \$3,300 for about 50 hours of work- averaging about \$66/hour. Then, he quit his other job! "Did I get that much better in one month?" he wondered.

Steve did not get that much better in one month- although there is no question that he improved considerably. The Power of Good Timing also contributed to the dramatic improvement in his results. Now that he can work at his insurance business full-time, he should be able to triple last month's income.

"Being in the right place at the right time" is NOT just luck when you use High Probability Prospecting. It's vital to remember that people become High Probability Prospects in their own time, for their own reason.

When you are calling a good, targeted list, most of the prospects WILL become High Probability Prospects eventually- Prospects that are ready to buy what you're selling- now. That's why we train

salespeople to repeatedly contact their prospects, usually about once a month. You want to ensure that you are there when they're ready to buy.

Steve sells insurance. In the month that lapsed between his first and second calls to prospects, it's likely that some of them experienced life-changing events, such as weddings, births, raises and promotions, business ownership, job changes, new homes, college tuition, deaths, etc. Any of those occurrences may have compelled some of them to want what he was offering- right now. That's the Power of Good Timing.

In High Probability Prospecting, Good Timing is a factor in successful selling. Here's another: The Difference between Cold-Calling and Warm Calling.

The first time Steve contacted his list with a High Probability Prospecting Offer, he was a stranger making a cold-call. When they said "I'm not interested," he said "Okay, good-bye." He heard them, accepted their answer, and immediately disqualified them. That left the prospects with a good experience.

The second time Steve called he was no longer a stranger, he was making a warm-call. And, he presented a new offer, with two additional features. In the month between calls, some of the people he had originally made offers to had been considering that maybe they did want insurance: The combination of the 'warm' call, a life-changing occurrence, and the new offer compelled some of them to meet with him.

In High Probability Prospecting, Good Timing IS a powerful factor - but it is rarely due to luck. Salespeople who methodically and systematically apply the principles of High Probability Prospecting routinely find themselves in the "Right Place at the Right Time".

## Telephone Prospecting- Is It a Waste of Time?

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By Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

Whenever I speak to a large group of salespeople about the enormous success that can result from telephone prospecting, I get several immediate, impassioned rebuttals from members of the audience. The typical rebuttal is, "Cold calling is a waste of time."

Cold calling *\*is\** (mostly) a waste of time! As we all know, cold calling is an onerous task. It is unpleasant and loaded with rejection - personal rejection.

Why does cold calling inevitably lead to rejection? It takes lots of determination and motivation to call a large number of strangers and try to get them to give you an appointment, so that you can try to sell them something that they don't already want. When you prospect that way, you're putting a great deal of pressure on yourself, and you're pressuring most of the people you call. It's natural that most of them reject you. This is referred to as "cold calling," because most of the people you call never want to hear from you again. Thus, you must continuously be making cold calls to new prospects.

However, when I say Telephone Prospecting, I am not talking about cold calling. Yes, the first call you make to everyone on your list is a cold-call. However, that call is extremely short, and creates no pressure. You make an offer, the prospect responds with either 'Yes' or 'No', and you gladly accept whichever answer you get.

Every call you make after that first call is a "warm call": None of them is likely to result in rejection, as long as you change the wording of your prospecting offer each time you call. They'll either respond "Yes" or "No" to your offers. No pressure, no manipulation, no Rhetorical questions- your response to 'No' is just a quick "Okay, goodbye."

Keep calling your list every few weeks with an offer, until they are ready to buy. When a prospect is ready to buy, they become a High Probability Prospect. If you're calling a precisely targeted list that contains people likely to want your type of product or service, prospects will become High Probability Prospects for their own reasons, in their own time.

### *Telephone Prospecting- Time Well Spent that Gets Results*

People that are not ready to buy now will be happy to take your calls because they are short, pleasant and informative.

Because of the frequent, positive contacts, when they think of your type of products and services your name will be at the "front of their minds."

You will make appointments only with people that are ready willing and able to buy now. Your selling cycle for each prospect will be short.

Your closing rates will dramatically increase.

## The Importance of Prospecting Lists

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By Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

As many sales managers and salespeople have discovered, the accuracy of your prospecting list is of utmost importance.

When we buy lists for our own use, or for client companies, we utilize skilled list brokers. The standard commissions that list brokers get paid from list owners are 15 to 20 percent. That commission rate doesn't even cover their costs - unless you buy at least 10,000 names. Therefore, we often pay the broker research fees and/or service fees - in addition to the cost of the list - usually from \$100 to \$500.

Some list brokers also maintain lists for list owners. They typically wholesale those lists to other list brokers, and retail them to list users. We try to avoid using those brokers because they make a lot more money when they sell a list that they maintain. Therefore, some may tend to be biased to steer end users into the lists that they maintain.

One good reason to use a good list brokerage firm is they can do what you can't do. They can utilize the lists of several different trade publications in order to supply you with a custom list. They have the software and knowledge to de-dupe multiple lists from several list owners. In the event that two lists have different phone numbers for the same prospect, you can request both. You only pay for the number of names that you receive.

The cost of your list might be 2 to 3 times higher than you have been paying. However, the improved accuracy of the list should convert to several additional High Probability Prospects per month. What is that worth to you?

## No More Cold-Calling? Well, Almost...

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

We do not advocate cold calling in High Probability Selling. However, cold calling is necessary at times.

You do need prospective clients and customers: If you don't have a customer list from which to solicit referrals, and you also lack an advertising/marketing budget, cold-calling to a highly targeted list is the fastest route to finding High Probability Prospects.

A High Probability Prospect is one who wants, needs, can afford, and is ready to buy your product or service- now. Those who only want, need, and can afford- but are not ready to buy now- are prospects that you'll continue to contact in the future.

How does Cold Calling fit into High Probability Prospecting?

When you start to call your list, initial contacts will be cold calls: Only first-time calls are cold calls in High Probability Prospecting. A truly effective prospecting campaign requires that you call the same list every 3 to 4 weeks, so after a short period of time, most of your calls will be warm calls. A higher percentage of the people on your list will say "Yes" to your prospecting offer with each successive call.

### **5 Simple rules for maximum effectiveness and maximum efficiency:**

1. Don't repeat the same prospecting offer more frequently than every third call.
2. Your offer must be no longer than 45 words, describing your product/service and mentioning two if its features.
3. Your prospecting offer must clearly request a "Yes" or "No" answer.
4. When prospects say "No," you say, "Okay, good-bye."
5. When prospects say "Yes," you say, "Why?"

With practice, you should be able to make at least 50 dials per hour. You'll find an increasing number of High Probability Prospects with each pass through your list. You'll be on your way to making appointments with people who are ready to buy what you're selling- right now.

High Probability Prospecting won't eliminate cold-calling entirely. You will, however, be making relatively fewer Cold Calls. You'll also eliminate most of the Rejection associated with cold-calling.

## Why Traditional Cold Calling Doesn't Work

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

Most people who use the term "Cold Calling" believe that all telephone prospecting is "cold calling." As the name implies, you call each prospect only once, trying to sell your way into an appointment. It's the kind of prospecting that most salespeople do, and usually hate to do.

What's wrong with traditional cold-calling?

Prospects don't like to be cold-called any more than you like calling them. Because you're pushing so hard for an appointment, they feel wary and defensive. As a result, they push back angrily, they refuse to give you an appointment, and you feel rejected.

Perhaps, if a prospect sounds "interested," you will try a second call, and try again to sell an appointment. Most prospects don't want you to call them again, and will reject your request for an appointment, again. Therefore, few prospects will get that second call, and even fewer a third call. If you do get appointments with reluctant prospects, you'll only close a small percentage of them.

### **REAL Prospects Really Buy!**

A High Probability Prospect (HPP) is someone who needs, wants, and can afford to buy your product or service, now. There are more HPPs than you can ever find the time to meet with—yet most salespeople don't know they exist.

### **High Probability Prospecting**

In the HPP process, the objective is to determine whether each person you talk to wants what you're selling, now. Each call takes an average of 35 seconds: they either want to buy, or they don't. If they don't, just say "Okay, good bye," and call the next prospect. Those who don't say "Yes" today are more likely to say "Yes," the next time that you call. Most of those who say "Yes," without being persuaded, will also buy without being persuaded.

### **"Warm Calling"**

In High Probability Prospecting, we call our prospecting list every three to four weeks. After the initial call, each time you call a prospect is a "warm call." Each time you call your targeted prospecting list, you'll get better results than the last time you called that list – if you're not trying to sell appointments. Most sales are made to people after they have heard numerous High Probability prospecting offers.

People become HPPs in their own time, for their own reasons. It's seldom because you convinced them that they have an urgent need for your product or service during a prospecting call. Just because you want to sell now doesn't mean that a prospect wants to buy now.

Referring to the High Probability Prospecting process as "cold calling" is inaccurate. The vast majority of calls you make in HPP are "warm" calls. The HPP process has rendered Traditional Cold Calling techniques obsolete.

### **Get Results from Cold-Calling and Prospecting**

The High Probability Prospecting process is revealed in our book "High Probability Selling." High Probability Prospecting is taught only by certified High Probability Selling instructors. They assist you in customizing the process for your products and services.

## **High Probability Prospecting – Some Basics Easy, Effective, Efficient, and Enjoyable!**

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

It is 100% certain that at any given time, a small percentage of the population wants to buy your products and services. We call them "High Probability Prospects".

### Finding High Probability Prospects

What's the exact percentage ready and willing to buy? It depends on the product or service. It also depends on the effectiveness of marketing efforts; bulls-eye, targeted marketing yields a higher percentage of high probability prospects.

How can you hit the bulls-eye with your prospecting? Find out the demographics of the highest probability prospects - data on average customers and profiles of the largest customers. Ask the Product Managers at companies you represent for these demographics. These demographics are profiles of your High Probability Prospects.

High Probability Prospects are not people who are merely "interested" in what you have to sell. They are likely to want what you sell. It's just as easy to find people who want to buy as it is to find people who have to be persuaded. However, the former are much easier to close.

Once you match up your products with the right prospecting list, call them all. Never mind introducing yourself, or using any kind of "sales pitch". Just tell them:

1. Who you are and who you represent;
2. What you're selling;
3. Two features (not benefits) of the product or service;
4. Ask if it's what they WANT.

Follow that outline. Be sure your entire offer is no more than 45 words.  
Don't waste time with low probability prospects

If the prospect says "no," you say "Okay, good bye." Wait for them to say "good bye," hang up, and immediately dial the next one on your list.

If the prospect says "Yes," you say "Why?" If they have a good reason, make an appointment. If they are only "interested", don't. Remember not to use the word "interested" in your offer, since "interested" implies a lack of commitment and a low probability of buying.

If a prospect wants you to send literature, get their email address and send a standard file with a standard cover note. Don't put anything in the mail. Call back within 5 days and present a different prospecting offer for the same product or service.

Do not leave voice mails. You will sell less and add to your frustration if you do.

Be systematic. Keep good records.

Keep records of every offer that you make, including the specific number of the offer, the date, and the time. You need that information because you'll call the same list at least every 4 weeks. If you don't reach the prospect, no notes are necessary.

Make a different offer each time you contact a prospect. Your offer can be for the same product, but change it to include two different features. Or, your offer can be for another product. The important thing is "not to" present the same offer to the same people each time you call.

The average person using this method dials 67 calls an hour. Some dial as many as 100 per hour. Depending on your prospecting list and the time you're calling, you can make offers to between 10 and 35 percent of the people you try to reach.

Over 2,000 people have learned this prospecting process and most of them are still using it. It's easy, effective, efficient and enjoyable. And, it eliminates almost all of the rejection created by traditional prospecting methods.

# Eliminate the Fear of Cold Calling and Rejection

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

I've never met a salesperson who did not experience a fear of cold calling at one time or another. Almost all of them have their reasons for being reluctant to make cold calls, and most of them have no idea what really causes it. There are two basic reasons for the fear of cold calling. Both are easy to cure if you know how.

## 1. The Experience of Repeated Failure

Most salespeople set out to contact a large number of people who have an apparent need for their products and service. Their objective is to convince every one of them to grant them an appointment.

Let's assume that you contact 50 people a day and average 2 appointments. In your business, that may be a very good result. Nevertheless, you have the experience of repeated failure because you tried to convince all of them and you failed to meet your objective of 48 out of 50 calls.

The Cure - Change Your Objective. Your new objective is to make appointments only with High Probability Prospects - and to disqualify everyone else. Make fifty calls and be clear that you'll only make an appointment if the prospect wants what you're selling. If the prospect doesn't want what you're selling, terminate the call quickly and courteously. You now have the experience of succeeding in your objective 50 times out of 50 calls.

## 2. Fear of Rejection.

Most salespeople have a prospecting "pitch" which is designed to interest, entice, excite, convince and persuade people to give them appointments. They have a string of questions to get the prospect involved and interested in meeting them. Every question that they ask increases the prospect's sales resistance. Thus, negative reactions to their methods grow very quickly.

Most prospects react to any prospecting pitch defensively. Their sales resistance is aroused as soon as they hear your warm greeting and your friendly, enthusiastic, professional pitch. The more skillful you are in keeping them talking and listening, the more they become wary and annoyed. Eventually, many of them become non-communicative, or too busy to talk, or abrupt, or sarcastic, or otherwise negative. All of these reactions cause most salespeople to feel rejected.

Almost all sales managers and trainers tell you that you're not being rejected, that the prospects are merely declining the offer of your products or services. Why then do almost all salespeople feel rejected? Are you too sensitive, too thin-skinned?

Think about it. Who do you trust? Is it the sales manager who wants you to keep on going until you become insensitive to the rejection? Or do you trust your own perceptions, your feelings of rejection? Are all other salespeople who feel the rejection also wrong? No, you feel rejected, personally rejected, because you are being rejected. That rejection is caused by the normal defensive reactions that everyone has against being persuaded to do something they don't already want to do. If you want to eliminate rejection you must change the way you prospect.

THE CURE - See 1, above.

**THE RESULTS** - No more fear of cold calling and no more wasted time with low probability prospects.

## "Interested" Prospects and Random Negative Reinforcement

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By Jacques Werth, President  
High Probability® Selling

"Interested" is one of the most common words that salespeople use in their prospecting and selling activities. If you can eliminate that word from your sales vocabulary and replace it with the word "want," your volume of closed sales will rapidly increase. In most cases, just changing that one word can increase sales by up to 25 percent. This is easy to explain, and very difficult for most salespeople to do. Here's why.

Closing is all about mutual commitment. However, commitment can be either positive or negative. Rather than ask for a commitment and allow for the possibility that the commitment may be negative, most salespeople avoid asking for a commitment. Instead, they ask prospects if they are "interested" - because they don't want to hear "No." And, their prospects often say they're "interested" - because they don't want to say "Yes." Then, you have two people spending a lot of time with no commitment - except the salesperson provides his time and expertise without compensation. Those salespeople are hoping that they will be able to persuade those interested prospects to buy.

Obviously, sometimes interested prospects actually do buy - but not very often. On average, salespeople close 17 percent of their appointments. In many industries closing rates are much lower. However, most salespeople keep hoping that they'll get better at persuading interested prospects to buy. That's referred to as "Random Negative Reinforcement." When you're doing something that has a small probability of producing a positive result, an occasional payoff will get most people to keep doing it.

The vast majority of people who keep putting their money in slot machines will lose all of their money in a short time. The lure of the big win combined with a few small wins keeps them hooked. They keep hoping that they'll become more skillful and learn how to beat the odds. That's the principle that enables gambling casinos to earn billions of dollars a year. That's also the principle that causes most people who go into the sales profession to fail or continue while earning meager wages.

If you only spend your time with prospects that want what you're selling and who will make a commitment to buy if it meets their requirements you have broken the pattern of Random Negative Reinforcement. That can change your life.

But, how can you get people to make a commitment to buy during a prospecting call? Stop asking them if they are interested in a benefit of your product or service. Stop asking them if they are interested in meeting with you to see whether they are interested in eliminating their pain. Instead, describe your product or service and tell them about a couple of its performance features. Then, ask if it is something they want. If it is something they want, they'll also commit to an appointment. If it's not something they want, they'll say "No," or "I'm not interested." If you quickly terminate the call, it will save you so much time that you'll be able to contact many more prospects. That will enable you to find more of those prospects that already want the benefits of your type of products or services.

Now, you may say, "But I don't have that many prospects that I can afford to bypass anyone. I have to try to sell them all." That may be true. However, it's also a matter of timing. The best time to visit with a prospect is when they are ready to buy (or specify) your type of product or service. If you visit with prospects when they are not ready to buy, your chances of selling them then are very small - and your chances of selling them in the future are even worse. When that prospect does become ready to buy, they're much more likely to contact one of your competitors to compare what they have with

your offering. At that time, they're much more receptive to what the competitor has to say, because they're ready to buy. It's then most likely that they'll buy from a competitor. If you wait to visit them until they are ready to buy, it's most likely that you will be the one who will get their business.

You should stay in touch with a large number of prospects by frequently calling them all. For most industries, the best frequency is every 4 weeks. Each time you call your prospects you should present them with a different prospecting offer than the previous one. That will minimize the likelihood of them being annoyed with your calls. New information isn't annoying unless it's used for manipulative purposes. Each time you call you must be willing to accept "No" for the answer and be willing to move on to your next call, quickly. Each successive time that you call, you increase your chances of contacting the prospects that want to buy.

High Probability Selling is a leading sales training and sales consulting company founded in 1989. While High Probability Selling principles may seem quite radical, they have been proven to be highly successful on hundreds of thousands of sales calls by salespeople in over seventy industries.

## Monkeys, Bananas and Sales Management

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Adapted by Jacques Werth, original source unknown  
High Probability® Selling

Start with a cage containing five monkeys.

Inside the cage, hang a banana on a string, and place a set of stairs under it. Before long, a monkey will go to the stairs and start to climb towards the banana. As soon as he touches the stairs, spray that monkey and all of the other monkeys with cold water.

After a while, another monkey makes an attempt, with the same result- all the monkeys are sprayed with cold water. Pretty soon, when another monkey tries to climb the stairs, the other monkeys will attack that monkey in order to prevent it.

Now, put away the cold water. Remove one monkey from the cage, and replace it with a new one. The new monkey sees the banana and wants to climb the stairs. To his surprise and horror, all of the other monkeys attack him. After another attempt and attack, he knows that if he tries to climb the stairs, he will be assaulted.

Next, remove another of the original five monkeys and replace it with a new one. The newcomer goes to the stairs, and is attacked. The previous newcomer takes part in the punishment with enthusiasm!

Likewise, replace a third original monkey with a new one, then a fourth, then the fifth. Every time the newest monkey takes to the stairs, it is attacked.

Most of the monkeys that are beating him have no idea why they were not permitted to climb the stairs, nor why they are participating in the beating of the newest monkey.

After replacing all of the original monkeys, none of the remaining monkeys has ever been sprayed with cold water, nor do they know why they behave that way. Nevertheless, no monkey ever again approaches the stairs to try for the banana. Why not? Because as far as they know, that's the way it's always been done around here.

And that, my friends, is how many a company's sales practices have developed.

## A Different Spin on Consultative Selling

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by Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

Consultative Selling and its cousin, SPIN selling, are newer generations of the "Needs Selling" of the 1960's. They have been in vogue with salespeople for almost two decades - with good reason. In today's business climate, Information Overload isn't just a buzzword; people are overwhelmed with data. They may welcome assistance in tuning out the noise in order to tune into a viable solution to their problems. A concerned, helpful salesperson may understandably be embraced as an Advisor or Consultant.

The Consultative Selling Process appears well-suited to the needs and challenges of today's customers. Yet, in my opinion, consultative selling is most often implemented in such a way that it's merely a new name for the same old manipulative sales games.

Let's start with nomenclature: A salesperson who refers to her- self as an Advisor or Consultant is essentially misrepresenting her true agenda - to earn a commission. A salesperson's primary objective is NOT to 'help' her clients and customers- she wants to make money. If receiving money for her sales efforts were not possible, she would be doing some other kind of work.

Real consultants and advisors charge a fee for their advice. Good advisors make \*their client's\* best interests paramount. How many salespeople frequently advise their clients not to buy their product or service, or to buy from their competitors?

By implication, advising encompasses full disclosure, including warnings about the 'down' sides of choosing an option. Most salespeople are very good at explaining the features and benefits of their products and services. How many salespeople disclose the detriments as well - without a prospect's prompting? Those salespeople say that their job is to emphasize the positives. Some even acknowledge that they are telling "half-truths". However, it is deceptive and unethical to "lie by omission". For the typical salesperson, it's just "part of the game."

This same old sales game is often dressed up as "Probing for Problems and Solutions" in order to help the prospect. In reality, anything we sell must meet some of the prospect's needs. It may be an explicit business need, such as reducing the volume of paperwork, or an executive's implicit want, such as possessing the latest "must-have" gadget. There's nothing wrong with selling something that someone wants to buy. However, it is deceptively manipulative to "probe for hidden problems" and "identify hidden pain" without disclosing your intentions, which are to \*persuade\* a prospect that your product or service will alleviate their newly discovered Pain. Furthermore, it is a very difficult and ineffective way to sell.

There is no probing for hidden needs in High Probability Selling. We won't even give prospects an appointment if they merely know what their needs are, and are "really interested" in meeting with us. In High Probability Selling, we distinguish between Want and Need.

A small portion of the universe of businesses and/or people will need our product/service in the relatively near future. Those that want our product/service- right now- are High Probability Prospects. We will schedule appointments with them now.

Those who will want our product in the future are part of the viable prospect universe. Many of them will become High Probability Prospects in their own time, for their own reasons. The essential

difference between Consultative Selling and High Probability Selling is that we don't attempt to persuade, convince, or manipulate those prospects into Wanting. Selling that way almost always results in low closing averages. Although many may need what we're selling, most will not buy until they decide they Want It Now. It's not just semantics- a prospect either wants what we're selling, or they don't.

Another distinction between High Probability Selling and "consultative selling" is Total Disclosure. In HPS, honesty and transparency are core tenets of the sales process. We trust and respect prospects, and require that prospects treat us with trust and respect as well. Practically speaking, we divulge the detriments as well as the benefits of our product/service. In turn, prospects must fully disclose their Wants, or requirements for doing business. At each step of the sales process, the prospect explicitly states their conditions for doing business, and agrees to purchase, if we can meet their requirements.

Ironically, salespeople who implement High Probability Selling usually act as advisors. Like a trusted advisor, High Probability salespeople practice total disclosure, divulging both the strengths and weaknesses of their offerings. Because we never pressure prospects into becoming buying customers, the selling process is relatively stress-free, as dealing with a trusted consultant should be.

What kind of salesperson are you? If you're still pressuring and manipulating, this is probably reflected in your low closing rate. You may be playing the same old sales game while dressing yourself up as a Consultant. Maybe it's time for you to get real about who you are and what you do.

## Poison Words: The Top 6 Words that Sabotage Sales

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by Jacques Werth

One of the quickest ways to turn off your sales prospects is to use Poison Words. Poison Words are words or phrases that trigger suspicion, mistrust and loss of respect. Ironically, several Poison Words are part of traditional sales techniques and are intended to create trust and "build rapport." Chances are that you're inadvertently sabotaging your sales with one or more of these Poison Words!

### Interested

Interested is the word that salespeople use when they don't want to hear "No." Interested is the word that prospects use when they don't want to say "Yes." There is no commitment in interest.

People are "interested" in all sorts of things: Information on lavish vacations, luxury homes, high-end cars, space travel, etc. Interested people enjoy gathering information. That does not mean that they intend to buy anything.

A High Probability Prospect is not merely interested. They need, want and can afford to buy what you're selling, now. Don't waste time with prospects that are "interested," but not in the market to buy, Now.

### Help

Teachers, nurses, and social workers are in Helping Professions. Accountants, Engineers, Carpenters, Bulldozer Manufacturers and Salespeople are not. They provide products and services in order to generate revenues and/or commissions. Prospects know this. When you claim to be there merely to "help" the prospect, you instill doubt and suspicion.

### "Honestly" or "To Tell the Truth"

What happens when you say, "To be honest with you..."? You provoke this thought: "Oh, so now you going to be honest... was the rest all lies and distortions?"

In High Probability Selling, Trust and Respect are fundamental to the relationship with prospects and customers. Being consistently forth-coming is not just "the best policy"- it's crucial to successful selling.

### Just

"I just wanted to let you know..." or "Just fifteen minutes of your time." What does the word "just" imply in sales situations? You seem to be trivializing your communication in order to disarm the prospect. You're minimizing the importance of your products and services, and your own time. If someone is truly in the market for your product or service, it's an important priority for them. Don't trivialize yourself or your prospects' needs.

### Thank You

While gratitude in a business situation is occasionally warranted, "Thank You" is one of the phrases most over-used, abused, and rendered meaningless by salespeople. There is no need to thank prospects for their time and attention. If someone is a High Probability Prospect, they

want, need, and can afford what you're selling- and they want to talk to you. They want to do business. Repeatedly thanking prospects and customers implies a subservient, begging, position, which will cause a loss of respect for you. It's a great way to sabotage sales and lose business.

### **Great!**

The prospect says he wants you to visit him to discuss one of your products or services, and you say, "Great!" Or, the prospect says she is in the market for your kind of product and you say, "Great!" You sound as if you are desperate, or perhaps have a warped sense of values. The prospect is bound to wonder, "Is it 'great' because you rarely get those types of reactions?" Or maybe you equate getting an order with having a baby or ending a war. If you are a professional salesperson, doing your job is not 'great!,' it is routine.

Look over these Top 6 Poison Words. You'll notice a couple of themes: 1) Phoniness and 2) a Subservient/Begging Posture. If you perceive someone to be insincere and phony, do you want to do business with them? If someone grovels towards you, what is your reaction?

In High Probability Selling, we have a list of 30 Poison Words, and we train salespeople to eliminate them from their vocabulary. Fake bonhomie, false concern, and manipulative patter are hallmarks of the stereotypical salesperson. Any words that create mistrust, manipulate prospects or indicate insincerity quash potential sales.

People want to do business with people they can trust and respect. The words you choose can arouse suspicion, or they can reflect a posture of trust and respect. Choose your words carefully!

## Being "Right" vs. Being Rich

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by Jacques Werth

As a former turn-around manager and consultant, with a Masters in Financial Management, I went into eleven failing businesses and made ten of them highly successful. What did the failing businesses have in common? Top management tended to diligently defend their management methods, the ones that had brought them to the brink of failure. In other words, the managers subconsciously chose being right over being rich.

At each failing company, I established mandatory sales training programs, incorporating the sales process that eventually became known as High Probability Selling. All salespeople were required to participate in the training, except the top two or three. It was optional for the top performers.

What was the common thread among these diverse sales organizations? Only about half of the salespeople were willing to change their sales beliefs or methods. Those that did quickly increased their sales volume and their compensation; those that did not soon left those companies.

Undoubtedly, some of the people who would not, or could not, learn a new sales process just did not have the "right stuff"- the attributes, talent or motivation to become a highly successful salesperson. But, most did. They just refused to change the way they sell. I have never been able to figure out why a large percentage of salespeople, those who have the right attributes to become successful, get stuck in false beliefs about "what works" in sales, and reject any other way of thinking.

One of the challenges we face in teaching High Probability Selling is that most salespeople believe that they need to improve their ability to persuade people to buy an expensive product or service that they did not already want. In other words, they believe that a salesperson is supposed to convince other people to change their minds.

According to our research, only a tiny fraction of salespeople can consistently get prospects to change their minds. Not sure? Just think about how difficult it is for you to convince yourself to do something that you do not already want to do.

When you utilize the High Probability Selling process, you will only meet with prospects that already want your type of product or service. You will do business with them on the basis of Mutual Trust, Mutual Respect and Mutual Commitments. Are you capable of that kind of change? Are you ready?

So, where do you stand? Are you fulfilling or exceeding sales projections? If the answer is "No," ask yourself "Why?" If you question whether your product or service, and its positioning, is the problem, just look around. Are there other salespeople in your industry earning a very nice living? If not, move on. If so, you'd better make a major change in what you are doing. Don't fall into the trap of "being right" instead of being rich!

## A Clearly Defined Sales Process Yields Big Results

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by Jacques Werth

For my first college degree, in 1955, I majored in Industrial Sales. What they taught back then was called "Needs Selling." Needs Selling was the first "scientific" selling system because it was based on psychological research. It worked better than any previous selling system. More importantly, it worked far better than no structured selling system at all. Needs Selling gradually evolved into Consultative Selling, which does not work very well anymore.

### **Other Things That Do Not Work Very Well Any More:**

#### 1. Becoming a "Trusted Advisor"

During the seventeen years that I have been in the Sales Training business, I have seen thousands of salespeople struggling to become trusted advisors. They say that will enable them to help prospects with their problem situations.

When you cast yourself in the role of a Trusted Advisor, your persona will not ring true, unless you are dealing with someone that wants your advice and is willing to use it. No matter how honorable your intentions, it is highly unlikely that you can get people to accept your advice when the problems that you can solve are not top priorities for them. It is also highly unlikely that you can convince them that those problems should be top priorities.

When you are trying to persuade and convince people to do something that they do not already want to do, most will resist. If you persist, their resistance will increase and they will not trust you. Furthermore, you are intruding on their time, and therefore in their lives. Thus, it is more likely to establish yourself in their minds as an annoyance.

#### 2. Wowing Prospects with Technical Brilliance or Product Knowledge

Few salespeople succeed based on their product knowledge or technical brilliance.

#### 3. Building Rapport

"Rapport-Building is an inherently manipulative process. Rapport-building techniques may get prospects to like you, but they will also lower their level of trust in you, as well as their respect for you. Rapport Building "feels good," but lowers the probability of closing the sale. Trust in the salesperson is the #1 factor in Buying Decisions.

#### 4. Developing Your Own Sales Process

Many salespeople are trying to develop their own sales methods based on what they think will work. Many are trying to adapt Consultative Selling methods to what they feel comfortable doing. Those objectives are contrary to what works best in selling. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that the attempt will result in an effective sales process. That is why most salespeople fail, or fail to attain the level of success that they want.

Your best chance for outstanding success is to become as skilled as the top salespeople in your industry. For most salespeople, that means dealing with a new learning experience that, in the beginning, may be quite uncomfortable.

## **What Does Work? Abandon the Idea that Prospects Need to Be Educated**

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By Jacques Werth

The Market for every product and service has changed radically in the last 35 years. Since the 1980's, the advent of desktop computers fueled an explosion of all communications media. The wide adoption of the Internet greatly increased that information flow. We are now bombarded with information about every conceivable subject. That condition is called Information Overload. Now, the need to educate prospects has been largely eliminated.

Information Overload has created a niche market that we call High Probability Prospects. These people already know that they want the benefits that your products and services can provide.

Prospect like the Top 1% The Top 1% of Salespeople change their selling process to suit current market conditions. They are no longer looking for prospects that merely need the benefits of their products and services, nor are they willing to spend their time educating "interested" prospects. They now concentrate their efforts on finding prospects that: 1) already want the benefits of their products and services, and 2) are ready, willing and able to buy now.

This takes the pressure off the prospect and the producer, giving them the best chance of successfully doing business together. It also eliminates most of the time spent doing "Needs Analyses" and preparing proposals for prospects that will not buy. Thus, most of your time is spent working with people that are genuine prospects.

### **Practice Full Disclosure**

Top sales producers practice total disclosure with no hidden agendas. They do not try to fool their prospects, or themselves, about their own primary motivation: To earn money for themselves by providing valuable services for their customers.

Salespeople who persist in Rapport Building, Overcoming Objections, and Closing Techniques are utilizing an outdated selling paradigm that is not effective in today's market. Those "selling techniques" leave success to chance, and that chance is low.

If you want to dramatically increase your probability of success, you must learn the selling skills that are most likely to yield the results that you want. In High Probability Selling, we know what works: Every step of the sales process is statistically validated to produce the most sales volume in the shortest time.

These new, highly effective selling skills are not easy to learn. Ultimately, you must learn them, or find another way to make a living. In order to achieve outstanding success, you must decide how you will make it happen, and when.

## Top Producers - How They Get There

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by Jacques Werth  
High Probability® Selling

It is often said that top salespeople work longer, harder and smarter than salespeople that are merely "successful." That theory doesn't work. Top Producers - the top 1% - regularly earn from 5 to 15 times more than the typical successful salesperson. No one can work 5 to 15 times longer, harder, and smarter than the typical successful salesperson.

Others say that Top Producers do what ordinary salespeople will not do. That is a bit closer to reality.

Top Producers fully understand that in order to get dramatically better results, they must make dramatic changes in the way that they sell. They must do what others won't even try.

Examples:

The typical successful salesperson tries to get appointments with all prospects that may need their products and services. Top producers do not make appointments with prospects that merely need what they are selling. Genuine prospects need and want what you're selling.

The typical successful salesperson knows how to qualify their prospects. Top producers diligently disqualify all but the high probability prospects - prospects that are ready, willing, and able to buy.

The typical successful salesperson knows how to "build rapport," creating pleasant and superficial interactions. Top producers develop deep relationships based upon mutual trust and respect. They do not do business with people they cannot trust.

The typical successful salesperson knows techniques designed to overcome objections. Top producers eliminate almost all objections.

The typical successful salesperson does an impressive presentation. Top producers conduct a thorough, linear sales process, with the prospect doing most of the talking.

The typical successful salesperson knows how to recognize "buying signals." When they occur, s/he tries to close the sale. Top producers ask for conditional commitments to buy - early and often.

The typical successful salesperson knows effective closing techniques, and applies them when they think the prospect is ready. Top producers overtly ask closing questions at least twenty times, until the prospect closes the sale himself.

The typical successful salesperson wants to know how to do what he already does better than he/she is doing it now. That is called "incremental improvement." Top salespeople want to make dramatic improvements in how they sell. That is called "sales process transformation."

Do you really want to become one of The Best in the Business? It's likely that you'll have to dramatically change the way you think about Selling and the Sales Process. The road from Typical Salesperson to The Best is an exciting, uncomfortable journey to outstanding success. When you're willing and able to transform the way you sell, you're a candidate for High Probability Sales Training.