



FRANK J. RUMBAUSKAS JR.

THE DEATH OF SELLING

**Why Selling Is Dead
in Today's Economy**

www.NeverColdCall.com

The Death Of Selling

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1. Is Selling Really Dead?
2. What is selling, anyway?
3. The Death of Cold Calling
4. Why Almost Everything You've Been Taught Doesn't Work Anymore
5. The Fallacy of Traditional Networking
6. The Fallacy of Traditional Referral Selling
7. Top Sales Pros Don't Sell

Is Selling Really Dead?

The short answer is ... yes!

I know what you're thinking – that you sell for a living, and therefore selling cannot be dead. After all, you and nine million other people in the United States alone are professional salespeople, not to mention the many millions more around the world!

If selling is dead, you'd be out of a job, right?

Wrong!

You see, for decades, thousands upon thousands of salespeople have been selling. Consumers and business owners alike are constantly confronted with selling. Think about it ... in today's world, it's practically impossible to get through a single day without someone trying to sell us something!

Even when I watch television or surf the Internet in the privacy of my own home, I'm hit with nonstop sales pitches. They're actually starting to appear on our cell phones.

There's no escape from the endless noise of selling.

Here's the catch: In today's economy, selling is a dying art. It's getting diminishing returns, rather than increasing revenues.

In other words, selling is no longer the best way to get sales.

WHAT???

Stay with me here ... I'm not crazy ... I promise!

For now, just imagine going through each and every day, getting plenty of sales, without ever selling.

You're going to learn in this e-book why selling is the clearly the wrong answer if your goal is to make more sales. You may begin to understand

why that is right away, or you may not get it until after you read the entire e-book.

Either way, you're going to realize that selling is an absolute waste of time.

That's right – if you've been selling for a living, you've been wasting time and losing sales. You've probably even lost sales from people who wanted to buy from you!

Did you catch what I just said? They wanted to buy from you ... but instead of simply letting them buy, you started selling to them ...

Is any of this beginning to make sense yet?

Let's use an example to help explain my point: Let's say your car has high mileage and has begun to have a lot of repairs. One day, your car breaks down and you decide that enough is enough, and it's time to get yourself a new car. You have one of two options:

1. Sit by the phone day after day, week after week, waiting for a car salesman to cold call you.

Total time: This option may take weeks or even months ... if it ever works at all.

2. Go to your local car dealer and buy a new car.

Total time: Fifteen minutes driving time, two to three hours getting beat up in price negotiations, and then you drive home in your shiny new car.

I don't know about you, but the last time I bought a new car, I used option #2. In fact, I spent about twenty minutes placing the order with the salesman, and when the new car came in, he had my paperwork done in advance. It took about ten minutes to sign it, hand over a check, and drive off in my new car.

Total time spent on my part: Thirty minutes.

If I had gone for option #1, I'd probably still have my old car. I don't know about you but I've never been hit up with a cold call from a car salesman! (Apparently, the car business is one of the few industries that knows how ineffective cold calling really is.) And if I had, I would have declined to take the call, just like I do with every cold call that comes into my office.

Now, think about something for a minute. Both option #1 and option #2 can get a person a new car. But which one is easier? Which one is a major hassle and a waste of time? Which one works quickly and easily, and which one may never work at all?

By choosing option #2, I saved myself a lot of time and trouble.

The problem in the sales world, however, is that we've all been taught to do the equivalent of option #1. We've all been taught the hard, difficult, "old-school," old-fashioned sales methods. Things such as:

- "Get out there in the trenches!"
- "Fight the good fight!"
- "Pound the pavement!"
- "Smile and dial!"
- "It's a numbers game! Just make more calls and you'll succeed!"
- "Come in early and stay late!"

(I've never understood this one – who on earth can I contact if I come in early and stay late, when 99% of the business world only works during business hours? And here's a little secret for you – most business owners work *less* than a full day – that's why they have employees!)

- "Don't expect to be an order taker ... you've got to get out there and work for it!"

Yuck. Just hearing all that brings back bad memories of all my nasty, old-school “little dictator” sales managers!

Let me ask you another question: Are you ready to stop doing things the hard way, and start working the *right* way? The old way just isn't worth it. The old way is dead ... *selling* is dead.

I never had any idea there was a better way. For the full first half of my sales career, I was doing things the hard way. I was cold calling. I was putting together cookie-cutter proposals, as my company encouraged me to do. I was trying to force people through a linear, pre-planned sales process. Oh yeah, and I did a lot more cold calling. It seemed to never end!

Then, one day, a senior sales rep in the office talked some sense into me. I'd always noticed that he was consistently around 200% of his large quota, and yet he never made any cold calls or even broke a sweat. In fact, he left every day by four o'clock while I was always working until six or later.

He revealed his secrets to me, and suddenly I had tons of qualified leads coming in and my schedule was packed to the brim with appointments. However, I still wasn't getting nearly as many sales as I should have with all those qualified prospects in my pipeline.

The problem was that I was handling those highly qualified prospects, most of whom had called *me* for an appointment instead of the other way around, as I had handled prospects right from the very start of my career ... the way I was taught to in corporate sales training.

Unfortunately, my corporate sales trainers and managers had taught me the typical *selling* method.

Here's the issue: Cold calling is a form of selling. Prospects who I'd uncovered via cold calling expected lots and lots of selling when I met with them. After all, that's what they were used to with cold callers. Prospects who had contacted me requesting an appointment, on the other hand, most definitely did not want to deal with the hassle of selling. In fact, they had zero tolerance for it. They wanted me to come in, recommend the most appropriate solution for their needs, and simply let them buy it.

When you start out by selling, prospects expect more selling. They even accept it as a natural part of the process.

When someone calls YOU first, selling is out. And the very top sales pros get people to call them. They never cold call, ever.

The biggest difference between cold call leads and people who call you first is that the ones who call you first are highly qualified and very likely to buy. Not to be sold, to *buy*. When you start selling to them, they are taken by surprise and are, quite simply, very put off by it. They expect a professional, and professionals don't have to sell.

In fact, I don't think anyone actually likes to be dragged through the selling process. It's a hassle and one big headache for everyone involved.

My sales exploded when I figured out how to stop selling and start getting people to buy instead. That's what top sales pros do. They never sell – they simply create the ideal circumstances for buying to take place, and then they let people buy.

Selling is indeed dead ... at least among today's most successful salespeople.

What is selling, anyway?

As usual, this is one of those questions to which the answer depends on who you ask. So, let's start out with a good reference point – the dictionary. Here's how the dictionary (I used Dictionary.com) defines the word “selling”:

Sell (verb: selling): To exchange or deliver for money or its equivalent.

While we're at it, it's important to look up the dictionary definition of “buying” as well:

Buy (verb: buying): To acquire in exchange for money or its equivalent; purchase.

Ok. Now that's done. However, the dictionary definitions of “buying” and “selling” are quite vague, and are severely outdated for today's market. Here's how I define those two words:

Buying: The act of *willingly* acquiring for money something that you want or need, without undue or unnecessary pressure and manipulation from the seller. The buyer leaves the transaction feeling happy and satisfied.

Selling: Attempting to *convince or manipulate* another into purchasing your product or service, despite the fact that they may not really need it. The purchaser is pressured and usually winds up with buyer's remorse.

As you can see, there is a *huge* difference between buying and selling, when you look at them in the context of today's sales world. The reality is that today's business owners and consumers simply want to buy. That's how business is done in the twenty-first century. No one, absolutely no one, wants to be sold to. However, approximately ninety-eight percent of today's salespeople go on, day after day, *selling*. (The other two percent who are smart enough to avoid selling, and instead set up the circumstances to allow people to buy, are top sales pros.)

How purchasing decisions are made today

Since I'm a business owner myself who makes business purchases on a regular basis, and who interacts with salespeople on a regular basis, I'll explain how I make a purchasing decision for my company.

The example I'll be using is a professional, broadcast television video camera, something that plenty of sales reps are out selling to their target market. I'll now show you, step-by-step, how my buying process took place:

1. I recognized a need for the camera. This happened after I launched my "Sales Pro Secrets" monthly coaching & learning program in fall 2006 with great success. A brand-new DVD is included in the package that members receive in the mail each month, and, as a result, I had a pressing need to be able to create real professional-grade video.

(NOTE: The need to produce top-quality video, due to my new monthly DVDs, was my **trigger event**. Make a note of this somewhere, as trigger event is a very important concept. You never want to spend your valuable time dealing with a prospect who does not have a trigger event, because lack of a trigger event is the #1 reason why prospects who seemed interested at first do not buy. Another example of a trigger event could be the purchase of a life insurance policy due to a marriage or the birth of a first child.)

I had three options to choose from:

Option One: First, I tried using my top-of-the-line consumer camcorder. While the video quality is excellent for a store-bought camera, and is better than 99% of the camcorders on the market, it still had that home video look, so that option was ruled out.

Option Two: I investigated professional videographers in my local area. I found few who had studios – most only do event videos, such as seminars or weddings. The ones who did have studios were extremely overpriced considering what it would cost me to buy the equipment myself, and had their own ideas (they call it "creative license") about how the videos would be produced. I also considered

the fact that if I had a burst of inspiration and wanted to shoot something immediately, I couldn't – I'd need an appointment quite some time in advance with a professional. As a result of all this, option two was ruled out.

Option Three: My third and final option was to simply purchase a professional broadcast camera myself and produce the videos in-house. Fortunately, I already had a high-end Mac computer, which is what the pros use to edit video, so that made the decision to get a camera all the more easier. I briefly looked into pricing, and, realizing that it wasn't as astronomically expensive as I'd thought, I decided on option three – I was going to get my own camera and associated equipment and shoot the video in-house. (NOTE: I just touched on another important concept – the fact that the pricing on cameras and other equipment was within my budget, combined with my need for the camera, made me a **qualified** prospect. Remember this.)

2. Once I decided to buy my own camera, I had some research to do. I knew right away that I did not want to call video supply houses and speak with salespeople. Why? There are several reasons:

- Salespeople, for the most part, are biased. They're only going to recommend the models they happen to sell themselves. Unless you're speaking with one of the two percent of top sales pros out there, it's impossible to get a genuine, unbiased recommendation from a salesperson. A Sony salesperson will tell you that Sony makes the best cameras, and give you all the reasons why. A Panasonic salesperson will tell you that Panasonic makes the best cameras, and give you all the reasons why.

Almost **ALL** salespeople will tell you that their particular company has the best service and support in the industry.

I knew that it simply was not possible to pick up the phone and get an accurate recommendation from a salesperson or dealer, so I didn't even bother.

Instead of calling to ask for recommendations, I got online. There's a very big reason why I suggest that all salespeople need to have a web

presence, complete with their own websites and newsletter lists. It's because modern business owners like myself use the Internet to do research on potential purchases and use that information to make our decisions. If you're not online, you're out.

I did preliminary research to determine which models would meet my requirements. Then I searched the Internet for unbiased reviews on those particular models. I found online video discussion groups where the professionals themselves chat and discuss their cameras and projects, and give each other tips and advice on how to best use them.

With this kind of information at my fingertips, it was easy to make a decision.

I learned everything I needed to learn in the convenience of my own office – all I needed was my computer and Internet connection!

This is also why today's prospects no longer make decisions based on your proposals and your promises in appointments.

In any case, I decided which camera I wanted to buy, along with microphones, lighting, and background equipment, without ever speaking to or meeting with a single salesperson!

3. Once I knew what I needed, I got back online and looked up pricing from several dealers. I also got opinions and feedback about different dealers in those discussion forums.

Does that give you pause for a moment? It should!

Think about it ... if you were a salesperson at one of those dealers, and you gave one of your customers a less-than-honest recommendation, or less-than-perfect service, I would have been reading about it on those websites!

The Internet is the greatest tool ever given to salespeople. It's also a double-edged sword. It makes it easy to prospect, and, more importantly, for prospects to find YOU, and it also makes it easy for a dissatisfied prospect to tell everyone else to stay away from you.

It also makes it easy for a happy customer to recommend you to others, as I had specific people and dealers recommended to me in those discussion forums.

(I'm glad I did that research because I learned that the dealers offering the lowest prices were also scam artists. It goes to show that buying on price is usually stupid, and it's why I never do it. Did you hear that? I never buy on price! Neither do any smart business owners! If you've been selling on price, or have been terrified of your competition undercutting you, stop that right now. Top sales pros never sell on price and always fetch full price. You can too, but first you must get past the limiting belief in your mind that we, the business owners of the world, buy on price. We don't. The few who do wind up going out of business very quickly, thanks to their being penny-wise and pound-foolish.)

Once I'd decided on the dealer who had the best reputation and verified that they had a reasonable price – note that while I didn't buy on price, I didn't want to get gouged either – I contacted them and placed my order for the new camera, filters, lights, and everything else I'd need to create professional-grade video footage in my own office.

So there you have my entire purchasing process from start to finish. I realized that I had a need (trigger event) and that I'd need to get my own equipment to satisfy that need, I made sure I could afford the equipment (I was qualified to buy), I did my research on the different models that were available, and once I'd settled on a brand and a model, I did my research on the various dealers offering that model for sale. I then contacted one and placed my order.

In other words, I bought!

Did you catch any selling in there? Just once? Ever.

No.

That's because selling simply is not part of today's decision making process.

Selling is dead.

In a selling situation, things would have gone very differently. My options would have been limited to those that the different salespeople had available. I would have explained my needs to those salespeople, but what they heard from me would have gone through the filter of what they could sell me to fulfill those needs, rather than getting a truly unbiased opinion. I would not have had the benefit of talking with actual users of the different cameras, like I did in the discussion forums. (In fact, any testimonials I'd have gotten would have come through the sales reps themselves, meaning that I was only seeing the good ones, and any bad ones would have been kept out of my sight.)

When the time came to make a decision, I would have been put through all kinds of manipulative closing tactics. I wouldn't have had the freedom and privacy – and unbiased information – that I had when I made my decision.

In other words, if salespeople were involved, there would have been lots and lots of selling.

I don't like selling. I like to buy on my own.

Why?

Quite honestly, because selling does not lead to the best decisions!

If I had allowed myself to be subjected to selling, it's doubtful that I would have made the correct decision. I probably would not have bought the same equipment that is now set up in its own space, its own studio.

I'd have purchased something, but I doubt that it would have been as perfect as what I bought on my own, through my own online research. And yes – I'm VERY happy with what I bought! The quality of the video it produces rivals that of any DVD in your movie collection.

Would that be the case had I been sold?

Maybe, maybe not. Either way, I would not have the satisfaction I do now. If you have any doubts as to why, go back and read my definitions of the words "buying" and "selling."

Hopefully my examples have shown you why selling is such a bad idea in

today's new economy, and why it rarely produces the optimal win-win outcome.

Selling is dead.

The Death of Cold Calling

If you have my other books or are at all familiar with my work, you know I'm beating a dead horse in this chapter.

However, bear with me.

It's important to review the reasons why cold calling is dead to fully understand why cold calling is the very epitome of selling, and why selling is so, totally, completely dead nowadays.

Cold calling has become so intolerable in today's society that decision makers have come up with all kinds of ways to avoid them! We all know that virtually every business has a no soliciting sign, and that walking in anyway and attempting to get in front of a decision maker is usually a hopeless proposition.

Most consumers now have Caller ID telephones so they can screen out telemarketers and other salespeople.

Business owners have voice mail and gatekeepers to keep the cold callers at a comfortable distance (and to guarantee that they'll never be successful at cold calling). Some even come up with elaborate schemes to avoid cold calls because there are just so many of them! For example, it's extremely common now for businesses to keep a separate voice mail extension just for cold calls. Every sales call that comes into the office is sent to that mailbox to leave a message. Here's the catch – it's never checked! This scheme is more common than you probably realize, and it goes to explain why cold call voicemails are never returned.

Here are some of the main reasons why cold calling is dead in today's world:

- People are sick and tired of cold calling.

This is the most basic, and perhaps the most important. Everyone has had it with the endless sales calls. People who are sitting down to a nice relaxing dinner at home hate nothing more than the phone to ring from a telemarketer, and businesspeople who are in the middle of a

busy day, trying to get things done, get furious at being interrupted by a cold call.

The problem for a salesperson, however, runs deeper than the mere annoyance factor. I'm sure you've heard that your first impression on a person is the most important, because people tend to remember you by your first impression, regardless of how long they've known you. With that in mind, do you really want to make an initial contact with your target prospects by annoying them?

When you make a cold call and aggravate someone with the interruption, even if you do get an appointment, you will forever be remembered as an interruption. This will always work against you down the line, throughout the sales process.

It gets worse, though. Let's say you interrupt someone with a cold call (hey, there's a reason it's known as "interruption marketing") and the prospect does not have a current need, but they will sometime in the future.

Guess what?

If you annoy someone with a cold call, you run a very good chance of destroying any chance of doing business with that prospect when the time does come for them to buy. The sad part is that they would have been more than happy to have met with you had you contacted them in a more professional manner; however, by cold calling, you put yourself in a negative light right from the start and you lose potential customers who would have bought from you otherwise.

- Cold calling makes you late to the game.

I recently learned of a study that showed that the vast majority of sales are won by the first salesperson the prospect met with.

Guess what?

When you find a lead via cold calling, almost never will you be the first salesperson to the table.

In fact, nine times out of ten, if you found them through a cold call, chances are you're *last* to the game.

I realized this over time, after having made thousands upon thousands of cold calls myself. When I did uncover a prospect who had a current need, ninety percent of the time they were already in a buying cycle and had already met with and gotten proposals from other sales reps. In other words, they already had what they needed to make a decision. They only decided to meet with me to get "one last quote."

I hardly ever closed any of those sales.

When most sales go to the first salesperson the prospect meets with, your chances go way down if you're anything but the first. They go down to almost zero if you're the last, and that's what you'll probably be if you uncovered the lead through cold calling.

Cold calling simply does not give you the advantage of good timing in sales.

- Cold calling destroys your credibility.

Would you hire the services of an attorney who called you at random one day, asking for an appointment to determine if you have any legal needs that may need to be taken care of?

Would you undergo surgery from a doctor who just happened to knock on your door one day, hand you his business card, and say, "We should set a time for an examination so that I may look you over and determine if you have any needs that I can take care of."

Would you take a mechanic seriously who called you just as you were sitting down for dinner and said, "This is Joe from Joe's Garage. We have some time available later this week for you to bring your car in so we may determine if there are any needed repairs that we can perform. Would ten o'clock Thursday or two o'clock Friday work better for you?"

Yes, these examples sound ridiculous.

So do you when you make cold calls.

Sorry, but it's true. When I sold telephone systems many years ago, I called people all the time asking for an appointment "so I could determine if there are any needs we may be able to address."

Most businesses get several calls of this nature each week from telephone system salespeople.

On average, businesses replace their telephone systems once every seven years.

Can you now see why I looked like an idiot making those calls?

I didn't look like a credible expert who could legitimately help a business. I looked like a poor sap who had nothing else to do but make those calls and try to scrape up some business. I made it clear to those whom I'd cold called that I had no appointments to attend and no customers to service.

(Even if you have tons of appointments and customers, whenever you make a cold call, you create the impression that you're a loser with nothing better to do, no customers, and no appointments.)

The problem with cold calling is that it creates the impression that you have no credibility. It makes people think you're a failure who is desperate to get an appointment and scrape up some business wherever you can.

Cold calling makes it impossible for a prospect to *trust* you, and trust is essential if you want to become a top sales pro.

Why can't prospects trust you if you cold call?

Because prospects want to put their business in the hands of someone who is successfully helping others. For example, when people see real estate agents with awards in their offices and "President's Club" on their cards, they want to work with those agents. They know that to become so successful, those agents must have helped many people.

Prospects also assume that successful salespeople are honest and have integrity. They're smart enough to know that you can't become highly successful by screwing people and ripping people off, because if you do, you won't get any referrals and word of your bad reputation will quickly spread. That's why prospects equate success in sales with integrity. When prospects see that you're successful, they feel that they can entrust you with their money and their business.

When you make a cold call, whether it's on the phone or "pounding the pavement," the exact opposite happens. Prospects get the image of the shyster snake oil salesman and want nothing to do with you. They assume that if you were honest, you'd have people wanting to do business with you, and you wouldn't have to "smile and dial" to round up appointments.

In addition to doubting your honesty, prospects doubt your ability and intelligence when you cold call. Just as they assume that honest salespeople would have people desiring to work with them, they also assume that most competent, capable salespeople who have the ability to recommend ideal solutions will have people wanting to work with them.

Wow ... this is really bad

Cold calling creates the impression that you are a dishonest idiot!

And I only said that it destroys your credibility.

Maybe I need to edit and re-release my books?

Hmm....

In any case, I digress.

The bottom line is, don't cold call. At least not if you want to be taken seriously by serious prospects.

- Cold calling limits your production by time.

Raise your hand if you've ever heard this nonsense:

“Take your quota and divide it by your average dollar amount per sale to determine how many sales you need each month. Now multiply that by the number of proposals you need to present in order to make one sale. Multiply that number by the number of appointments it typically takes you to get to the proposal stage, and multiply that number by the number of cold calls you need to get an appointment. You now know exactly how many cold calls you must make every month. Divide by twenty, and you now know what your minimum daily activity in cold calling needs to be.”

On the surface, that makes a lot of sense. Especially to dictator sales managers who want you cold calling all the time. However, there’s a huge, major problem with this formula.

If you’re really honest about how many cold calls it takes to get a **qualified** appointment, it’s practically impossible to succeed!

And, it’s definitely impossible to really excel, to become a top sales pro.

The most obvious problem with this old-school activity planning model is that it limits production by time. There are only so many hours in a day. If the total number of cold calls required exceeds the amount of free time you have available for cold calling, you’re screwed!

Let’s face it – we do a lot more than just prospect and go to appointments. There’s time spent driving to and from appointments and the office. There’s time spent generating proposals. There’s time spent with your networking contacts. There’s time spent in the office, brushing up on your own product knowledge, and researching the competition. (You do keep tabs on your competitors, don’t you?) And, on top of all that, you need to eat lunch at some point.

How on earth then can you become highly successful – a top sales pro with a six-figure income – if you’re going to depend on massive numbers of cold calls to get there?

You can’t!!!

It's a fact of life like death and taxes. Cold calling may get you a sale here and there, and it may even get you by if you're good at it, keeping you at quota so you don't lose your job, but you're certainly not going to get rich cold calling.

Especially not in today's world that has become so intolerant toward cold calling that many countries are passing laws against it!

The bottom line here is that cold calling fails to employ the massive power of **leverage**. Successful salespeople leverage their time and their resources to work for them. They don't work in a non-leveraged, linear fashion which is exactly what cold calling forces you to do. When you cold call for prospects, you have no leverage, because you **are** the leverage. It's like working hourly – your income can only go up if you can squeeze in more hours, and there are only so many hours in a day. The same is true with cold calling – your income depends on how many cold calls you can make, and there is only so much time in a day.

Top sales pros, however, don't bother with cold calling. They employ leveraged systems to do their prospecting for them – they work smart, not hard – and as a result they pull in six-figure incomes and beyond with apparent ease.

I don't know about you, but I entered sales because the income potential is unlimited. More sales equals more income. With cold calling, however, your income is strictly limited by time. I didn't get into sales to have my income limited by time. I got into sales to make a whole lot of money, and that's exactly what I did, without cold calling. I hope you will too.

- Cold calling makes timing work against you.

Here's what you usually run into when making cold calls – prospects who:

- Are not interested (most common).
- Have no need for your product or service.
- Will buy in the distant future but not anytime soon.

- Is already a customer.
- Has just bought from someone else.

In rare cases, you will find prospects who are in a current buying cycle for what you're selling, and as we've already covered, you're usually last to the game and won't get the sale anyway.

With that in mind, why does anyone cold call anymore?

It beats me. I don't get it.

Sure, some companies require it, but they're usually run by idiots anyway and you should be looking for a new job if you're forced to do mandatory cold calling. There's a good chance your company won't be around much longer.

I'm serious. As you now know, I worked in the telecom industry for quite some time. If you remember, nearly every telecom company went bankrupt in the first half of this decade.

Do you know why?

A lot of theories abound, but having been there, I know why.

It's because almost every single telecom company, including all of the ones that went bankrupt, relied entirely on cold calling to generate new business.

They had ZERO marketing, and relied 100% on their sales teams to cold call for new business.

That's insane!

That's also why they went broke.

I remember the dismal mood in those offices. The salespeople were miserable because they were forced to make cold call after cold call, day after day, month after month, and weren't getting sales (or commission checks).

The management was miserable because they had no revenue coming in while the money they had was pouring out the expense column, nearing the big red zone.

The management was also angry – if you dared suggest that maybe, just MAYBE, they should do some marketing instead of making the sales reps do fifty cold calls a day, they exploded in a rage and ranted and raved about how lazy the salespeople were, laying 100% of the blame on them for the company’s piss-poor financial situation.

In reality, it had nothing to do with the salespeople and everything to do with management’s decision to avoid marketing entirely.

You see, their decision to spend zero dollars on marketing and instead rely on the sales team’s cold calling wasn’t entirely based on stupidity. It was also based on greed and cheapness. These people took things a step beyond stupid, and actually saw mandatory cold calling as a way to avoid having a marketing budget!

They decided that they could save the money on marketing by telling the salespeople that they ARE the marketing – that daily cold calling activity IS the marketing.

It’s dumb, but it’s also insidious.

By saving their money on marketing, they instead wasted the salespeople’s time and money. But that’s not how they “sold” it to us.

They said, “More cold calls equals more appointments equals more sales!”

But that wasn’t true at all. They were guilty of teaching that nonsense, and most sales managers are guilty of teaching it. “Increase your activity and you’ll increase your income” are the mantra.” We’re told to do the sales math to “motivate” ourselves. Have you heard this one? “If you make five hundred dollars per sale and it takes five appointments to get a sale and twenty cold calls to get an appointment, then each cold call is worth five dollars in your pocket.”

Did anyone ever really believe this?

To that I say, “Hey boss, put your money where your mouth is!”

If that were really true, companies would be willing to pay us per cold call, rather than per sale. But they’re not. They’re not willing to do that because they know it’s a big lie. They know that by brainwashing salespeople into making cold calls, they’re saving a few dollars out of their own pockets.

The simple fact is that we’re only paid for completed sales, not for making calls. We’re not paid to write proposals, to show up at sales meetings, to drive in our cars, or for anything else other than for completed sales.

The reason companies require you to cold call is because it is a waste of your time and money, not theirs. You only make money when you sell something, yet eighty percent of most salespeople’s time is spent looking for someone to sell to.

- Cold calling fails to find the qualified leads we need.

The fact of the matter is that highly qualified leads follow a buying process similar to what I followed to buy that video camera.

They certainly do not want to be the victims of selling.

When you make cold calls, you’re contacting people at random, without any rhyme or reason as to why the people you’re calling on would be qualified to work with you.

You’re contacting a bunch of people who don’t need what you’ve got, don’t want it, already have it, or want it but are not a truly qualified lead – either financially, or in terms of need. (Remember what a trigger event is?)

Hot, qualified, ready-to-buy leads come to you through your own self-marketing efforts, and NOT through cold calling!

- Cold calling might get you into trouble.

I live in Phoenix, Arizona. I had no idea for a long time, but for as long as I've lived here, the State of Arizona requires you to have a Telephone Solicitor's License if you're going to cold call anyone by telephone, business or consumer!

Arizona is just one of many states with similar requirements. I know of plenty of salespeople who started "dialing for dollars" in response to the sales manager's orders, who eventually got into big trouble for making those calls without the required license.

Many countries are banning cold calling outright. I'm sure you know about the Do-Not-Call list in the United States, which only deals with telemarketing to consumers at home, but did you know that many other nations are banning ALL cold calling to both businesses and consumers?

It's only a matter of time before that happens everywhere, so NOW is the time to begin learning how to generate qualified leads without cold calling!

As time goes on, I get more and more letters and emails from salespeople complaining about flaky prospects. The problem is that prospects show a lot of interest in the cold call and the first appointment, then never return another phone call. They vanish as though they didn't exist in the first place. That's because cold calling doesn't uncover qualified prospects, the kind we all want and need to work with. Since cold calling is the method of idiots, it attracts other idiots, resulting in this situation – a prospect who was never fully qualified who is interested at first, then disappears when they realize they're not really going to buy.

Learn how to use self-marketing to attract highly qualified prospects to you and you'll be light years ahead of your competition.

- Salespeople HATE cold calling!

This reason alone is enough to stop it! Why do something you hate? Even if it worked, again, why do something you hate?

Everyone knows that your attitude is the #1 determining factor as to

whether you'll succeed or fail in sales. Why, then, make that attitude miserable and negative by exposing yourself to cold calling day in and day out?

Do something enjoyable instead – get people calling you through self-marketing – and your attitude, and sales, will go through the roof!

Why almost everything you've been taught doesn't work anymore

There's a very, very simple explanation for this.

Salespeople around the world are continually baffled as to why all the great sales techniques, lines, and closing tactics they read in books never work. They can't understand it because those strategies have worked for countless others before them.

Guess what – that's exactly why they don't work anymore!

Confused? Don't be. This is simple, really.

Take a step back for a moment and think of where all of today's decision makers came from, career-wise. Where do the vast majority – approximately eighty percent – of today's upper management and business owners come from? Where did they start out in the business world?

If you said sales, you're right!

Now do the math. If they're decision makers today, they were probably in sales anywhere from ten to thirty years ago.

When they were in sales, they strove to improve by going to the bookstore and reading the then-best-selling sales books.

They went to training programs, both on their own and within their company's training system.

They went to seminars, and learned powerful tactics and techniques from that day's most popular sales authors and speakers.

Is this beginning to make sense?

You guessed it! All those old-school sales tactics don't work on the decision makers of today because they've all used those same tactics!

And when you're hit up with a sales tactic that you've used yourself, you can spot it a mile away!

Tell me if any of these sound familiar:

- Closing for an appointment with the “alternative close”: “Would Friday at three o’clock or Monday at two o’clock be better for you?”
- Closing the sale with the Ben Franklin close: “Mr. Prospect, let’s take out a sheet of paper and make two columns, that we’ll name ‘pros’ and ‘cons.’ Now let’s go through each pro of buying my product, as well as each con, and add them up at the end. You’ll use that to help make your decision.”
- Saying dumb, unnatural-sounding things to gain agreement, such as, “Mr. Prospect, would you agree that if I can show you today how I’m going to fulfill all of the requirements you laid out for me during our last meeting, there shouldn’t be anything stopping us from doing business today? Does that sound fair, Mr. Prospect?”
- And, of course, the old one we’re all sick of: “It’s a numbers game!” “Just make more calls and you’ll be successful!”

(Here’s some news for you if you buy into that myth: Sales is NOT a numbers game! Do you doubt me? Then I’ll explain. The reality is that cold calling does not get satisfactory results anymore. If you make a cold call, and the result is zero, you’re at zero. We all learned by third grade that anything times zero equals zero. So, if one cold call equals zero, then fifty times zero still equals zero!

The answer isn’t to increase your activity, when that activity isn’t working ... the answer is to CHANGE your activity to something that gets results. Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results is the definition of insanity, so don’t be insane and expect endless cold calls to get you somewhere.)

The examples I just gave you come from the “old school” sales books and trainers who were popular in the 1980s and before, and even into the early 1990s to some extent. I only gave you a few examples out of hundreds, but I’m sure you recognized all of them.

The problem is compounded by the fact that most of today's sales authors and speakers are still teaching the same information! They've taken the high-pressure, "numbers game" sales tactics of the 1980s and simply reworded and repackaged them for sale all over again. Now, don't get me wrong – there are plenty of great sales authors today who are teaching common sense, instead of the old-school garbage. Jeffrey Gitomer and Tony Parinello are two examples who come to mind immediately. However, go browse the sales shelf in your local bookstore, and you'll see that not only are the old 1980s books still there in new editions, but plenty of "new" authors are teaching the same old material in different form.

Think about something for a minute: If you were a car salesman, and you went to another car lot shopping for cars, wouldn't you recognize each and every sales tactic that was being used on you? Wouldn't you see right through them, recognize them as mere sales tactics instead of true honesty, and immediately have your doubts about working with that person?

Of course you would! It's never pleasant to know that someone is running sales game on us instead of being up-front and honest.

The same exact thing happens when you get on the phone or walk into an appointment armed with all that worn-out, 1980s sales "wisdom."

Your prospects, who know each and every trick and tactic you're trying to pull on them, will see right through you, and will immediately lose trust and respect for you because you're running sales game instead of being direct, honest, and genuine.

THAT is why the old-school stuff doesn't work anymore. You can't fool a magician with his own tricks, so don't go and try to fool today's decision makers with the very tricks and techniques they used on prospects themselves. Be better than that – be a true professional instead.

The fallacy of traditional networking

Among all that old-school crap we're all taught when we enter sales, three ideas in particular stand out; they are:

- Cold calling
- Networking
- Referrals

Cold calling is obviously a waste of time. Networking and referrals are excellent ideas if you do them right; however, the old-school teaches all the wrong ways to go about them. Let's start with networking.

I don't know about you, but one of the first things my sales managers told me (after "fifty calls a day," of course) was to get out to networking groups and chamber mixers ... and network! "Build a network," they told me. I was promised an endless supply of sales without any real work on my part, if I'd just build a great network.

Okay, I'll admit that a great network will do that for you. However, you're never going to build a great network hanging around networking groups and chamber mixers.

Why?

Because successful salespeople – top sales pros – already have enough business to keep them fat and happy! They have absolutely no need to stand around at a networking event or leads club with a bunch of rookies who have nothing to offer!

I'll never forget my first experience with a "leads club." My manager asked me to go, as he had a coupon for one free admission (it was an overpriced paid membership group). Now I'm not a morning person, and I was not at all amused by getting up before dawn to make it to the meeting by seven in the morning.

When I got there, I found a whole room full of salespeople who also did not want to be up that early, and, worse, had no leads to offer! The moderator went around the room, everyone said “I have no leads this week,” and it turned into just a friendly group breakfast.

After I left that meeting empty-handed, I received several calls from the group leader who was trying to sell me a membership for several hundred dollars a year. It was then I realized that the group was a scam.

Later on I tried all the chamber of commerce mixers. These were full of people who were selling personal services (mostly real estate agents and insurance agents). There was no one I could really do any networking with though, and it seemed that even the real estate and insurance agents weren't getting anything out of the group either.

The worst part was the barrage of phone calls from MLM reps for weeks after those events, trying to sell me their “business opportunities.”

(Just for the record, there are plenty of legitimate MLMs out there and I have nothing against them. But, if you expect to be successful at recruiting a large downline, do it through self-marketing, not by collecting business cards from strangers at chamber events, then hassling those people with dozens of phone calls and voice mails.)

Finally, I found a private, members-only networking group. To gain acceptance, I had to interview with the two principals of the group, attend one meeting as a guest, and during that meeting, gain the commitment of two members in good standing to sponsor me for membership. Once I'd done all of that – and paid the fee, of course ... let's not forget the fee – I'd be in.

This was it! I thought so, anyway. I did my phone interviews with the two principals, put on my best custom suit for the event, and walked in to see all of those same MLM reps looking at me.

Ohhhhhh.....

Another scam! I'd been taken again!

It was then that I realized that building a great network does not happen at

those events. Those events are for amateurs, and top sales pros don't waste time on them. (I continued to go from time to time, but only for social reasons – I was single at the time. Chamber mixers are a great place to find dates if you're single, and I highly recommend it for that purpose ... just don't ever expect to sell anything there!)

I now know that successful networking is something that takes time, by building relationships with people who would be valuable networking partners.

The catch is that in order to get a top sales pro into your network, you first need to start selling at the levels of a top sales pro! Otherwise, you have nothing to offer to a top performer, and they won't waste their valuable time meeting with you. (Top sales pros are very sensitive of their time.)

The answer is to begin building a self-marketing system today, one that brings you qualified leads without the necessity of cold calling. Once you do that, and you begin closing those leads to generate high sales numbers, you'll find that other top sales pros are attracted to you and will want to network with YOU because you have something of value to offer.

Until you reach that point, don't go wasting any more time at networking events!

The fallacy of traditional referral selling

Raise your hand if you've heard this one:

“Get the sale, do a good job for the customer, and then ask for three referrals.”

I heard it too.

It doesn't work.

Why not?

Because it's not that simple!

Referral selling is an art and science all in itself. Getting referrals isn't as easy as simply asking for them after a sale. In fact, few customers will give you quality referrals that soon and that easy. They have no reason to, unless you're giving monetary incentives, and even then, you're unlikely to gain access to their closest friends and colleagues unless you've build a level of supreme trust and respect with that new customer.

Did you catch that? It's that word “trust” again.

You need to put your prospect in the frame that you are a referral salesperson right at the very start of the sales process, and you must build trust and follow through on that trust by doing the right thing for the customer.

“Do a good job and ask for three referrals” is about as effective as cold calling. Which means it's not effective at all.

Now, the easiest way to get referrals is to offer paid incentives, otherwise known as referral fees or commissions. But, if your company doesn't offer such a program, or if your commissions aren't large enough to justify paying those fees out of your own pocket, what can you do?

There are plenty of answers to that question, and even if you DO offer paid

incentives, it makes sense to do everything else you can in your power to maximize referrals.

Here's something to consider: A top sales pro has the image of supreme success. Top sales pros go out of their way to display their success – I've already explained why this is. Remember, it's not done to be arrogant, but because when a prospect sees that you're successful, they have an immediate desire to do business with you. Success suggests that you're honest, have integrity, and are doing a superb job for your customers.

That's why it's very important to have an image of supreme success, even if you have to "fake it till you make it."

How successful would you appear if you had the words, "Appointments by referral only," printed right on your business cards?

Do you think qualified prospects would feel comfortable working with you? Would they want to work with you? Would they be a lot more willing to trust you, if they saw that you work by referral only?

Of course they would!

Having those words printed on your cards does something else – it sets the prospect up to give you referrals down the line, whether they buy from you or not. When they understand that you work only by referral, they also understand that you'll expect referrals from them, and you'll have no problem getting highly qualified referrals when the time comes.

For more on this, see *Creating a Million-Dollar-a-Year Sales Income: Sales Success Through Client Referrals* (Wiley, 2007) by Paul McCord. In my opinion, it's the best book on referral selling money can buy.

Top Sales Pros Don't Sell!

When you downloaded this e-book, you were probably skeptical at first, and at least a little curious about what “The Death of Selling” could actually mean.

You probably thought I was predicting the end of sales! To be replaced by marketing, or something else ... but the end of sales.

I'm not predicting the end of sales, at all. Sales will always be around, and top sales pros will always be able to make a six figure income on their own terms. Top sales pros have job security and financial security for life, and many go on to become successful entrepreneurs and business owners themselves.

However, hopefully you've learned why “selling,” as it is currently practiced by most salespeople, is a dying art.

People are sick and tired of selling. They've had enough. They want to be able to buy, on their terms, and they don't want a bunch of salespeople trying to sell them anything.

If you want to become a top sales pro, you need to stop selling, and start allowing prospects to simply buy.

Of course, it takes a bit of work to reach that stage. For starters, you've got to stop cold calling and start attracting prospects to you through self-marketing.

You've got to have a web presence, both to generate leads, and to solidify your image as a true professional.

You've got to stop with the old-school selling tactics, and start working for your prospects and customers as a true consultant, with their best interests in mind.

You've got to reposition yourself as someone who sells by referral, because only then will prospects, customers, and other people in your life begin to flood you with highly qualified referrals.

You've got to become successful first – you must have something of value to offer – and then you can explode that success by networking with other top sales pros, and collaborating on how you can improve.

These are the things that top sales pros do!

If the top sales pros you've worked with are at all typical, they seem either secretive or anti-social. They don't tell you what they're doing day by day, other than saying "I cold call" just to make you go away.

Hopefully now you understand what it is they're doing day after day to be so successful.

Thank you for reading. To learn more, please see <http://www.nevercoldcall.com>