

THE FEARLESS BUSINESS OF NEW BUSINESS

THE 12 INDISPENSABLE RULES

INTRODUCTION

In the current digital age, two phenomena have appeared almost as quickly and ubiquitously as the new age itself. One is the general level of sophistication amongst the general public in relation to the language of brands and all the related marketing disciplines. The second is people's growing inability to communicate live, whether that be in person or on the phone.

This, coupled with the new reality that everyone is now exposed to the possibility of being a marketer and ostensibly a sales person with no real training (and often expected to be due to the new tools that we have at our disposal), is indeed a paradox of our age.

In the following 12 pages we have attempted to distil into one hundred and thirty word lessons, the combined experience of over fifty years working at the sales and new business coalface of large multinational communications agencies. Read them, muse on them, and above all put them into practice - they will make you invaluable to any employer or start-up, and you will never be out of meaningful employment.

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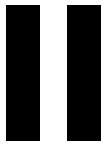
Honesty

In order to prosper, we need to be ruthlessly honest about where we are with our business and how good we are at our core offering and how valuable our product is.

However, this is not enough. Where the real honesty needs to kick in is in relation to how skillful we are at articulating our service or product and bringing it to the market.

This is the key to marketing and selling well. The many who believe themselves skilled are usually blinded by arrogance and conceit and will often fail because of their lack of honesty about their own capabilities.

Having the courage to be really honest about yourself, your business and your team is the foundation to a successful business and a solid platform for future sales and new business activity.



Focus

For anyone wanting to achieve anything of value and merit to themselves and their community, it is vital that they fully concentrate on only a small handful of projects at a time. This quantity may vary depending on a person's capacity (see rule one for answers about this) but a guide is two to three projects.

The key to making a sales campaign a successful reality is to give it your total attention. So, for success in any project you must focus on it with a whole heart and mind to the exclusion of EVERYTHING else.

This focus will provide previously unobtainable solutions, tasks will take a fraction of the time, results both in service or product will outstrip past achievements and financial rewards will inevitably follow



Trust

An important quality in business, especially in the art of generating new business, is trust. Trust is an unseen social currency more powerful than charisma or status that can be traded on

Trust is engineered falsely by those with great apparent 'people skills' who charm their way into people's confidences. This short-term tactic is used by those without real skills.

Authentic trust takes time to develop, and once won, is the backbone to million-pound deals and lifelong business relationships.

Trust has two faces. The confidence arising from an innate sense of your capabilities provokes an external response and is won by constant investment & nurture.

People with both forms of trust have integrity and are indispensable cornerstones of any organization.

IV

Communication

Not unlike cash flow, the efficient flow of information in any organization is an excellent measure of its health. This flow is the lifeblood and its blockage will sooner or later be the death of a company.

Efficient, concise and accurate communication is the key to an agile, future-proof and effective team - the DNA of a working enterprise. Communication keeps people engaged and responsible and it creates trust and a powerful bond between people that ensures morale stays high.

In selling, communicating effectively is the first benchmark by which a person's success is measured. Without clear, consistent and accurate communication there is no chance of producing a successful sales campaign.

So remember, communicate (don't hide and speak up), it is the royal route to long-term success.

V

Patience

It is an observable fact that people lacking experience in business, and specifically the sales cycle, underestimate the value of this virtue at their peril.

Sound relationship building & gaining the trust of an important prospect, take time
The 'instant gratification' that is all around us will not be found, especially in sales.

Like a good hunter, we must learn to wait, watch and be patient. This waiting is not a passive state, it requires discipline and judgment, calm steadiness, keeping watchful and waiting for the exact moment when action is required.

So many deals and relationships in their early stages are ruined by an impatient novice 'spooking the horses' with over enthusiasm and lack of judgment.

Calmly observe your prospects sign-up as clients, impressed by your calmness and steady hand.

VI

Courage

One aspect of running a fledgling start-up, as well as experience of being 'in the trenches' in a large multi-national agency, is that you need to be courageous.

In the arena of new business and selling, competition is fierce, clients unreasonable, deadlines immovable, pitches loom, calls must be made and powerful disinterested brands brought on side. It's a battlefield, and the only way to face the constant pressure, the ceaseless demands, the reality that at any moment everything you are currently fighting for could be lost, is to have an iron will and a fearless demeanour regardless of internal storms .

When your back is really against the wall, fight, fight, fight, and keep fighting until you win. Persistently exercise your ability to be courageous and you will prevail.

VII

Tenacity

There are two types of people in life: those who see negativity in everything (a lottery win would inspire a grumble), and those that see positivity in every situation and doggedly continue against the toughest odds.

The first are unsuited for a career in business, the second will make excellent sales people or senior management. Sales is a demanding, highly-skilled career requiring unlimited amounts of positive energy.

When everyone decides a lead is dead, it's the person who tries once more and converts it into a client - ignoring the consensus of colleagues and bosses - who triumphs.

Being as tenacious as a bloodhound is key in selling. My personal record is waiting nine years to sign a target client. I have business contacts developed over decades through sheer tenacity.

VIII

Speed & Authenticity

When a client asks for a proposal in three days, send it in two and make it better than anything they ever expected - over deliver in both reaction time and quality. Why? Because the sales arena is highly competitive and requires the ability to surprise and delight prospects at every step of the relationship, especially at the start. Clients judge you on your ability to react fast and in an authentic fashion.

The efficacy of your response and reactions is an indicator of how awake you are and how confident you are in your abilities and skills. The authenticity of your work and demeanour will radiate from you and clients recognise this and 'buy' you and your services.

IX

Good Humour

Business is hard and selling is the hardest part of business. Disappointments and near disasters are an ever-present reality for those in the front line. The constant pressure of targets and KPIs can wear away at a person's resilience. Without sufficient inner strength, this pressure will finally undermine their resolve.

The antidote to things becoming too serious and all the joy and happiness being squeezed out of a business is to have good humour, even a little 'gallows humour' when things have really 'gone South'.

The ability to bounce back and inject levity into an otherwise serious predicament is a vital attribute. It shows a heart that refuses to be depressed and a determination to face challenges and learn and grow. 'Keep it light' is a great phrase to remember.



Flexibility

Change is the only constant in business and life. Flexibility to adapt, rearrange teams, budgets, ideas, fundamental business goals or core strategies in the cold light of reality - allows progress and evolution of your aims.

It shows a firm resolve to do what is right in spite of short-term discomfort and unpopularity of your decisions, and also a grasp of the real situation at hand and a non ego-based response to it.

Being agile in one's thinking and smart about changes, might be compared to the constant software updates demanded by modern computers.

Without constantly refreshing and upgrading our thinking and strategy - even if that means a complete one hundred and eighty degrees turn - a business will become stale and corrupted from within. Be flexible and supple of mind and action.

XI

Delivery

'Don't tell me it can't be done or your problems. I need solutions, even wrong ones'. This is a rough version of what one of my bosses used to say when we were embarking on a seemingly impossible project/mission that had never been done before. In other words, find solutions fast and deliver.

You'd never hear James Bond or Ethan Hunt say 'Well, I'd love to jump out of that plane, but it looks a bit dangerous'. No, they just jump!

The point is that a delivery-oriented state-of-mind is vital if you are going to rise within a company or make your own a success

Delivery (coming up with the goods however hard this might be), is why specialists are paid well. A great sales person exceeds their targets over and over again. They deliver!

XII

Listening

This should probably be the sub text of each chapter because without the ability to listen you will fail.

The ability to actively listen to detailed information and take accurate and concise notes is a fundamental skill and really an entry level requirement for anyone wanting to achieve success in business.

We must also be able to listen to every nuance of a conversation as the subtle changes in tone inform us of multiple facets - anger, disinterest or amusement. A subtle, powerful tool to enable your ability to win.

This primary skill, once developed, puts you head and shoulders above the competition - your clients will notice and be more likely to buy from you.

Listening gives you the subtext of all your interactions with prospects and is how you can surprise and delight them constantly.

This book is dedicated to anyone with the guts to succeed and those amongst us who are sales people (as far as we are concerned, that's everyone) or those who want to succeed in business.