

LIFE IS SALES

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This month marks the 19th month I've written the "Sales Quest" article for *SmartCEO* and the final chapter in what I hope has been a complete sales education for you and the professionals with whom you've chosen to share this information. I say "complete sales education," because one of the catalysts that drove Joe Mechliniski and me to start *EntreQuest* was that much of the sales training we saw in the field was incomplete, either fixated solely on process, or was full of rah-rah hyperbole that gets people fired up, but has little in the way of lasting effect.

The format of this column is changing. Over the coming year, my focus will move to addressing topics in sales as they come to me, and as you bring them to my attention. You can reach me by e-mail or by sending an e-mail or letter to *SmartCEO* directed to my attention. But I wanted to spend our first year-and-a-half together getting in alignment, sharing a common knowledge and language so that we can move forward together in the quest for success in step with each other.

When I write these articles, there are three audiences. People who glance at it to pass the time; people who read the articles thoroughly, but occasionally; and people who read along each month, putting these theories into practice, measuring the results, adjusting the implementation of them, making them their own – and growing their businesses.

To cap your complete sales education, let's review the 18 principles I've expressed here in *SmartCEO*. For those of you who have been following along, it will be review, reinforcement and a quick reference guide. (Those who have been reading closely will notice I reordered the articles.) For the rest of our audience, I intend this to be a catalyst for you to read back issues of the magazine, or read the articles on the *EntreQuest* or *SmartCEO* Web site.

You have often heard me reference the 80/20 rule, whereby 20% of a given sales team generates 80% of a company's revenue. My intention is that by following these principles, you'll count yourself among the 20 percenters.

The Achievement Model – Put "mindset before process" to generate results. With the right mindset, any generic sales process will be more effective – without it, the best "system" is bound to fail.

Choose to Win – When you change your beliefs, you can change your mindset.

Success is a choice. And it's a choice that the 20 percenters have made.

Make the Choice to Choose – The beliefs that support your mindset are formed by experiences and, ultimately, your choices. Positive and negative experiences happen every day – which experiences are you choosing to focus on?

Move. Say. Think – Your mindset influences

everything you do, and the results you will or will not achieve, and mindset manifests itself in three ways: physical movement, patterns of speech and patterns of focus. Know your recipe for success and create the results you're after.

The Dynamics of Communication – It's not what you say, it's how you say it. Words are only 7% of communication. Voice quality and body language make up the bulk of how we communicate with each other. It's how you're saying it that matters.



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Be Present to the Opportunity – Enroll clients through presence, rapport and engagement. Being totally present for someone is the key to being in and staying in rapport, and rapport is the key to engagement.

Master Nonverbal Communication – Engage your prospects through varying positions of strength: superior, inferior and equal. In any situation you can present yourself to another person three different ways. When your way isn't getting you where you want to be, change how you are communicating with them nonverbally.

Use Your Animal Instincts – Enroll prospects faster by understanding what motivates them. There are four distinct personality types in the work environment. Know yours and know theirs and you'll find it much easier to be in rapport.

Know "The Trust Model" – Build a foundation for lasting relationships by understanding why we do and don't trust people: reliability, sincerity and competence equal trust. If one or more elements are missing, something will smell fishy.

Understand the Difference between Enrolling and Closing – Leave the door open to future business. When you "close" a deal, you close the door and you're only as useful as the problem you just solved. Enroll in their mission and goals, enroll them in your solutions, and you'll be a partner for life.

Destinations and Drivers – Move clients along the path to "Yes." There are six destinations that you must move your audience through: suspects, prospects, SMART prospects, client, repeat client – skip steps and you're setting yourself up for disappointment.

Beware of "The Grape Zone" – Don't let clients, or your mindset, squash your motivation. Between each destination is a "grape zone" – the land of maybe. Get your mindset and your prospect to the next destination and out of the grape zone or, in the words of Mr. Miyagi in *The Karate Kid*, be "squished like grape."

Seek Ambassadors – Ambassadors are the key to referral business, and with ambassadors on your side, clients come to you.

Reveal the Need – Enroll your prospects through the needs/values selling model. Don't go into a meeting thinking that you know the answer when you haven't even discovered what the need is.

Know the Difference between Means Needs and Ends Needs – When you know the difference, you can turn one-off prospects into long-term clients, because you got beyond the project at hand and enrolled in helping them reach their ends need – reaching their goal or fulfilling their mission.

Value vs. Process – Knowing the difference is the key to shortening the sales cycle. When people ask, "What do you do?" (process) what they are really asking is, "What value can you bring to me?" Tell them!

Create Value-Based Solutions – Understand your prospect's ends need and develop a value proposition that creates an irresistible return on investment.

Objections Are Opportunities – The great ones don't ignore objections, get defensive or internalize rejection as a commentary on their worth as human beings – they acknowledge the objection, get in alignment and redirect the conversation back to the ends need.

Life Is Sales. Follow along with me over the course of the coming year and we'll learn more together...

Jason P. Pappas is the CEO and co-founder of *EntreQuest*, a Baltimore-based sales and leadership development firm focused on productivity and profitability.