







# Relationship Selling

second edition



Mark W. Johnston Greg W. Marshall





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## RELATIONSHIP SELLING

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# About the Authors

# Mark W. Johnston, PhD

Mark W. Johnston is the Alan and Sandra Gerry Professor of Marketing and Ethics at the Roy E. Crummer Graduate School of Business, Rollins College, in Winter Park, Florida. He earned his PhD in marketing from Texas A&M University. Prior to receiving his doctorate he worked in industry as a sales and marketing representative for a leading distributor of photographic equipment. His research has resulted in published articles in many professional journals, such as the Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Applied Psychology, and Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management.

Mark has been retained as a consultant for firms in the personal health care, chemical, transportation, service, and telecommunications industries. He has consulted on a wide range of issues involving strategic sales force structure, sales force performance, sales force technology implementation, market analysis, sales training, and international market decisions. Mark has conducted a number of seminars around the world on a variety of topics, including motivation, managing turnover in the organization, sales training issues, ethical issues in marketing, and improving overall sales performance.



# Greg W. Marshall, PhD

Greg W. Marshall is the Charles Harwood Professor of Marketing and Strategy in the Crummer Graduate School of Business at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. He earned his PhD in marketing from Oklahoma State University. Greg's industry experience includes 13 years in selling and sales management, product management, and retailing with companies such as Warner Lambert, Mennen, and Target Stores. When he left Warner Lambert in 1986 to enter academe, he was the manager of the top-performing sales district in the United States. In addition, he has served as a consultant and trainer for a variety of organizations in both the private and public sectors, primarily in the areas of marketing planning, strategy development, and service quality.

Greg is an active researcher in sales management, having published over 40 refereed articles in a variety of marketing journals, and he serves on the editorial review board of the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Business Research, and Industrial Marketing Management. He is editor of the Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice and is past editor of the Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management. Greg is on the board of directors of the Direct Selling Education Foundation, is past president of the Academic Division of the American Marketing Association, and is a fellow and past president of the Society for Marketing Advances.

In addition to working together on *Relationship Selling*, Mark and Greg are the coauthors of *Churchill/Ford/Walker's Sales Force Management*, also published by McGraw-Hill/Irwin.



Fundamental to the success of any organization is its relationship with customers. Today, the relationship between companies and their customers is in a period of profound change. Technology, globalization, ethical concerns, corporate strategic decisions, and a host of other issues have created a revolution in the selling process. Customers are no longer interested in working with companies that cannot add substantial value to their business. They seek better, more strategic *Relationships* with their suppliers. Changes in the buyer–seller relationship have also led to dramatic changes in the management of salespeople. "Home" and "virtual" offices, communication technology, and demographic changes in the sales force (to name just a few) have created significant challenges for salespeople and their managers. Today's selling model is a very different process than it was even 10 years ago. As a result, any book about selling should fully reflect this new business reality.

This second edition of *Relationship Selling* continues to present a clear and concise portrayal of selling in the contemporary business environment—namely, *relationship* selling with a strong focus on creating and communicating value for customers and on managing the buyer–seller relationship process. It remains the only book to integrate the critical tools of the relationship-selling process with the unique challenges managers face working with salespeople in a highly dynamic competitive environment. Mark Johnston and Greg Marshall, your authors, combine backgrounds in selling and sales management with long established research records and consulting experience in the field.

# Why Did We Write This Book?

The idea for writing this book evolved over several years and many conversations with colleagues and sales professionals. There was no single moment of creation, rather a series of conversations that ended with "Gee, I wish there was a book that presents a relevant and current approach to relationship selling, with a value focus, and an integration of managerial issues in buyer–seller relationships."

Our own review of the books in the Personal Selling area revealed no single source for a complete, holistic approach to selling that incorporates not only state-of-the-art sales methodology but also the knowledge base and skill sets necessary to manage such a critical area in the organization. Our colleagues presented us with an exciting challenge: Was it possible to create a book that reflects contemporary relationship selling in a way that maximizes the course's success for both instructors and students? To answer the challenge, our primary goal in writing

Relationship Selling, Second Edition, as in the first edition, was to create a single, comprehensive, and holistic source of information about the selling function in modern organizations, focused on the process of securing, developing, and maintaining long-term relationships with profitable customers—the essence of relationship selling. As you read the book, note that our approach links the process of selling (what salespeople do) with the process of managing salespeople (what sales managers do). In order to provide a pictorial representation of this linkage and to create an easily referenced thematic thread, we have developed a Relationship Selling and Sales Management Model that serves as a road map all the way through the book. The model is introduced in Chapter One, and we return to it at the beginning of each subsequent chapter to highlight where that chapter's content fits into the overall model.

In summary, building strong, sustainable customer relationships is no longer optional—it is *required* for long-term business success. As the importance of relationships has grown, the selling function has become assimilated into the rest of the organization. Selling now is truly a "boardroom topic" as companies realize that effective management of the relationship-selling process is a key to gaining overall competitive advantage. Thus, this book incorporates state-of-the-art sales practices and research to develop a comprehensive portrayal of relationship selling today.

# Who Is the Audience for the Book?

The overarching theme of this book is securing, developing, and maintaining long-term relationships with profitable customers. As such, the book offers broad appeal and high value added in any Personal Selling course, allowing the instructor to portray a modern, integrative approach to selling in a style that today's students will easily connect with and truly enjoy. In our discussions with colleagues at many colleges and universities we consistently heard a call for a book that offers a fresh, value-driven, integrative approach to relationship selling and also provides important insights into managerial aspects of the buyer–seller relationship. This book addresses those needs.

You may have noticed (as we have) a growing trend in sales-related courses. More and more students who are not majors in marketing (or even in business) are taking courses in Personal Selling. This trend recognizes the inherent value of such courses to the personal growth and success of any student. As such, we believe *Relationship Selling*, Second Edition, serves this emerging market very well by enabling "nonsales majors" wanting a single sales-related course to understand the overall sales field from a modern, application-oriented perspective.

In addition, the book is written to complement and enhance a variety of teaching approaches. Most importantly, this second edition of *Relationship Selling* incorporates a comprehensive role-play model that integrates role-play exercises focused on important relationship selling issues. Role playing is one of the most used training tools by top sales organizations. Our end-of-chapter Role Plays are tied together throughout the book within a common scenario that students will readily and enthusiastically identify with as they progress through the course. Beyond the role plays, a variety of other teaching enhancements are provided within the book. For those interested in a lecture/discussion format an abundance of material is presented in the chapters and reinforced in discussion questions at the end of each chapter. Learning objectives and key terms help focus students on the most important material. Mini Cases and Ethical Dilemmas are also included at

the end of each chapter for instructors taking a more case-oriented approach. A variety of other features imbedded within each chapter add value to the students' experience in the course, including boxed features on Leadership, Innovation, and Global Perspective. This second edition also expands our popular Expert Advice feature so that each chapter begins with a sales expert giving firsthand advice on some of the key topics in that chapter.

# Structure of the Book

As mentioned, the model for relationship selling used by firms today defines the connection between companies and their customers in a new way. We have developed a framework that breaks down the relationship-selling process into three distinct yet interrelated components, reflected by the three parts within the book.

- 1. What Is Relationship Selling? (Chapters 1–4) The book begins with an introduction to relationship selling and the environment in which this process takes place. The opening chapter introduces the model for Relationship Selling and Sales Management and shows how it serves as a road map for the entire book. Next is a comprehensive discussion of two critical precursors to the relationship-selling process—using information to understand sellers and buyers and the concept of value creation and communication, both of which are central to the buyer–seller relationship. Finally the important area of ethical and legal issues within the relationship-selling framework is discussed.
- 2. Elements of Relationship Selling (Chapters 5–9). Each of the elements in the relationship-selling process is identified and examined in detail. These include prospecting and sales call planning, communicating the sales message, negotiating win—win solutions, closing the sale and follow-up, and self-management: time and territory. At the end of each chapter on the relationship-selling process, we conclude with a brief section that links the role of salesperson to the role of his or her manager in a way that is relevant to that chapter's topical focus. As such, students come away with an integrative perspective on how salespeople and their managers relate in order to get the job done.
- 3. Managing the Relationship Selling Process (Chapters 10–14). Key to effectively implementing successful buyer–seller relationships is an understanding of the many managerial issues involved in the relationship-selling process. Fundamental sales management concepts are examined from within the relationship-selling model. The topics addressed include salesperson performance: behavior, role perceptions, and satisfaction; recruiting and selecting salespeople in relationship selling; training salespeople for sales success; salesperson compensation and incentives; and finally, evaluation and rewarding salesperson performance.

# Features of the Text

A. Expert Advice—NEW AND UPDATED Expert Advice is a dialogue with a working professional who has found success in relationship selling by applying aspects of the principles and concepts discussed in the chapter. Designed to be a great chapter kickoff providing a real world perspective, our experts satisfy the desire by both students and instructors to see how people actually use chapter concepts to be successful in business practice.

- **B.** Learning Objectives—UPDATED Each chapter begins with a set of learning objectives for the students. The objectives guide students as they read and seek to identify the key takeaways from the chapter.
- C. Boxed Features—Leadership, Innovation, Global Perspective—NEW AND UPDATED These three boxes are key drivers of relationship selling today—leadership, innovation, and global perspective. Each chapter contains featured boxes that focus on at least one of these concepts. The boxes underscore and provide real world examples related to the material in the chapter. Instructors will benefit from these boxes because they provide excellent discussion starters in class.
- **D. Key Terms—UPDATED** At the end of each chapter key terms are summarized for the students. These terms are also boldfaced the first time they appear in the body of each chapter. As a result, students can use these terms to take a quick check on their level of understanding of the material. They will also find these terms defined in the glossary at the end of the book.
- E. Role Play—UPDATED It is accepted both in field sales training and in the college classroom that role playing is a valuable tool for helping salespeople and students internalize and apply what they are learning. A comprehensive role-play scenario has been developed for *Relationship Selling*, Second Edition, that flows through the various chapters for continuity of learning. It involves a sales district of the "Upland Company," and includes a cast of characters students come to know and empathize with as they move through each chapter's role play. Each part of the role play will enable students to employ aspects of relationship selling they have learned within a particular chapter. In the sales management chapters later in the book the role plays give students maximum opportunity to connect the managerial issues with the relationship-selling topics covered in earlier chapters.
- **F. Discussion Questions—UPDATED** Each chapter contains a set of questions designed to generate classroom discussion of key concepts and ideas from the chapter material, opening vignettes, and boxed features. These questions can also be used by students to enhance their own understanding or by instructors as review questions.
- **G.** Ethical Dilemma—UPDATED Ethical behavior in buyer–seller relationships has never been more important than it is today. Each chapter contains an ethical dilemma designed to place students in realistic scenarios that require one or more decisions. These scenarios can be used as discussion starters in class or assigned to students for reflection and reporting back individually or in groups.
- **H. Mini Case—UPDATED** Cases have consistently been shown to be an effective tool for students in learning and applying material. Each chapter incorporates a mini case that supports chapter subject matter. All the cases are original—written especially for the book and incorporating the latest in relationship-selling issues.
- I. Relationship-Selling Math Appendix—NEW The value proposition provides the basis for the customer's perception of any salesperson's product or service. As part of the value proposition a good salesperson will develop a quantitative analysis to provide concrete evidence of the product's value to a buyer. This appendix to Chapter 3 and the accompanying spreadsheet on the book's Web site (www. mhhe.com/johnston2e) lead students through interactive exercises detailing the process of putting together a financial analysis for a sales proposal and buyer

presentation. Many instructors mention the need for better quantitative skills among their students—this great new feature in the second edition allows for a class assignment on quantifying the value proposition.

- J. Sales Proposal Appendix—NEW Creating an effective sales proposal is an essential element of a successful sales presentation. The new appendix to Chapter 5 provides a complete template for developing a sales proposal. Along with the Sales Proposal Handbook posted in PowerPoint on the book's Web site (www .mhhe.com/johnston2e), the appendix guides students through the process of professional sales proposal development, linking the required content back to specific chapters and other source material. Instructors who want to assign a sales proposal development project in class will find this new tool exceptionally useful.
- **K. Videos—UPDATED** A complete set of video material has been included to support and extend the material in the book. In addition, unique to this book are video segments designed to enhance the role-play exercises.
- L. PowerPoint Slides—UPDATED A complete set of PowerPoint slides has been developed to enhance the in-class experience of both instructors and students. The package of slides is flexible enough for instructors to include their own material yet comprehensive enough to stand alone. Links to sales-related sites are imbedded in the PowerPoint presentation to enable the instructor to go directly to relevant Web sites if they are online.
- M. Instructor Manual—NEW AND UPDATED A newly created instructor's manual for *Relationship Selling*, Second Edition, provides an overview of each chapter, answers to discussion questions, and a discussion guide to role plays, ethical dilemmas, and mini cases. A comprehensive test bank is included.
- N. Ancillary Web Site Materials—NEW AND UPDATED Instructors and students benefit from a variety of extra materials on the book's Web site, many of which are periodically updated. The Web site also contains important additional resources related to the Relationship Selling Math and Sales Proposal appendices.

# Acknowledgments

Writing a book is never the result of the authors alone. Many people contribute in a variety of ways to the process. We would like to begin by thanking the many colleagues and sales professionals who inspired us to take on the exciting challenge of creating a text that reflects relationship selling the way it's practiced in contemporary firms. Over many conversations we developed the ideas and concepts you will find in the book. More specifically, we offer a special thank-you to the reviewers who provided valuable insights and guidance through the writing process. They are:

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Victoria Panzer at the University of South Florida deserves considerable praise for doing an outstanding job of developing the Relationship Selling Math and Sales Proposal appendices. We would also like to thank the great people at McGraw-Hill/Irwin, including Andy Winston, Sarah Crago, and Dana Pauley for their exceptional work and support during the process. Working with professionals who are also fantastic people makes the task much more enjoyable—thanks again to everyone on the McGraw-Hill/Irwin team. Finally, we want to offer a very special thank you to our families and friends. Without their encouragement and support over many months you would not be reading this book. They are special and appreciated. Enjoy the book!

Mark W. Johnston, Rollins College Greg W. Marshall, Rollins College

October 2006

# **Guided Tour**

Relationship Selling is truly unique. It is the first and only text to combine customer value and relationship selling with leadership and sales management. The Model, developed exclusively for the book, provides a great framework for understanding the process of relationship selling (what salespeople do) and the skills necessary to manage a modern sales force (what sales managers do). Chapters contain valuable information on the key building blocks of relationship selling (Leadership, Innovation, and Global) as well as expert advice from sales professionals who have been there and done it. In addition, each chapter includes an ethical dilemma that puts the student in a real world, ethical problem faced by salespeople and managers every day. Also, every chapter has a case to help students learn and apply what they have been studying in the chapter. Finally, a comprehensive set of role plays has been developed for the book that will enable students to learn by doing, using one of the most successful sales learning tools.





## Create Your Own Creativity

The ability to be creative when prospecting, working with customers, and developing solutions has always been important to salesperson success. Creativity will allow you to provide your customers with innovative ways to solve their problems or improve their situation. Creativity does not come easily to many salespeople. Barriers to creativity arise every day, and your ability to identify and conquer these ever-present obstacles will increase your sales success. Potential barriers include the following:

- Routine can be one of the most common barriers to your personal creativity. Following the same routine every day certainly will not stimulate you. It can lead to a serious lack of creativity and innovation in both your career and personal life. Some routine is definitely necessary, even desirable, but too much of it will dry up your creative juices. Try varying the ways and times ou do things in your daily schedule.
- Fatigue is another common barrier to creativity in salespeople. Giving your all every day to meet and

A role play at the end of each chapter gives students the opportunity to put their skills to work practicing the concepts they've just learned. Also, don't overlook the appendix following Chapter 1, where you'll find instructions and tips on how to get the most out of your role playing experiences.

- · Fear is an aspect of negative thinking. If you fear trying new sales techniques, you will certainly fail to tap into your creative juices. Conquering your fear of trying new things will help you service your customers. It's up to you how you face your fear, and if you face it with courage you will surely become more creative
- Any crisis is a phenomenal opportunity to tap into your creative abilities. Salespeople who fear crises don't realize that crises are chances to prevent the same

Boxes focusing on Innovation, Global Perspectives, and Leadership are woven throughout the text, using real world examples to emphasize the importance of these key themes in today's selling environment.



# Leadership

# Shift to Value-Added Selling Is Biggest Challenge in Sales

Making the transition from transactional (price- and productoriented) selling to consultative (value-added) selling is now the most frequent challenge faced by sales profes sionals, according to a survey of 134 sales managers by

Concessions

and agreement

Internationa What dif

marketplace Moving to se

Selling value Inexperience Negotiating Prospecting

Closing Unable to ge

"The fine more sophis Performan than half of sales techn counter trou cifically cor

a shift in emphasis as much as the complexity of the tasks

For more than a decade, managers have tried to move Eades. "As the survey implies, solution selling is where leading companies want to be. Not only does a consultative approach afford a competitive advantage, but it also makes for a more honorable seller. The salesperson becomes a problem

# Global PERSPECTIVE 4.2

Differences in Negotiating between the Japanese and American Cultures

Stage of Process Nontask sounding Considerable time and expense are devoted Spend shorter period of time Task-related exchange of This is the most important step: High first of-Information is given briefly and directly. information fers with long explanation and in-depth clari "Fair" first offers are more typical. fication are given Accomplished primarily behind the scenes. Persuasion This is the most important step: Minds Vertical status relations dictate bargaining are changed at the negotiation table and outcomes. aggressive persuasive tactics are used.

ress is difficult for Americans to measure Source: Reprinted from Columbia Journal of World Business, John L.Graham, "A Hidden Cover of America's Trade Deficit with Japan," p.00,

Are made only toward the end of negotiations

(holistic approach to decision making). Prog-

Concessions and commitments are made

throughout (sequential approach to deci-

sion making)



# Before You Begin

Before getting started, please go to the profiles of the characters involved in the a role play.

## Characters Involved

Chloe Herndon

Lenny Twiggle

Lenny is the new head buyer at Buster one of Chloe's top five accounts. Before on former head buyer Edith Greer the Appendix: Additional Information on Role Play

> The following information the role-play exercises at the end of each chapter. It is important to read and study this information before doing the role play in Chapter 1 and also to refer back to this information as needed before conducting the role plays in subsequent chapters.



The role plays involve a fictional consumer products company called the Upland Company. Upland sells a variety of health and beauty aids through supermarkets

## Ethical Dilemma

Jerry Gutel has been with Step Ahead Publishing for 11 years and witnessed firsthand its technology transformation. When he came to the company, Step Ahead salespeople carried large binders with all relevant information for hundreds of books (sometimes as much as 10 pages on each book). Often he would have to carry two or three of these heavy binders into a bookstore. Meeting with store

managers in the S

Five years ago sales force. Jerry by were no more her the computer, sudelivery dates. At pany laptops for data. It also wante not as personal py

Jerry was beco Two years ago he ever, Jerry had lit was the time Jerry many nights in a Questions

- Should Ben drop Midwest as his account and let it become a second-tier customer?
- 2. What obligation does a company have to customers who no longer warrant special service or attention?

# Mini Case

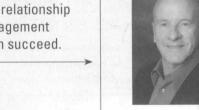
## **BestValue Computers**

BestValue Computers is a Jackson, Mississippi, company providing computer technology, desktops, laptops, printers, and other peripheral devices to local businesses and school districts in the southern half of Mississippi. Leroy Wells founded BestValue shortly after graduating from college with an information technology degree. Leroy began small but soon collected accounts looking for great value at reasonable prices with local service. When Leroy started his business in Jackson, he believed that anyone could build a computer. In fact, other than the processor and the software that runs computers, many of the components used are sold as commodities.

Leroy initially viewed his company as a value-added assembler and reseller of technology products. This business model was so successful that Leroy decided to expand from Jackson throughout southern Mississippi. To facilitate this expansion,

Following each chapter. students are given an ethical dilemma to consider. These cases can be used within or outside the classroom. and are accompanied by questions to use as an assignment or to help start a classroom discussion. Mini cases at the end of each chapter are also provided for in-class discussion or outside assignments.

The Expert Advice boxes at the beginning of each chapter show how real working professionals apply the concepts of relationship selling and sales management every day to help them succeed.



6 6 6 expert advice

CASE 3

Expert: Company: Business:

Cofounder, CustomerCentric Systems, L.L.C.

Mike is one of the top consultants and authors globally in the field of selling. His best-selling book, Solution Selling, literally created the modern genre of consultative selling that pervades today's organizations. His new book Customer-Centric Selling, written with John R. Holland, breaks exciting new ground by establishing a dynamic process for effective buyer-seller relationship building. (Visit Mike at www.customercentricsystems.com.)

The idea of being customer-centric is very much at the core of both your new book and your approach to working with firms. What's the essence of what it means to be customer-centric?

Customer-centric means you think about your customer's use of your products or services to achieve their goals and solve their problems when you design and market your offerings. It also means allowing your customers to buy from you the way they want to as opposed to being subjected to your presentation, your proposal, your cost

customer's problem. This approach fundamentally changes the way we sell, as well as the buyer/seller relationship overall. Students of selling today need to be prepared for more than simply walking through the traditional steps of a sales call—they must be able to act as valued consultants to their clients and work toward achieving win—win solutions.

Where do you see the relationship between sales and marketing headed over the next several years in most businesses?



presentation?

Expert: Company: Business:

Education

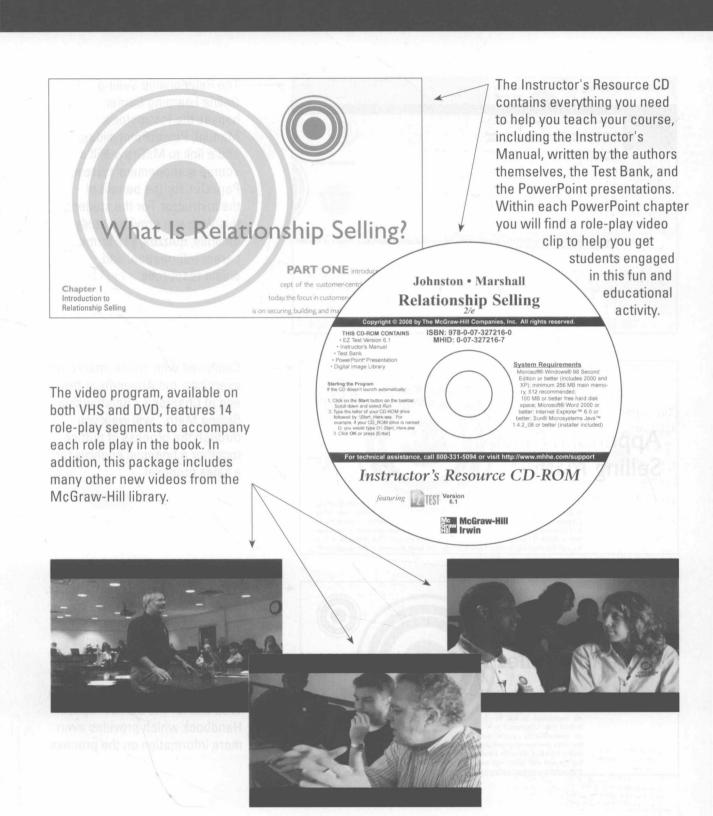
Mr. Randy Dorn, Preside Initial Security, San Anto Initial Security is a leade

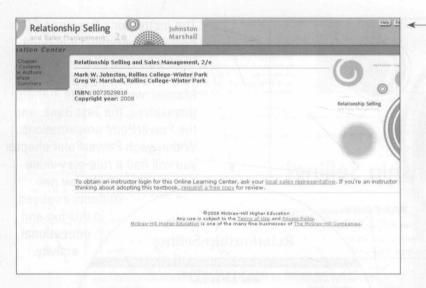
with over 8,000 employees. It has revenues in excess of \$250 million a year and operates in 26 states. Meeting client's needs and exceeding expectations for more than 77 years, Initial Security utilizes state-of-theart technology and industry recognized programs. For more information, visit Initial Security's Web site at: www.initialsecurity.com. Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and Economics, Bethel University

Q: Based on your experience, what do you think are the four most important characteristics of a successful sales

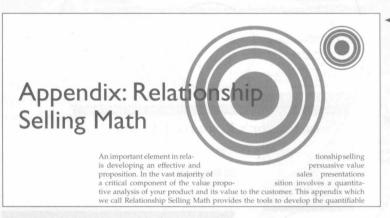
It is important to understand the customer's needs and to develop a presentation that communicates how we, as a service provider, will address those needs. Our customers must deal with many business issues in order to grow and

requested. It is during this early relationship building stage that the real selling takes place. The prospective customer must see our business as one that addresses their central needs, not our own. The relationship involves a consultative approach that educates the prospective customer on how they can improve profits and productivity, while we add value in areas of their business that we can affect. We therefore need a clear understanding of

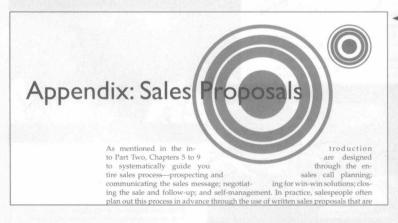




The Relationship Selling
Online Learning Center
houses the Instructor's
Manual, PowerPoint slides,
and a link to McGraw-Hill's
course management system,
PageOut, for the benefit of
the instructor. For the student,
this Web site provides study
outlines, quizzes, key terms,
career information, and
online resources.



 Combined with online interactive exercises, the Appendix at the end of Chapter 3, "Relationship Selling Math," will walk you through the process of putting together a financial analysis for a sales proposal.



Following Chapter 5 an Appendix, Sales Proposals, provides a template for developing a sales proposal. The Appendix links specific chapters and other source material to the sales proposal template. Check out the Web site for the Sales Proposal Handbook which provides even more information on the process.



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