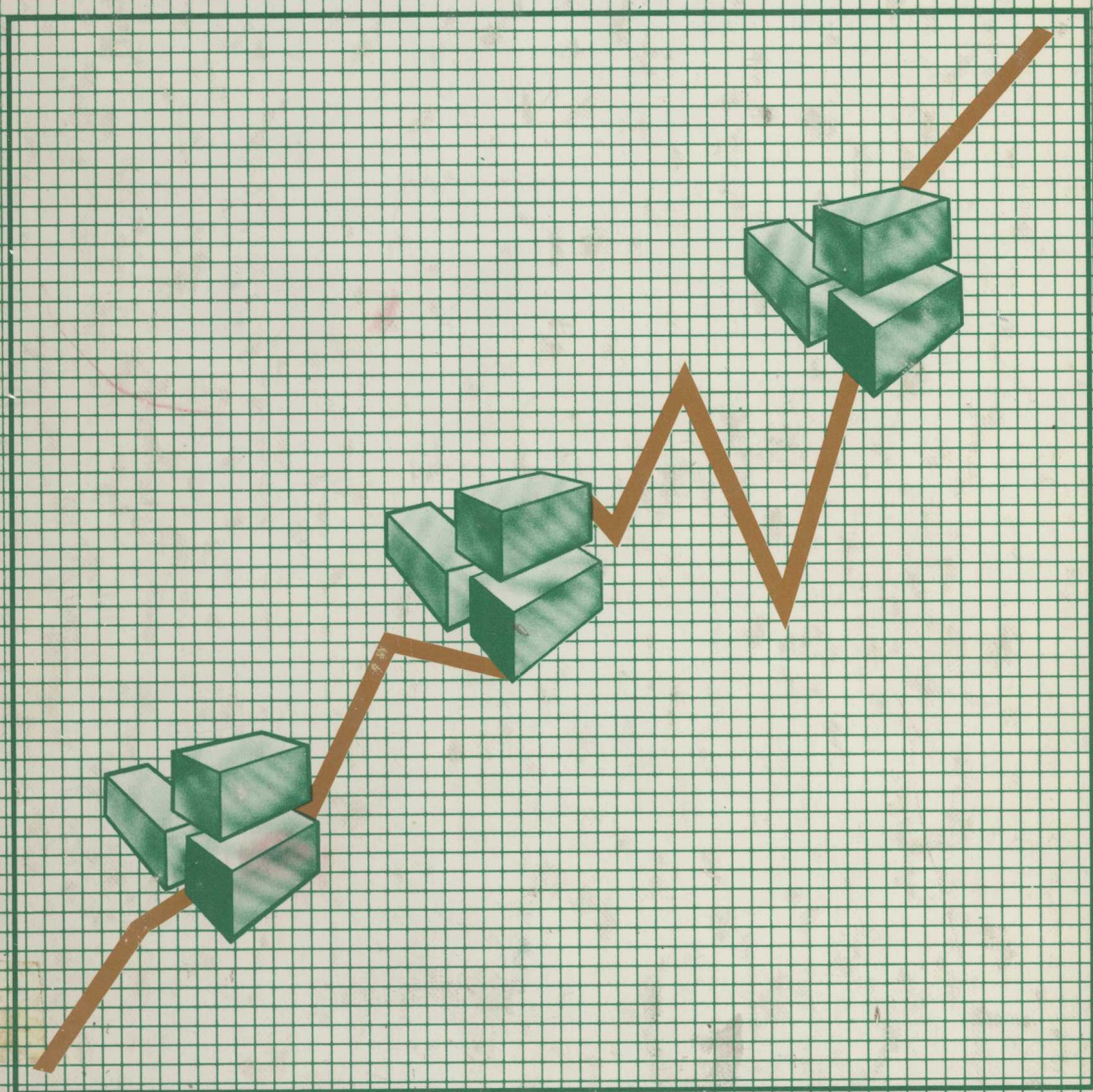
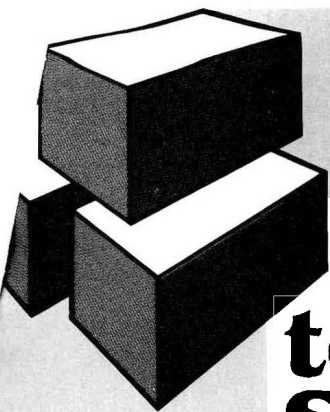


# INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL SELLING SHINN





# **Introduction to Professional Selling**

**George Shinn**

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# Preface

At one time or another, everyone is a salesperson. Convincing family or friends of an idea, applying for a job, and raising funds for charity are just a few examples of the selling activities that most people can expect to perform. The ability to sell is thus useful for anyone. As a career, selling offers unmatched opportunities for satisfaction and growth.

*Introduction to Professional Selling* is directed toward students who want to become professional sales representatives or who want to develop their selling skills to help them advance in related careers. It is a practical rather than theoretical text, based on strategies that have brought results to real salespeople.

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The five parts of *Introduction to Professional Selling* systematically present the important aspects of the profession. Part I, The Background for Selling, introduces the reader to the role of the sales professional in American society and surveys the career opportunities in this field.

Part II, Preparing to Sell, lays the foundation for developing skill in selling. Chapter 3 examines the personality traits of the successful salesperson. Chapter 4 defines product knowledge and tells where and how to acquire it. Chapter 5 focuses on consumers' buying motives and the steps of the buying decision.

As the title indicates, Part III places the student in the selling situation. Chapter 6 discusses prospecting, qualifying customers, and the preapproach. In Chapter 7 students learn about effective approaches. Chapter 8 examines the sales presentation, including the demonstration and use of visual aids. Chapter 9 identifies typical objections and teaches students how to anticipate, recognize, and overcome them. Chapter 10 describes buying signals and recommends techniques for closing the sale. In Chapter 11, the steps of selling are examined in the retail setting.

Part IV, Techniques for Increasing Your Sales, examines ways in which salespeople can improve their performance. Chapter 12 tells how salespeople can best organize their time and territory. Chapter 13 discusses how nonpersonal selling can be used to support the salesperson's selling efforts. Chapter 14 takes up call-backs, suggestion selling, and the telephone.

Part V, Your Future in Selling, provides practical advice for finding and applying for a sales position and attaining job satisfaction once a person has been hired.

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The practical approach of *Introduction to Professional Selling* is reflected in the realistic dialogues and examples throughout the text. The numerous illustrations include photographs; charts and graphs that present current statistics in a visual, easily understood way; and actual business forms.

The vocabulary of the sales professional is highlighted in bold type where each new term is introduced and defined, and a glossary at the end of the text serves as a convenient reference.

A unique feature of *Introduction to Professional Selling* is the inclusion of special sections under the title, "Ask a Pro." For these sections, actual salespeople were interviewed about specific topics covered in the text. The success stories of these professionals provide models for the students and evidence of the satisfactions that a career in selling can offer.

Each chapter ends with a series of activities that help the student review the key concepts in the text and encourage them to apply what they have learned. All the new terms introduced in the chapter are listed in Learning Sales Talk. Reviewing Your Reading allows the students to check their understanding of the information presented.

Several activities follow that build on the information reviewed in these two objective exercises. Each chapter includes several of the following activities: Applying Your Reading, Discussing Your Opinion, Gaining Experience in Selling, Working with People, and Taking Stock of Yourself. Two sales cases, based on real incidents, conclude each chapter. The questions that follow each case require the students to draw on their reading, their own experience, and a thoughtful analysis of the issues raised.

An accompanying instructor's manual and key provides suggestions for teaching an introductory course in selling at the postsecondary level. It includes objectives; a bibliography; appropriate classroom techniques and answers to end-of-chapter activities for each chapter; ready-to-duplicate objective exams with answer keys; and reproduction masters of useful forms.

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Many friends have helped in the preparation of this book. The author would like to express his special thanks to Patrick Scannell for his valuable assistance in the research, writing, and rewriting of this book. Pat also conceived of and developed the "Ask a Pro" sections. Sheila Furjanic conducted several of the interviews. To the sales professionals who shared their time and expertise, the author is also deeply grateful. Reviewers of the manuscript, who made valuable recommendations about the content and presentation, include Dr. Herbert Katzenstein, St. John's University, New York, New York; Margo Keen, The Hickey School, St. Louis, Missouri; and Kathleen Langen, Greenwich, Connecticut. The contributions of all these people are greatly appreciated.

George Shinn



## ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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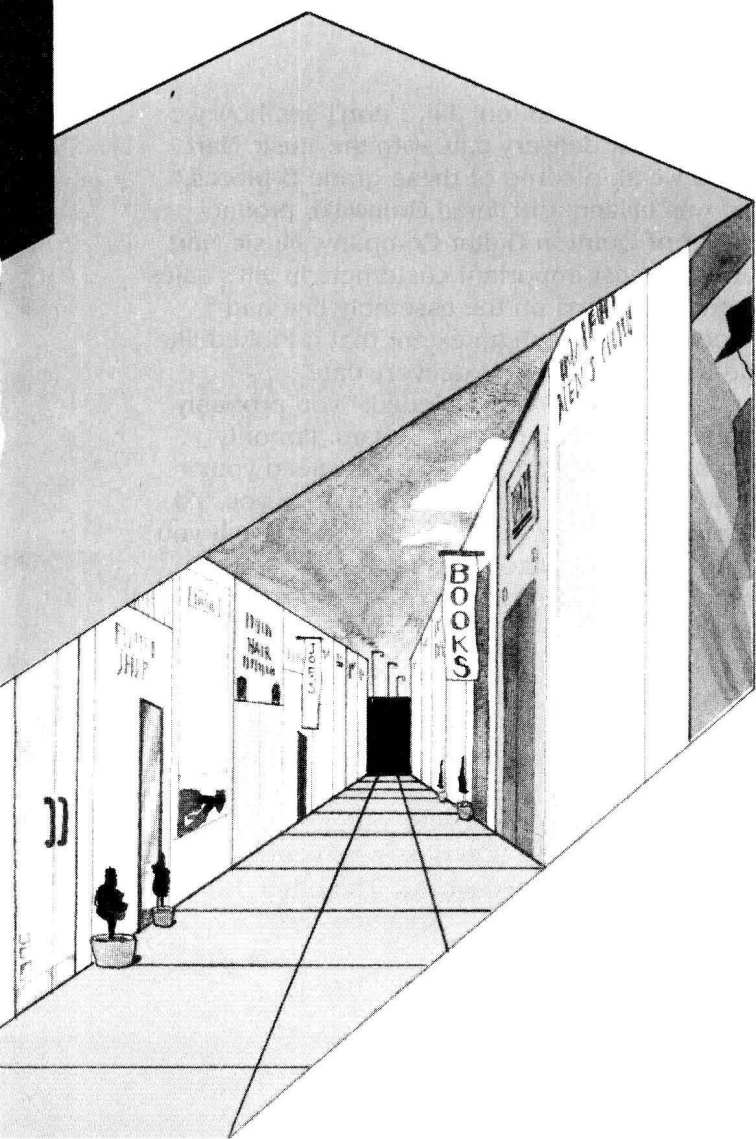
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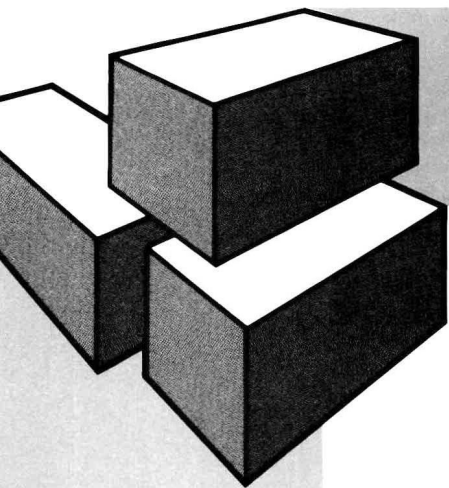
# **PART I**

# **THE**

# **BACKGROUND**

# **FOR SELLING**





# 1

## Professional Selling

"Well that's the situation, Jill. I don't see how we can meet your delivery date with the Music Mart chain unless we ship some of these grade B pieces." Jill Stewart was talking with Jared Grunwald, production manager of Quinton Guitar Company. Music Mart was one of the most important customers in Jill's sales territory, and problems on the assembly line had slowed production to such an extent that it looked like she would miss an important delivery date.

"Come on, Jill," Jared continued, "you probably can't even find the flaws in these guitars. I'm only telling you about the problem because I need your signature to release grade B pieces. If I were you, I'd ship on time using these pieces and adjust later if you get any guff from the customer. You wouldn't be the first salesperson here to solve a delivery problem that way. Chances are they'd never know the difference."

"Sorry, Jared, I just can't operate that way. Music Mart is expecting a top-quality product from us, and that's what they're going to get. If you can't have the whole order of 400 pieces ready on time, how many can you have ready? And how long will it take you to come up with the rest of the order?"

"I can guarantee you 200 pieces by your delivery date and another 100 in two weeks. The other 100 will follow 2 weeks after that," explained Jared.

"I'm afraid that's just not good enough, Jared. Our guitar will be a featured item for their big anniversary promotion, and it must be available in quantity in all twenty stores. Let's set up a meeting with Mr. Rice (the plant manager) sometime tomorrow morning, and discuss all the possible options here. I'd like to have him authorize enough overtime hours to meet that delivery date. I'm sure that the money spent for labor now will be worth the investment if we don't risk losing the Music Mart account. If Mr. Rice agrees that there is no possible way to avoid missing the delivery date, I'll get together with Jerry Schwartz, their head buyer, and explain the whole situation. Maybe he can work around our delayed delivery if he knows about it in time."

Why did Jill refuse to compromise on the quality of her customer's order? Why did she go out of her way to try to maintain a promised delivery date? Professionalism! Jill is a professional salesperson who realizes that making the sales presentation and writing the order are only two of the many aspects of the salesperson's professional responsibilities. She makes every effort possible to utilize all of her capabilities in providing quality service for both her customers and her company.

In this chapter you will learn what makes a salesperson a professional. The chapter will also examine the importance of selling in our economy and the advantages of a career in selling.



## WHAT IS SELLING?

---

The first step toward understanding professionalism in selling is defining selling. There are numerous accepted definitions, but for the purposes of this book, we will look at only two. The first was developed by the Definitions Committee of the American Marketing Association (AMA) after a thorough study of the various terms used in the field of marketing. "Selling is the personal or impersonal process of persuading a prospective customer to buy a commodity or service, or to act favorably upon an idea that has commercial significance to the seller."

### Personal Selling

---

This definition indicates that selling is done both personally and impersonally. It is **personal selling**, in which there is direct verbal contact between the salesperson and the prospective customer, that most of us think of when we hear the term selling. Unless the salesperson and customer are talking by telephone, personal selling also





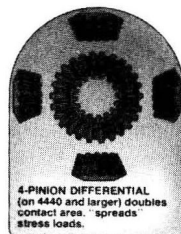
# POWER TRAIN

## Strength and efficiency are never sidetracked in the New Iron Horses™

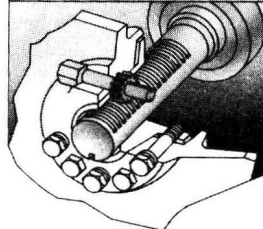
Tractor power trains catch it from both sides — from the added torque thrust of the new higher-horsepower engines working against the shocks and resistance from implements and the soil. The entire pathway of power must be structured to withstand both forces.

**Parts comparison quickly points up new strength.** You can see it in the bevel gear driveshaft, the bevel pinion and most certainly in the differential. Some of it is size, some is design, and some is metallurgy. For instance, the bevel drive and gear have been increased in size. The differential pinions for the 4440, 4640 and 4840 are designed as 4-pinion units. New hardening processes and hardness checking procedures in the factory have been initiated to deliver longer in-field wear characteristics.

**The goal has been reached.** Thus, the farming choice mentioned at the opening of this booklet — move fast with matched loads or move slower with larger loads — can be made with confidence that these new tractors have the strength and efficiency to carry out either assignment.



Large rear axles — 86 mm on the 4040 and 4240; 86 and 92 mm on the 4440, and 100 mm on the 4640 and 4840 — have been provided to stand up under weight and torque loads. Exclusive rack and pinion tread adjustment is retained.



**Personal selling involves direct contact between salesperson and prospect. Nonpersonal selling is directed to a mass audience.**

involves face-to-face communication. The salesperson can make a personal presentation and talk directly with the individual customer. Both of them benefit from the opportunity to see each other's facial expressions and physical actions.

## **Nonpersonal Selling**

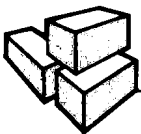
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Impersonal selling, which is also called **nonpersonal selling**, involves no face-to-face contact between the customer and the salesperson. Instead, it is aimed at making the company and its products known to a large audience. It sets the stage for the salesperson by familiarizing the prospective customer with the product or service being sold. Advertising and display are the two most common examples of nonpersonal selling. It also includes **publicity**, which is a company's efforts to get favorable stories published in newspapers and magazines or broadcast on television or radio. These items may be about itself, its employees, or its products.

## **Selling Provides Mutual Benefits**

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The AMA's definition of selling is helpful in distinguishing personal from nonpersonal selling, but it is incomplete. It fails to include the fact that the selling process provides satisfaction to both the buyer and the seller. The salesperson is responsible for determining the customer's needs and attempting to satisfy those needs as a result of the sale. Throughout this book, then, selling will be defined in a more comprehensive manner. **Selling** is the process of determining a prospective customer's needs and wants and persuading the customer to purchase a product, service, or idea that will satisfy those needs and wants, thereby benefiting both the buyer and the seller.



## **WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL SELLING?**

---

Selling can be considered a profession, but not all salespeople are professionals. Professionalism involves behavior, attitudes, enthusiasm, goals, and willingness to work hard. It requires commitment to yourself, your company, and your career. It is even willingness to disagree when disagreement leads to progress.

Many people go through life looking for the work or career that suits them best. The sales professional has found his or her life work, and would rather be selling than doing anything else.



The following list of characteristics represents the author's view of the role of the professional salesperson. Sales professionals:

1. Have a built-in desire to succeed and have little need for external direction or prodding.
2. Are goal setters and know that a written goal is more concrete and more likely to be accomplished.
3. Place their customers' and company's interests above their own self-interest.
4. See as their primary role the need to help other people fill their needs and solve their problems.
5. Enjoy day-to-day contact with customers simply because they have a genuine fondness for people.
6. Firmly believe that they are selling the best product available and that it will benefit the customer to buy it.
7. Make every effort possible to utilize all of their capabilities when



**Sales professionals firmly believe they are selling the best product on the market. This belief should be demonstrated in every transaction—regardless of size.**



- rendering service to their customers and the company, both at the time of the sale and after the sale.
8. Are constantly studying to improve their proficiency—to expand and update their knowledge of product, territory, company, and customer need.
  9. Never violate the trust and confidence of their customers or coworkers.
  10. Maintain honesty and integrity in all of their dealing with customers, the company, coworkers, and competitors.

When you think of the selling profession in terms of the ten factors described above, it is obvious that some salespeople don't meet the requirements of a professional. In the case situation at the beginning of this chapter, Jared Grunwald tried to talk Jill Stewart into violating her customer's trust by substituting an inferior product for the one that was ordered. When Jill refused and proceeded to set up a meeting to fight for maintaining the original delivery schedule with a quality product, she was acting as a true professional. It would have been easier for her to release an inferior product to keep the schedule, but she chose to maintain her honesty and integrity. She also could have taken Jared Grunwald's word for the fact that the company couldn't meet her delivery date without questioning him or seeking alternatives. Instead, she made every effort possible to utilize all of her capabilities in order to render the best possible service to her customer.



## **WHAT FUNCTIONS ARE PERFORMED BY PROFESSIONAL SALESPEOPLE?**

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Now that you know the type of people who are professional salespeople, let's examine three of the functions that salespeople perform as a part of their regular selling duties. Professional salespeople are problem solvers, communicators, and educators.

### **Salespeople as Problem Solvers**

---

The primary role of all salespeople is to help customers fill their needs and solve their problems. This important customer-oriented function is something all salespeople have in common, whether they are selling directly to the consumer, selling merchandise to a store owner, or selling industrial goods and services.





**First, salespeople help customers to recognize their needs—and then they show them how to fill them.**

As salespeople help customers solve their problems, they help them make five important buying decisions: (1) What are my needs? (2) What product(s) should I buy to fill these needs? (3) Where should I buy? (4) How much should I pay? (5) When should I buy?

The retail salesperson in the following example helps the customer to realize that he has a need and proceeds to help him find a product to fill that need:

**Customer:** And I'd better take four extra flip-flash packets for our vacation.

**Salesperson:** That will be \$12.15 all together, but before I ring up the sale, I'd like to show you something. Do you have any trouble using these flip flashes?

**Customer:** As a matter of fact, I do. I usually forget to turn the flip flash over when I should and I end up wasting film.

**Salesperson:** I used to have the same problem, and I also used to find it annoying that the number of pictures on my roll of film seldom came out even with the number of flip-flash



bulbs. But last summer I bought one of these electronic flash attachments for my camera. It cost only \$29 and I'm sure I've saved that much in flip-flash packets already. Let me show you how easy it is to operate.

## **Salespeople as Communicators**

---

Communication can be described as a combination of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All of these communication skills are important for salespeople.

**Listening.** Salespeople must be able to listen to and actually hear a prospect's questions, comments, and doubts if they are to be able to show how their particular product meets the prospect's needs. Many salespeople listen but don't pay close enough attention to catch the subtle comments or remarks that signal a customer's true needs.

**Speaking.** When salespeople are speaking to prospective customers, the first thing they must do is think before they speak. Then, they must keep on thinking as they speak. This may sound elementary, but it makes the difference between a carefully developed sales presentation that conveys the salesperson's ideas and zeros in on the customer's needs and one that is imprecise. Salespeople should also practice speaking clearly and slowly, without annoying speech habits such as "you know," "ah . . . ," and "like." "Ah . . . this new router will ah . . . save you both ah . . . time and ah . . . money. It's the ah . . . same model we ah . . . installed last month at ah . . . Medlocks in ah . . . Decatur."

**Reading.** Salespeople, like all other people in business, have to do a lot of reading as a normal part of their jobs. Sales literature, market items, product specifications, letters, memos, reports, and trade literature are just some of the items typically found on the salesperson's desk. Because of the volume of reading material, salespeople must learn to sort through all of the reading material, scan the items that have value, and study those few items that are worthy of serious attention.

**Writing.** Just about all sales jobs require some writing skill. Some salespeople are required to write several letters, memos, and reports every day or so. Others will regularly follow up most telephone calls with a short confirming letter. The key to effective communication by letter and memo is planning. Plan the letter or memo, prepare a draft, reread carefully, correct the draft, and prepare the final copy.

