



SPIRIT OF SALES

Giving of Yourself without Expecting Returns

ALAIN AMZALLAG, M.Sc.





Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys

SPIRIT OF SALES

Giving of Yourself without Expecting Returns

**Alain Amzallag, Ph.D. (ABD),
Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys,
Lévis, Québec, 2012, 31 pages.**

Published by the Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys, nonprofit organization,
Québec online publisher and bookseller.

Email : contact@manuscritdepot.com

Website : <http://manuscritdepot.com/>

All rights reserved. Any reproduction of this book, in whole or in part, by any means is prohibited without the written permission of the author. All rights of translation and adaptation, in whole or in part, reserved for all countries. Reproduction of any excerpt from this book, by any means, electronic, mechanical, and in particular by photocopying and microfilm, is prohibited without the written permission of the author.

ISBN 978-2-89612-457-2

© 2014 Alain Amzallag, M.Sc. All rights reserved.

Cover – art by Alain Amzallag

Top : Heaven's Gates for Drowned Sailors – Bottom : Undersea Volcano

Legal deposit – Second trimester 2014

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Canada

Print in Québec

This book is dedicated to my aunt,

Mrs. Thérèse Kafka, z"l

January 10, 2004 / Tevet 17, 5764

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	5
NOTE FROM A FRIEND.....	6
PREFACE.....	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	8
INTRODUCTION.....	9
Early Sales Jobs.....	10
Boutique Unique Jacques.....	10
Touring Club Montréal (CAA).....	11
CLTI (Canadian Life Technologies Inc.).....	11
The Art.....	13
Fetal Bovine Serum (FBS).....	13
The Sport.....	16
The Science.....	21
ADDENDUM.....	25
Advice.....	25
ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....	27
TO CONTACT THE AUTHOR.....	28
FURTHER WORKS BY ALAIN AMZALLAG.....	29

FOREWORD

I have had the opportunity to work with Alain Amzallag for many years of his professional sales career. I believe the essence of his short dissertation on salesmanship is basically that all commercial enterprises sell products to customers who in fact are living entities with likes and dislikes.

To sell effectively, whether 100 years ago or in this constantly shifting electronic age, requires an understanding that your customer is ultimately a person. If a business is not sensitive to the reality that its customers control its destiny and success, the business limits its ability to realize its real potential.

Many well established business experts provide books and courses on service quality, customer retention and new market growth potential, with the appropriate matrixes to support the value of the customer.

I consider Mr. Amzallag a sales professional who inherently understands the significance of the customer at a personal level, as most good salespersons do, in the process and success of commercial operations.

To be truly successful, companies should consistently seek to more clearly understand their marketplace from their customer's perspective.

Phil Robertson, M.A.
March 16, 2006

NOTE FROM A FRIEND

I met Alain just as I began my business career, and I had the pleasure of working with him for approximately 11 years.

During this time I learned a great deal from him regarding sales strategy, business realities and the crucial need to build strong relationships with customers.

Alain had the gift of discerning customer needs and translating that not only into a sale, but also into an opportunity to help his other sales peers.

It is appropriate that Alain is sharing his experience and knowledge of selling skills, as that is how he carried out his day-to-day work; he developed strategies for success and then enabled others on the team by sharing them.

I have been fortunate to have worked with Alain, and to have him for a friend.

Take heed of these wise words from a wise salesperson.

Roxanne Green

PREFACE

This book is based on the author's experience as a salesman, which started in 1977. From 1983 to 2000, during his journey as a Senior Territory Manager with Canadian Life Technologies Inc. (CLTI), he was trained continually by his managers in the skills of selling. Also, CLTI provided a variety of sales training courses, the memories of which have inspired and informed this handbook. The courses were Toastmasters International, Professional Selling Skills II, Face to Face Selling, and Acclivus Sales Negotiation. In addition, he was exposed to sales bulletins featuring tips and sales advice, and various articles in sales and marketing magazines.

Although these outstanding teaching and training experiences played a large role in the contents of this handbook, this work was written from memory alone.

While the author recalls the events in this book in good faith, he has relied on his memory of things variously long past. His opinions are and remain personal and they do not necessarily reflect accurately upon the character or actions of the individuals mentioned herein. The author does not represent or maintain that his depiction of any individual in this book is comprehensive or entirely accurate. Any reliance upon his opinions or the information presented by him shall be at the reader's own risk. The author accepts no liability in respect thereto.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Ms. Monette Greenway, VP Marketing Europe at Life Technologies Inc., for her supervision of my sales efforts and her lasting friendship at work and beyond.

I am grateful to my former CLTI national sales manager, Mr. Ed McMahon, for his kind supervision and friendship.

I am deeply grateful to Ms. Andrea Zanin and to Ms. Dimitra Barnard for the speedy and excellent copy editing of this handbook.

I am very grateful to Mr. Serge Segal for his valued support and friendship for the last 40 years (truly, a friend for life).

INTRODUCTION

If I were to rename Dale Carnegie's famous book, How to Win Friends and Influence People, in my mind it would become How to Make Customers Your Friends While Influencing Their Buying Habits. Ideally, this is what comes of careful application of the art, the sport and the science of salesmanship.

At first, contact with the customer should be made without intent to make a sale. It should rather be largely devoted to developing mutual congeniality, recognition and appreciation. This is what I refer to as the art of salesmanship. In the science of salesmanship, one applies solid, proven, established and ever-evolving techniques (such as those taught in courses like Professional Selling Skills II, Face to Face and similar) in order to assess the degree of difficulty represented by the customer, both initially and in the future. The sport of salesmanship involves accomplishing the above with good humor and graceful intelligence while humbly demonstrating your vast knowledge and expertise related to the products or services in question.

The combination of these three elements of salesmanship with an honest attitude and impeccable integrity can be a powerful tool for generating sales in a way that is gratifying for both the customer and the salesperson. Customers will appreciate your knowledge and credibility and truly enjoy doing business with you. This lays the groundwork for building customer loyalty which in turn reduces the effectiveness and success of your competitors' efforts. As chess players say, victory is the result of an accumulation of small advantages. This saying is pertinent to sales and more particularly to closing sales.

CHAPTER I

Early Sales Jobs

Boutique Unique Jacques

One of the my first sales jobs was taking charge of a large clothing store. I was co-manager, bookkeeper, salesman, buyer and morale-booster for a staff of seven. This would have been nothing particularly noteworthy except for the fact that, while I was there, I initiated a little fashion-change strategy.

I had noticed that the conservative dresses, skirts and blouses which were sold in the store were not only unappealing to my own artistic disposition, but left the thirty to forty year old women who formed the customer base cold as well. So, during the performance of my duties as a buyer, I began to progressively select more and more of the “classical Romantic” style of garments with very good results. I am proud to report that customers were delighted with the new patterns and designs; in the span of ten months, sales of the newly introduced style went through the roof.

Selling the line was relatively easy thanks to their attractive pastel tones and flattering cuts. However, it was also a matter of being honest with the customers about the fit, and most importantly, about the “plus” that a garment added to their appearance. Observing that the color of a garment goes well with the color of a customer’s hair or eyes, and saying things such as, “That outfit looks stunning on you!” are useful appeals to vanity and often yield positive results – but certainly not when done excessively or dishonestly!

This experience taught the author that being honest is the only way to have peace of mind, a sense of personal integrity and success!

Touring Club Montréal (CAA)

In 1977, I did a five-month stint in telemarketing that taught me the basic art of convincing people to sign up for services whose necessity is intangible. Granted, the Canadian Automobile Association and the American Automobile Association are very well-established, reputable and reliable automotive clubs in North America. However, selling intangibles involves helping the customer see that the worst can happen and then selling them protection against it.

I was responsible for presenting 20 to 25 different features and associated benefits. With leads from the United States Travel Association, the author made cold calls to total strangers who were about to travel to the United States. I detailed three or four of the features and benefits, closed the sale and obtained the customer's credit card information over the telephone.

I quickly realized that I had to be honest, natural, courteous, and motivated by the genuine desire to help and answer any questions the customer might have. In other words, I had to be myself, believe in the benefits that the CAA program provided to its members and allow this to show naturally in my intent to assist customers in making a decision.

I was very successful. Even though I was only working on a part-time basis, I sold between six to seven hundred memberships during those five months. It is worth noting that about eight of those sales were made to individuals who did not own a vehicle. This is due to the fact that the CAA rescues members and not vehicles. In my mind, this represented a tour de force.

CLTI (Canadian Life Technologies Inc.)

From 1983 to 2000, I worked as a Senior Territory Manager and set up a series of supply centres with Canadian Life Technologies Inc. (CLTI).

The supply centre is a concept in scientific and medical research institutions that was first implemented by a company called IBI in the US and Canada, providing molecular biology research products. One year later, Pharmacia, a competitor of CLTI and IBI, took the lead by installing one at the Microbiology Department at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. A few months later, the I implemented one (BRL Express) in the McGill Biology

Department storerooms—the first one ever for CLTI. To make a long story short, thirteen years later in 1995, there were eighteen supply centres in my territory and eighty-seven in Canada. This concept proliferated across North America very rapidly and extensively with several other companies as well.

A supply centre, as I set mine up, is simply an on-site, centralized location (in a department, large laboratory or building) that brings the customer the proximity, instant availability and easy access to products that, in a prior survey, they stated they use regularly or will use soon. This means no wasted delivery time and of course no shipping charges. As an on-site facility, the supply centre provides on-demand, well-preserved items stored at -70°C, -20°C, 4°C and room temperature.

Basically, a supply centre manager is a middle man who dispenses products upon request, records the information together with the purchase order number, and once a week transmits the information to CL.T.I. head office. In turn, the replenishment order is shipped at the same time as invoices are mailed to the individual customers for their weekly purchases. This is the way I operated with the supply centers in my territory. Once every six months, another survey is conducted for each supply centre as the list of required items evolves. Obviously, since supply centers generally deal with perishable products, the supply centre manager must be trained in stock rotation.

Supply centers can have a tremendous impact on sales, mainly when they are exclusive providers in a particular location. Scientists do not have much time to spare and are creatures of habit. So they are very likely to purchase from the same place as a matter of course. Moreover, the supply centre frees up the scientists' own storage facilities; down the hall, the CLTI supply centre can “store” items for them in a transient fashion while keeping the items at their permanent disposal.

CHAPTER II

The Art

It stands to reason that treating your co-workers with respect, deference and kindness is the only way to go, as well as any associated individuals who may be performing a task on your company's behalf. This attitude is important on the part of a salesperson because it precludes any ill will from the other people involved.

When working at CLTI, I selected my supply centre managers very carefully. They had to be flexible, friendly, autonomous, proactive and generally motivated by the desire to help and assist.

In order to show my appreciation to all eighteen of my supply centre managers, I gave each one of them a bottle of champagne and a box of Belgian chocolates every Christmas or Hanukkah. For religious Jews, I provided kosher gifts. I personally delivered every gift, and made sure that each supply centre manager perceived them as a thank you for helping me and CLTI. I performed this gift-giving endeavour for about 15 years. Every time, I could see in the managers' eyes and smiles their acknowledgement of the author's appreciation for their good work.

Fetal Bovine Serum (FBS)

In basic clinical research, there is an irreplaceable product used for growing cell and tissue cultures: Fetal Bovine Serum, or FBS. Both human and animal cells and tissues grow in monolayers or in suspension in polystyrene flasks or dishes in the presence of FBS, media, supplements and antibiotics. FBS is very expensive. Its price varies from \$100 to \$350 for a 500-ml bottle, depending on its availability on the market. It is considered to be a commodity item. Why is this of interest? For two reasons:

- A. To illustrate the power of telemarketing. A seven-minute conversation on the phone resulted in a purchase order for a large quantity of FBS totaling \$76,000.00. Needless to say, the technician knew me well and had already ordered and tested a sample. For large orders of FBS, a sample was sent to the customer and the anticipated number of bottles to be purchased from that lot was kept as a reserve at CLTI for one month.

- B. There are many players in the FBS market. If a salesperson is able to develop a very strong allegiance with the customer, by being truthful, dependable and honest, as well as a loyalty to the FBS provided by the company he or she represents, it is possible to prevent competing companies from making any headway. Case in point: at McGill University in Montreal, 48 laboratories formed a group which collectively purchased CLTI's FBS. For almost eight years in a row, they purchased 950 to 1,000 500-ml bottles of FBS like clockwork. Selling at slightly above competitive prices did not hurt my efforts since we provided the best quality FBS.

When a huge undertaking is planned, such as getting approval and agreements to set up a supply centre in a new location, the salesperson has to do their homework. The bigger the selling situation becomes, the more preparation time must be invested in order to be successful. Making an appointment with the decision-maker is crucial; so is the presence of at least one supporting individual (sales manager, marketing manager, general manager or fellow salesperson). It matters very little whether the colleague speaks or contributes; his or her mere presence is often sufficient to tip the scales in favour of the project. Somehow, the customer perceives that he or she is important because the presence of more than one person is bestowed upon him or her. It is a very subtle but real and operative phenomenon.

Vince Lombardi was a very successful coach of a national football team, the Green Bay Packers. He was famous for two sayings: "To succeed you have to have mental toughness and respect Lombardi time, as well." In other words, arrive fifteen minutes before the time of the appointment in order to compose yourself, and to mentally review of what you are trying to achieve, what you are going to say and the order in which you will proceed. If all the above is clear in your head, then the presentation will be excellent

and the outcome of the meeting will probably be to your liking. Also, your garments must be impeccable and your grooming extra-spiffy.

Whereas a new satisfied customer may become a steady revenue-generating blessing, a disgruntled customer is a catastrophe. An unsatisfied customer will most likely stop purchasing goods or services from you and your company, perhaps forever. It's a double whammy – not only will you lose sales, but also, the disgruntled customer will speak in detail to others about the nature of the company's or the product's unfortunate mishap, error or unreliability. The damage could become extensive quite rapidly. These situations require damage control right away. Many independent studies have documented the impact of one unsatisfied customer. While a satisfied customer will influence 3-5 new customer contacts in a healthy way, a disgruntled customer on average will make negative comments to 6-10 potential customer contacts.

The most effective way to control the damage is to take a few deep breaths, bite the bullet and face the irate customer. Just nod and say "Yes, yes, yes, you're right. We messed up! What can we do to make amends?" Do not ever argue with an irate customer! Instead, allow him or her to blow off steam; after a while the customer will calm down and sometimes even apologize for the outburst. If the irate customer is not pacified by your presence, your soothing words, or your tone of voice, you should call in reinforcements such as the sales manager, the marketing or general manager, or technical service personnel. A customer who is in a position of authoritative influence and who feels he has been ill-treated is akin to a festering boil – it's best to tend to them rapidly.

The reality is that salespeople are on the front line between the customer and the company. Salespeople have a missionary role to be the representative of the company when they are in the field they sell products or services.

In other words, the salesperson looks after the needs of the customer and those of the company the salesperson represents. In the process of quoting a price for the goods and services, the sales representative, together with the sales manager, establish a suggested price, which includes a quantity discount as well as taking account the customer's general attitude (loyalty) towards the company. The most important role for the sales representative is to be the customer's advocate and an intermediary with the intent and purpose to reach a win-win-win result for the customer, the company and the salesperson. This is real artwork!

CHAPTER III

The Sport

I have always believed that it was a privilege to be a salesman in medical and research product sales and certainly not a prerogative. I rubbed shoulders with professors and doctors, highly educated and knowledgeable technicians and very bright, sometimes brilliant undergraduate and graduate students. It was a real pleasure to learn from university and hospital staff members as they often considered me and treated him as an equal.

My scientific training was a tremendous asset to my sales endeavours in a medical and scientific environment because in talking with staff and customers, I understood what their research was all about and immediately knew which product to offer in order to assist them.

This brings me to a piece of advice to any aspiring high-calibre salesperson. Get one or two degrees or diplomas in a field which represents a passion for you; be the best you can at it! This field could be in engineering, computer science, science, biology, botany, geology... it does not really matter. What matters is that you become very, very proficient in that area. Then, get a job in sales in that field. If you have a gift for salesmanship, it will shine through very rapidly, and it is a matter of developing and honing it. Incorporating that gift into your vast base of background knowledge will yield results that will astound you and your company's management. Also, some companies have sales training programs, internally or externally, which might be available to further your efficiency as a salesperson.

A well-balanced and successful salesperson is one who uses their skills and abilities to create opportunities to generate purchases and customer goodwill toward the company. This task must be performed harmoniously, with good humour and in a matter-of-fact fashion. A huge asset for a salesperson is to possess congeniality. It is not an essential quality to have, but

it can enormously facilitate the art of sales. One thing I kept in mind while making a sales call was to make every possible effort to render the conversation pleasant – so pleasant that the customer looked forward to the next visit. This effort should be made regardless of sales outcome. As a consequence of this, you will be greeted with open arms at every one of your appearances. Again, do not think about personal monetary rewards during the sales call – or for that matter, to make things simpler, ever! This focus on having a pleasurable time is essential for the development of a long-term allegiance.

Also, it is important to explain that your priority is the customer despite your responsibility towards the company. Obviously, most of your commitment goes towards your employer; however, a healthy dose of “going to bat” must be toward the customers. Thinking and acting this way will help you take good care of your customers. The mindset will result in your dedicating a lot of effort to serving your customer even better. This, in turn, will develop their loyalty towards you and maintain and increase sales to unseen levels.

As salespersons we are occasionally subjected to very offensive and personally abusive statements, most of the time by ignorant people. Such statements may hurt, sometimes deeply, but for the good of the company, the salesperson must not react right away.

At a Québec university, there was an administrator whom I liked; we had a good relationship. After thirteen years of this camaraderie, the administrator, in the director’s office with eight people present, said: “Alain is a great guy, a fantastic and dependable fellow. But there is only one thing wrong with him: he is Jewish.” I did not give him a piece of my mind, although I was dying to. Alain was deeply hurt; their friendship was betrayed.

One year later, a transfer was in the works to move that university’s supply centre from one pavilion to another, and this same administrator was directing traffic and making arrangements. He told me that there was no room for the CLTI’s supply centre; he explained that a shelf had to be cut in order to accommodate spatially the CLTI supply centre: Ill will in full bloom. I argued my case, mentioning the fact that CLTI was the first one in 1987 to establish a supply centre at this university and that the other three competing companies were emulations of CLTI’s supply centre – to no avail.

So, recognizing an opportunity for payback time, I made in-person contact with every one of the 32 principal investigators in the pavilion where the supply centre was to be transferred, as well as their post-doctoral fellows, their research assistants, their students and more.

I asked them, very kindly, for their help. I explained the whole situation and requested that they speak to the administrator several times daily to stress the importance of having a CLTI supply centre close by. Starting simultaneously on a Monday morning, irate scientific personnel made an incredible number of visits to the administrator, as well as making phone calls, sending faxes and e-mails and leaving an avalanche of notes on his desk.

These scientists agreed to be mobilized because they needed our supply centre for its contents and the convenience it afforded them, but also because of the loyalty to me and to the company they developed throughout the years.

The results were spectacular. The first day, the flurry of interventions resulted in the administrator leaving me eight messages in his voice mail box. I did not call back! The second day, there were fourteen messages imploring me to call him back in order to discuss – and I did not call back! The third day, I got the message from him that CLTI's supply centre would be given our desired location. I let this situation last two more days, for good measure. Obviously this administrator was an ignorant anti-Semite. Never again!

The first lesson this anecdote teaches us is that during the process of selling – whether face to face, by phone or by any other means – the maintenance of one's credibility, integrity and product or service knowledge, as well as an obvious desire to help and to assist the customer select the appropriate item, will generate a very desirable customer loyalty. What I am trying to say is that the scientific staff of this Québec university would not have helped create such a blitz at the request of just anyone (I humbly believe).

The second lesson is that no-one messes with CLTI's supply centres! It takes an incredibly huge amount of time, effort and work to set one up.

In 1984, my territory registered the highest sale increase in Canada. At a Montreal restaurant during supper, my dear humorous friend and national sales manager Ed McMahon asked him what I would prefer as a reward: a trophy or a \$1,000 cheque. I pondered for a few minutes and then I chose the trophy. (This choice was to become a trend.) The reason was that money would have invited greed, envy and competition within the sales force and thus compromised the desired and very valuable cooperation, collaboration, exchange of leads and overall positive and constructive atmosphere during the quarterly sales and marketing meetings.

I am glad I chose the trophy. Despite the fact that I became top salesman in Canada seven times over his 17-year career with CLTI and could have gained a great deal of personal profit if I had chosen the cheque each time, I believe this represents \$7,000 very well invested. The sales meetings among members of the sales force and marketing personnel at CLTI were pleasant and the evenings were even more enjoyable; shooting the breeze, enjoying libations and fine cuisine, and telling jokes were common occurrences. We were a great team—the sales force worked hard and played hard!

At one point, LTI North America conducted sales and marketing meetings that included the US and Canada. Amazingly, in regional meetings where two out of five American LTI regions were to meet with Canadian LTI, every region in the US fought and manoeuvred for the privilege of having the meeting with the Canadians. We, the Canadians, were famous for being party animals – joke-telling, guitar-playing, singing, beer-guzzling fun people to be with. We were the “crazy Canucks” and proud of our nickname! All of this to show how beneficial – for everyone – a little sacrifice can be in the long term (trophy vs. cheque).

Should the customer state that your product is cheap, meaning the low price, the salesperson’s instant reply should be: “Pardon me Sir/Madam, you must mean inexpensive, because not only all our products are priced competitively but they also are of high quality.”

This is why a salesperson should never sell on price alone. In some instances, with group purchasing large quantities, buyers will play a ping-pong game – they play one competitor against the other, unethically revealing one competitor’s quoted price to the other. The salesperson, in my opinion, should refuse to partake in such a game. It happened to me

two or three times, and I told the buyer that my products were not common potatoes; CLTI's products were not equivalent to the competitors'. I explained that I believed the CLTI product should command a slightly higher price because it was a superior product, better quality-controlled, and made with better basic ingredients; as a consequence, a task performed with it would yield better, more reliable results. Then I added that the last price on the quotation I provided the customer with was my final one. This approach will do wonders for your self-esteem as it makes you proud to work for and stand up for your company and its products; and sometimes you might get the sale.

Learning thoroughly about your products, learning about the competitor's equivalent products and learning to compare them with dexterity – this should instill in you, the salesperson, a sense of pride and resolve that translates into having fun at selling and making a living at it. Moreover, customers get attached to salespeople and vice versa. The conversation with each customer ought to be geared towards spending a pleasant time together; through discussion, you can then help the customer choose to buy your products and close the sale. Countless times, my customers greeted me with: "Hello, Alain. What can I buy from you today?"

CHAPTER IV

The Science

Art and science are best described as communication between the sales force and marketing. Sales meetings are a forum for brainstorming. They are the salesperson's chance to express opinions and ideas as the "missionary" of the company, on the front lines. Indeed, salespeople know what the customer expects, and what kinds of promotions they would enjoy. If the salesperson keeps the company's financial interest in mind while thinking about satisfying the customer's wishes, the salesperson's efforts cannot fail. It is a question of walking the fine line between the customer's interests and the company's.

The idea of giving of yourself without expecting returns is a leitmotif which is applicable to several facets of life. If one gives altruistically of oneself, be it in friendship, love, business, volunteer work, charity or elsewhere, rewards of great magnitude will be plentiful and will endure.

I have noticed occurrences of the above, and I believe the principle is largely true and does not fall into the category of self-promotion. Rather, it is a matter of being yourself with the customer. Your integrity, honesty and sincerity will shine through.

As for the rewards, they may be of several kinds, of many levels and varying intensities. The most valued one, in my estimation, is customer allegiance – repeat business, sales and profits. Strong relationships are another benefit. For a salesperson, being well received and greeted every time you show up is extremely gratifying. You may even develop long and endearing professional friendships with customers during sales calls. Lastly, these factors lead to career satisfaction. They all contribute to making the salesperson happy to get up in the morning, to perform your

expected duties with a smile in your heart – and believe it or not, get paid for it.

One of the proven ways for salespeople to effect successful selling is to have a magnanimous frame of mind – magnanimous toward the customer and toward the competition. Obviously the salesperson's priority is the welfare of the company and his or her own welfare. But the two are intimately linked. If the company is not thriving, neither is the salesperson. As for magnanimity toward the customer, the attitude of not wanting to pull something over on the customer, and the genuine wish to objectively assist in the selection of the appropriate items, products or services (sometimes even directing them to a competitor), will generate gratitude and goodwill. As a consequence, the customer will most likely purchase the product or service from you and will become a long-time repeat customer.

The idea of respect is key. If a salesperson manages a territory, a good approach is to have a relatively constant base year after year. This base is generated by repeat customers who are satisfied with the product, quality control, shipping – and the salesperson's relationship with them. Once the base is created, the salesperson should only have to spend twenty percent of selling time catering to base customers. Eighty percent of their time can be devoted to establishing new customer relationships, which, together with new products and services, will lead to increased sales from year to year.

This approach to sales – treating the customer with respect and dignity and gently allowing them to make up their mind – makes it difficult for competitors to displace the salesperson and the company as a provider of goods and services. Selling is not an all-or-nothing endeavour. There are no failed sales attempts. A partial victory is a victory. That is, if you have somewhat advanced the process of selling, it must be seen as a victory. If it takes three, five, eight sales calls to achieve your goal and close the sale, so be it. Never give up. Even after the customer purchases from a competitor, the tables could turn.

In sales, your credibility could represent a stunning blow to your competitor's efforts to displace you if it is built through repeated manifestations of personal and professional integrity. One aspect of this integrity is a constant watchfulness not to mislead the customer in any fashion whatsoever. If the customer asks a question that the salesperson cannot answer, the salesperson should say, "I do not know," (what is more

beautiful than those four words?) “but please, allow me to inquire for you and I will get back to you ASAP with the answer to your question.” This must be done even if it means delaying the close of the sale. However, since the salesperson will get back to the customer, the customer will view the salesperson as truthful, sincere and reliable. Such customers often will give you referrals as you have treated them with respect for their intelligence and allowed them to make their decision at their pace.

Some sales representatives are too eager to close a sale.

A fun and gratifying way to close a sale, and it does not happen very often, is to proceed such that the customer closes the sale him or herself. In order to achieve this result, the salesperson links three or four of the customer’s essential needs to the features and benefits of a given product or service. Without attempting a trial close or a close, the sales representative illustrates extensively, yet subtly, the incredible nature of this fit. Invariably, five or ten percent of customers will be induced to proceed with the purchase on their own initiative.

How many times have we seen a customer ask for a particular salesperson? It happens when a particular sales representative took excellent care of the customer. It could be because of the salesperson’s honesty, congeniality, joke-telling, charisma, good taste, and so on... or perhaps that he or she went to bat for the customer while maintaining and respecting his or her commitment to the company. Customers feel and acknowledge these intangibles.

Marketing and sales complement one another, so everyone wins when the two teams work hand-in-hand. During the selling process, elements of information can be collected to pass on to the marketing team, which can in turn help sales to be even more successful. During this chit-chatting, very often, the customer may volunteer information as to what they think would be a good promotion. (Customers can be subtly probed as well). Basically, this information is money in the bank. Hundreds of other customers may agree, provided the idea is good and sound. After making a quarterly compilation of customers’ suggestions, I send a report to the product or marketing manager who, in turn, can then create the pertinent promotions.

After a promotion is run completely, sales results come in, and the marketing department takes care of the number-crunching. At the next sales and marketing meeting, the marketing manager presents the results of every promotion run in the previous quarter, including the impact of the individual promotions. This sort of two-way flow of information between sales and marketing teams at Canadian Life Technologies Inc. resulted in CLTI being referred to as the “jewel” of LTI.

ADDENDUM

Advice

1. Consider being a salesperson a privilege and not a prerogative.
2. Assimilate and work with the following four maxims:
 - a) Try your best.
 - b) Do not make assumptions.
 - c) Do not take things personally.
 - d) Be impeccable with your words: say what you mean and mean what you say.
3. Never stop reading product information material.
4. Make it a permanent objective to develop customer relationships.
5. Take upon yourself the role of establishing win-win-win results.
6. Move forward.
7. Remember that “cheap” and “inexpensive” are not the same thing.
8. Do not put pressure on customers.
9. Ask customers for a premium for the superior quality of your goods and services.
10. Have fun!
11. Take some time to shoot the breeze with customers.

12. Treat an \$80 sale as you would an \$80,000 sale – you never know what may happen in the future with your \$80 customer.
13. Thank the Lord for small mercies (small sales)!
14. Thank the Lord for huge mercies (huge sales)!
15. Always say thank-you to the customer.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in Casablanca, Alain Amzallag, M.Sc., quickly realized he had a passion for science. After advanced scientific studies in institutions of higher learning such as McGill University and Cornell University, Alain changed careers and invested himself in the world of sales. His natural gift for salesmanship, his extensive professional sales training and his proficiency in the science behind the products made him a very successful salesperson with Canadian Life Technologies Inc.

Alain won several Salespersons of the Year Awards in Canada, as he continually honed his salesmanship skills while keeping up with the current pertinent scientific information.

In this handbook, Alain shares his analysis of the ways that sales ought to be carried out: in the spirit of a win-win-win outcome for the customer, the company and the salesperson.

TO CONTACT THE AUTHOR

E-mail

alainamzallag@bell.net

Web site

<http://www.alainamzallag.com/>

Page dedicated to this book on the website
of the Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys

<http://www.manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.7.htm>

FURTHER WORKS BY ALAIN AMZALLAG

Bipolarité & Cancérologie – Défis et espoirs

Alain Amzallag, M.Sc.

Essai, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys, Laval, 2009, 192 pages.

Traduit de l'anglais par Marc Amzallag, M.A.

ISBN 978-2-89612-307-0

<http://manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.1.htm>

Anatomy of a vision

Systems Equilibrium Theory

as a General Theory of Cancer Management

Alain Amzallag, M.Sc.

Essay, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys, Laval, 2010, 88 pages.

ISBN 978-2-89612-325-4

<http://manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.2.htm>

Pensées d'Avi Ben Mordékhaï

Alain Amzallag, M.Sc.

Essai, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys, Lévis, Québec, 2010,

114 pages, illustré.

ISBN 978-2-89612-349-0

<http://manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.3.htm>

Réflexions

Alain Amzallag, Ph.D. (ABD)

Essai, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys,
Lévis, Québec, Canada, 2012, 134 pages.

ISBN 978-2-89612-349-0

<http://manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.4.1.htm>

Reflections

Alain Amzallag, (ABD), Ph.D.

Essay, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys,
Lévis, Québec, Canada, 2012, 160 pages.

ISBN 978-2-89612-412-1

<http://manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.4.2.htm>

**High, Flat, Down And Back Up Again!
A Guide to Manic-Depressive Illness (Revised)**

Alain Amzallag, Ph.D.

Essay, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys,
Lévis, Québec, Canada, 2013, 60 pages.

ISBN 978-2-89612-439-8

<http://manuscritdepot.com/a.alain-amzallag.6.htm>



Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys

Québec first non-profit online publisher and bookseller

<http://manuscritdepot.com/>

ISBN 978-2-89612-457-2