



BRIGHT IDEAS

To DOUBLE YOUR SALES
FROM

Colin Pearce



Vol 7: No 5 May 1997

Phone: (08) 8374 0711

\$6 per issue

Sales and Marketing

Salesmanship: Queen of Sciences, King of Professions

Salesmanship is wonderful scarce stuff: Wonderful because it makes such a difference to business; scarce because it's simply as rare as rocking horse manure.

My observations tells me we are in danger of losing it forever. If it were a criminal offence to use it, most salespeople would not present enough evidence to get convicted.

Although I have recited it many times in the past I can only recall snippets of this description of a salesperson. It was obviously composed in the USA in the fifties and paints a fairly dated picture of a salesperson's life, yet there are elements in it which suggest that salesmanship was a life-style back then - albeit apparently only for men.

A salesman is many things- a pin on the map to the sales manager, a book entry called "cost of sales" to the accountant, a wink and a cheeky remark to the receptionist, the purveyor of the balm of flattery to the buyers.

A salesman must have the charm of a playboy, the tongue of an orator, the craft of Machiavelli and the tact of a diplomat.

He must be an expert golfer, tipster, card sharp and raconteur. He must be able to work all day, play all night and get up at dawn, fresh as a water lily and drive to the next town and do it all again.

He is a pessimist who wishes his territory were smaller, his competitors fairer, his products

more reliable, his shipping department prompt, his accounts department reasonable and his customers human. He is also an optimist who knows none of this will ever be but he goes ahead and makes the next sale anyway.

Ever since innocence was swapped for the forbidden fruit, human beings in all but a few cultures, have been expressing their uniqueness by trading.

Since the first digging stick was traded in for the first hoe, the first hoe for the first plough share, the first plough share for the first tame mule, the first mule for the first team of bullocks, the first team of bullocks for the first steam tractor and the first steam tractor for the first petrol one and the first petrol tractor for the first eight-wheeled-pneumatic-tyred-air-conditioned-quad-CD-stereo-diesel-powered-ground-masher - there have been sales people with the gift of salesmanship able to persuade others to step up to the next level of ease and sophistication.

Adam Smith noted way back in the eighteenth century in *The Wealth of Nations*, "it is the propensity of human beings to truck and barter."

This being true, you'd not be surprised to find some people being better at it than others, but like me you must be astounded that all traders don't regard it as important enough to master.

In some countries like Russia there's no need for salesmanship because there's nothing left to sell. In Cambodia all the salespeople have been shot, and in Albania everything

has been stolen. In North Korea, anything left is supposed to belong to everyone anyway, and in Rwanda everything belongs to someone else. In the UK they say, "Salesmanship has a certain place", in the USA they say, "Salesmanship made this country great" but in Australia they say, "Salesmanship makes me feel uncomfortable."

I want to help you feel that salesmanship is OK. It's not about loud ties, large brief cases, big talk and heavy drinking. Salesmanship is made up of at least five elements and in the next few editions I'll explain them.

They are:

- Portrayal of an idea
- Painting of pictures
- Perseverance against the odds
- Professionalism at all costs
- Planting of hope



Bright Idea:

Get to like the joy of salesmanship.



Change is a half light

Does the pace of life wear you out? Are you feeling bloated at the number of things you need to keep up with? You're not alone. These are tiring times.

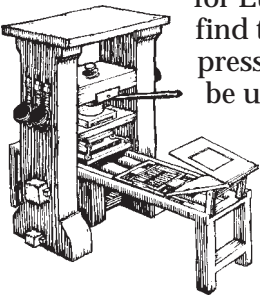
Two things used to be certain: Death and Taxes. Now there are three, no four: Death, Taxes and I'd add Change – AND the fact that when you want to get an e-mail from someone to meet a deadline you can't get on the 'net'.

Barbara Johnson says, "change is inevitable, except from a vending machine."

Until the late twentieth century that process of change has been fairly slow.

- **It was two thousand years** before early humans discovered that iron cut deeper than sticks yet only forty years from manned flight to the flattening of Hiroshima.

- **It took five thousand years** for Europeans to find that a wine press could also be useful as a printing machine, yet only fourteen years from the inven-



tion of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee to Marc Andreesson's Netscape in 1994.

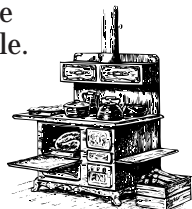
- **It took humans six thousand years** to travel by steam train yet only one hundred years to get to the moon.

The last hundred years.

There has been more change in this century than in any other.

My mother lived from 1908 until her death at age 82, and was born into a time when life was simple.

- Her own mother cooked her first meals on a wood



stove. She cooked her last meal in her microwave.

- They walked everywhere.
- Her first long journey was in a sailing ship taking two weeks to get from Adelaide to Brisbane. Her last was in a 747 Jumbo Jet, taking seventeen hours to get to Canada.
- Her first entertainment was her father singing at the kitchen table while banging some spoons. Her last was watching her son singing on a TV show.
- Her first calculations were done on a slate with a 'ready reckoner', her last on a Sharp multi-function calculator.
- Her first correspondence overseas was by post via ship - a six week wait. Her last was instant - by telephone to me.

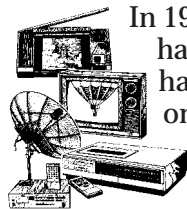
The last 50 years.

There has also been more change in the last 50 years than in the last 4000.

In 1947, who'd ever heard of transistorised radios, televisions, stereos, VCRs, tape recorders and computers, Nike, McDonalds, instant soup, vinyl, jet travel, nuclear power plants, plastic guns and rubber bullets.

The last 5 years.

And there has been more change in the last 5 years than the last 4050.



In 1992, hardly a home had a computer. Now half the population is on the 'net' which no-one had heard of five years ago. LP records have disappeared in the face of the CD explosion and cassettes are seen as old fashioned. CD roms are common place. Every business has a fax but didn't five years ago. TV is going digital, Rugby League has gone to the dogs, the Crows are second, Port Power are in 'the eight', and the

Poms have got up a cricket team at last.



On your PC you used to have to type A:\exe.bat.

splosh.fumble.peck.grope.doc (unless you had a nice Apple

Mac like I did) and laughed at Mac users with their 'toys'; click and drag windows, trash cans and a friendly interface, until you got Windows 95 and then you suddenly realised Apple was right after all.

In the light of this we are supposed to be healthier wealthier and wiser but you might have picked up on the fact that we are more time poor than ever and the paperless office is swamping us with memos, faxes, multiple copies and more and more stuff to fall behind on — and the really great invention of the last five years – MEETINGS just to try to keep up.

Epidemic.

I don't mind confessing I'm puffed out and if you are too, then take some consolation in the fact that you are not alone. It's the great 'puffed out epidemic' of 1997, and it seems that the only cure is to recognise that there is no cure.

I feel better already, don't you?

You see change makes us feel as though we haven't got control. We haven't!

Just for now we don't know where the 'net' is headed, we don't know why they can't get Microsoft right, or how much ram will be enough. Cameras are in the twilight between film and digital and eggs come and go in favour depending on whether cholesterol is good or bad.

It's chaos out there.

Bright Idea:



Embrace change before it buries you. Agree to live in the half light of never being completely in control.