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TO SELL IS
HUMAN 

THE SURPRISING TRUTH
ABOUT MOVING OTHERS

**A 14-DAY PLAN
FOR FIRST MOVERS**

INTRODUCTION

December 2012

Dear Reader:

Thanks for pre-ordering *To Sell is Human*. This 14-day plan will give you a head start on applying some of the principles in the book. But the two weeks of exercises you're about to peruse will make more sense if you understand a bit more about the book itself. So here's a quick summary.

Two ideas animate *To Sell is Human*. First, like it or not, we're all in sales now. In the U.S., 1 in 9 workers now works in "sales" – that is, they earn their living trying to convince others to make a purchase. But in Chapter 1, I present new evidence showing that those other 8 in 9 are in sales, too. They're not making a cash register ring. But they're spending a huge portion of their time persuading, convincing, and cajoling others to part with resources – an activity I call "non-sales selling."

That leads to the second key idea. When I tell people they're in sales, the typical reaction is something like this: *Blechhh!* Sales has a dim reputation. We consider it sleazy, cheesy, and skeezy. But, I show in Chapter 3, that's a mistake. Sales has changed more in the last 10 years than it did in the previous 100 years. And a consequence is that the low-road, user-car-dealer-in-a-plaid-sport-coat approach has become less and less of an option.

Yes, we're all in sales now. But sales isn't what it used to be.

As a result, emerging now is a new approach to moving others ("moving others" is my catch-all term for traditional sales and non-sales selling). It's built on 3 fundamentally human qualities and demands 3 key skills.

The 3 qualities, whose power is supported by a rich trove of social science, are the new ABC's:

Attunement: The capacity to take someone else's perspective and calibrate your words and actions to another's point of view.

Buoyancy: The capacity to stay afloat on what one salesman calls "an ocean of rejection."

Clarity: The capacity to make sense of murky situations, to curate information instead of merely accessing it, and to move from problem-solving to problem-finding.

These qualities serve as the foundation for three particular abilities that are now most critical in moving others:

INTRODUCTION

Pitch: The skill of distilling your message to its essence and doing it in a way that engages another person deeply enough to begin a conversation.

Improvise: The skill of departing from the script to respond to unforeseen resistance and objections.

Serve: The skill of turning your encounters from transactions to transcendence by making them personal and making them purposeful.

That's the background.

Now a few words about the workbook. We've designed it for you to use over two weeks – 14 days of activities. On each day, I'll present a new activity, tell you which quality or ability it's aimed at boosting, and explain its purpose. The rest is up to you.

But by the time *To Sell is Human* arrives at the beginning of the New Year, I'm convinced you'll already be a little bit better at moving others.

So thanks again for your early support. If you have any questions or comments about the workbook or anything else, email me directly at dp@danpink.com.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Pink". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

DAY 1: TIME TRAVELER QUALITY: ATTUNEMENT

Purpose: The ability to take another’s perspective can be difficult. It requires muscles many of us haven’t fully developed. Today’s activity, which comes from improvisational theater expert Cathy Salit, requires you to look at the present through the lens of the past.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Find a partner. Or, if you’re in a group, organize yourself into pairs.
2. Create a list of 6 items that somebody from 300 years ago would not recognize.

Examples: a carry out pizza, a traffic light, an e-reader, plastic sandwich bags...

3. Select one item from the list above.
4. Ask your partner to play the role of someone from 1712.
5. Now explain the selected item to her, with the other person posing questions that someone from 1712 might ask.
6. When you’re done, switch roles and allow your partner a chance to be the explainer and you to be the person from the past.

7. Consider the following questions:

- ▣ What was challenging about explaining the item?
- ▣ What assumptions did you make during the explanation?
- ▣ What additional items or concepts did you need to explain? How did talking with a time traveler-- someone with a different point of view than your own-- help you attune your message?
- ▣ What lessons can you apply to your own present-day messages?

DAY 2: TRY A NEW CONVERSATION STARTER QUALITY: ATTUNEMENT

Purpose: Every effort to move another begins with a conversation. But striking up conversations with people we don't know – say, on a sales call or at a trade show – can be challenging for some of us. Today's simple exercise will help get the conversation off to a good start.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Start a conversation today with someone you don't know. But before the encounter, plan how you will approach it.

What question do you typically use when starting a conversation? (If you're not sure, think of the last time you met someone new. What did you say to that person to get the conversation going?)

- What do you do?
- What's your role?
- Do you have kids?
- Other:

This time, though, don't ask your usual question. Instead, ask "*Where are you from?*" The wording allows the other person to respond in a myriad of ways. She might talk in the past tense about location ("I grew up in Milwaukee"), speak in present tense about her organization ("I'm from PNC Bank"), or approach the question from some other angle ("I live in Los Angeles, but I want to move to Europe.").

This question opens things up, rather than shuts them down. Try it today as another step in attuning yourself to others. Repeat after me: *Where are you from?*

DAY 3: MAP IT QUALITY: ATTUNEMENT

Purpose: Just as a geographic map can give you a view of the physical terrain, an “attunement map” can offer you a glimpse of the emotional landscape you inhabit. Today’s activity helps you create this new kind of map – and, in turn, will help you see situations from new perspectives.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Create two mood maps, one for an individual conversation and one for a meeting. Follow the directions below.

Mood Map 1

In your next important conversation at work, note your counterpart’s mood at the beginning of the encounter. On a scale of 1 (negative and resistant) to 10 (positive and open), what’s his or her temperature? Do the same at what you think is the middle of the conversation. Has it changed? Do it again when the conversation ends.

Afterward, reflect on the factors that might have changed the mood for better or worse.

Start of Conversation

1 (Negative/Resistant)

5

(Positive/Open) 10

Notes

End of Conversation

1 (Negative/Resistant)

5

(Positive/Open) 10

What Changed?

DAY 3

Mood Map 2

In your next meeting*, rate the collective mood on that same 1 to 10 scale at the beginning, middle, and end.

Reflect on the factors that might have changed the mood – including your role in bringing it up or down.

*This can be any meeting – in person, online, or via phone – as long as it's a typical meeting that involves more than two people.

Start of Conversation

1 (Negative/Resistant)

5

(Positive/Open) 10

Notes

.....

.....

End of Conversation

1 (Negative/Resistant)

5

(Positive/Open) 10

What Changed?

.....

.....

DAY 4: MEASURE YOUR POSITIVITY RATIO QUALITY: BUOYANCY

Purpose: Although we might roll our eyes at a word like “positivity,” the science – especially the work of Barbara Fredrickson of the University of North Carolina – shows it can buoy our lives and bolster our work. People whose ratio of positive-to-negative emotions exceeds 3:1 generally fare much better on both sales and non-sales selling.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Visit this link: <http://positivityratio.com> and find out your current positivity ratio by taking Fredrickson’s 2-minute online quiz.

Record your Scores here:

Positivity Score:

Negativity Score:

Positivity Ratio:

Now, select two of Fredrickson’s ten positive emotions:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joy | <input type="checkbox"/> Pride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude | <input type="checkbox"/> Amusement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serenity | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspiration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interest | <input type="checkbox"/> Awe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hope | <input type="checkbox"/> Love |

Throughout the rest of the day, look for ways to experience your two selected emotions. Takes notes on things you try and the effect they have on your positivity.

DAY 5: RE-EXPLAIN REJECTION QUALITY: BUOYANCY

Purpose: The work of Martin Seligman, founder of the positive psychology movement and a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, has shown that one of the best predictors of sales success is how someone explains failure. Those who explain setbacks as permanent, pervasive, and personal – “It’s going to ruin everything. It always happens. And it’s my all my fault.” – tend to flounder, Seligman has shown. Those who take the opposite approach tend to flourish. The more you explain bad events as *temporary, specific, and external*, the more likely you are to persist even in the face of adversity.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Describe a recent failure, rejection, or major setback

Then consider the situation in light of Seligman’s findings. Finish each statement:

This situation isn’t permanent – that is, the consequences are temporary -- because...

It’s not pervasive – that is, it doesn’t always turn out this way -- because...

It's not personal – that is, many of the causes are external – because ...

.....

.....

.....

DAY 6: THE NO'S HAVE IT QUALITY: BUOYANCY

Purpose: It's time to get realistic about the responses you hear when trying to move others. Today's activity will help you determine what happens when you hear no, and how to start the process of moving toward a yes.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Count the number of rejections you hear today. Anytime someone says "no" (or a variation of it), take note. Then come back to this list at the end of the day to answer the questions in part 2.

Part 1

Start by counting the number of no's you hear today. Every time someone tells you no – by voice, email, or even the shake of a head on matters large or small – circle a "no" below.

no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no
no	no	no	no

Part 2

Now, think a moment about your "no" tally and answer the following questions:

Which no was the most surprising? In what way?

Which no was hardest to hear? Why?

.....

.....

Which was the 'best' no? For what reason?

.....

.....

.....

Which no sunk you so deeply you won't be able to recover? (Hint: If you're still afloat to answer that question, the answer is "None of them" – which is the point of getting used to hearing "no.")

.....

DAY 7: ASK THE FIVE WHYS

QUALITY: CLARITY

Purpose: Clarity requires treating problem-finding with the same rigor with which we treat problem-solving. Today's exercise, used by the groundbreaking design firm IDEO, offers a simple way to do that.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ask somebody to describe his or her problem in one sentence.
2. Whatever the answer, ask the person "why?" (and really listen to the answer).
3. Then in response to that answer, ask "why?" again (and again, really listen).
4. Repeat until you have asked the question, "why?" at least five times.

Yes, today's activity might annoy your friend or colleague. But you might also be surprised by what you uncover. As IDEO explains it, "This exercise forces people to examine and express the underlying reasons for their behavior and attitudes." And that can help you discover the hidden problems that most need solving.

DAY 8: JOLT YOURSELF QUALITY: CLARITY

Purpose: When you become accustomed to a routine or habit, you typically lose the heightened sense of awareness that's needed to notice what's going on around you. In order to gain clarity, and to help you bring clarity to others, break out of a rut by giving yourself a mini-jolt.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Do one thing differently today. Sit on the opposite end of the conference table at your next meeting. Travel home from work using a different route than normal. Instead of ordering what you usually do at your favorite restaurant, choose the 11th item on the menu.

Describe what you did:

Describe 3 new things you saw, thought, or noticed

Tomorrow, when you go back to your regular routine, discover clarity in it.

DAY 9. TAKE 30 MINUTES TO BECOME A BETTER CURATOR

QUALITY: CLARITY

Purpose: In the old days, sellers always had more information than buyers. Today, that information asymmetry is ending. But in its place a new challenge is emerging: We've got *too much* information. The result is that in both sales and non-sales selling, accessing information matters less than curating it. Today's activity, adapted from Beth Kanter's outstanding *Content Curation Primer**, will help you begin to develop your curatorial chops

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Clear your calendar for 30 minutes. Then pick one topic of interest to you, related to the next opportunity you have to move others. For example, if you need to persuade your teenager to clean her room, select the topic personal organization. Or if you will be meeting with a health care client soon to present your newest proposal, maybe choose the topic of wellness.
2. Seek out the best sources for your selected topic – preferably online. Spend no more than 15-20 minutes gathering pertinent information. Print it, clip it, or mark it – however is easiest for you to collect as much information as you can.
3. Create a meaningful way to categorize what you have collected. Could you assign a priority value to each one (A, B, or C)? Or use a color code notation? This step is extremely important because you're placing value on each item. Whichever method you choose, make sure it's simple enough to replicate again and again.
4. Share the best tip you've learned from the collected material. Post it to a social media site, send an email to a colleague, or phone a friend. As you share, you'll help others and possibly learn something new in the meantime.

While today's activity only lasted 30 minutes, find ways to repeat this exercise on a regular basis expanding your focus beyond the online world. Once you discover the initial resources and create meaningful ways to categorize them, the continued process of curation will bring you ever greater clarity.

* For more information, visit Kanter's site: <http://www.bethkanter.org/content-curation-101>

DAY 10: CALIBRATE YOUR PITCH ABILITY: PITCH

Purpose: These days we're pitching all the time. But like sales itself, pitching isn't what it used to be. *To Sell is Human* will teach you the 6 new pitches that have superseded the elevator pitch. Today's exercise will help calibrate that pitch – whatever variety you ultimately choose.

INSTRUCTIONS:

As you prepare your pitch, clarify your purpose and strategy by making sure you can answer these 3 questions:

After someone hears your pitch . . .

1. What do you want them to *know*?

2. What do you want them to *feel*?

3. What do you want them to *do*?

If you've solid answers to these three questions, the particulars of the pitch will often take care of themselves.

DAY 11: DISCOVER YOUR INVISIBLE PITCH ABILITY: PITCH

Purpose: We don't always realize it, but what we do and how we do it are themselves pitches. We're conveying a message about ourselves, our work, or our organization – and other people are interpreting it. Today's exercise will help you find out what they think you're saying.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Call or text 6 people who know you – people you interact with on a regular basis. Ask them “Which three words come to mind?” in response to one of these questions: **1.** What is my company about? **2.** What is my product or service about? **3.** What am I about? Be sure to let them know that you're not looking for physical qualities (“tall, dark, and handsome”) but instead for something deeper.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Now look for patterns. Is this the message you're hoping to send? If so, great. If not, what can you do to change your invisible pitch?

DAY 12: EMAIL SUBJECT LINE REVIEW

ABILITY: PITCH

Purpose: Every email we send is a pitch. It's a plea for someone's attention and an invitation to engage. According to research from Carnegie Mellon University, the best email subject lines appeal either to *utility* (something that directly affects someone's work or productivity) or to *curiosity* (something that provokes an intriguing level of uncertainty). Today's activity is designed to test how your own emails are doing.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Open your email program and find your Sent Mail folder. Scan the last 20 email messages that you have sent (originating from you, not replies or forwards). What were their subject lines? Take a screen shot and print out the image or write them on a blank sheet of paper.

Note how many of your last 20 sent messages appealed to utility or to curiosity.

Utility #: Curiosity #:

If the total adds up less than 10, rewrite each one that fails the test.

You don't have to re-send those messages, but apply what you've learned to the next email you send after completing this exercise.

DAY 13: SLOW IT DOWN ABILITY: IMPROVISE

Purpose: To improve your listening skills – which, in turn, will help you hear offers in what seem to be objections and resistance.

INSTRUCTIONS:

In your next 5 conversations, take listening to an extreme. Every time another person says something, wait 5 seconds before responding. Seriously. Every time. It will seem odd at first. And your conversation partner might wonder if you were recently bonked on the head. But pausing a few additional seconds to respond can hone your listening skills in much the same way that savoring a piece of chocolate, instead of wolfing it down, can improve your palate.

Mark each conversation after it happens to keep track of your count.



Afterwards, reflect on the experience. How did those conversations compare with your usual ones? Did you hear things you previously might have missed?

DAY 14: ASK THE 2 QUESTIONS AT THE HEART OF TRADITIONAL SALES AND NON-SALES SELLING ABILITY: SERVE

Purpose: To keep your efforts to move people on the high road.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Today, every time you are attempting to move others – whether traditional sales like convincing a prospect to buy a new computer system or non-sales selling like persuading your daughter to do her homework – first ask these questions:

1. If the person you're selling to agrees to "buy," will his or her life improve?
2. When the interaction is over, will the world be a better place than when you began?

If the answer to either of these two questions is no, reconsider what you are trying to sell and how you are trying to sell it.

OVERVIEW OF EXERCISES

	HOW TO BE			WHAT TO DO		
	ATTUNEMENT	BUOYANCY	CLARITY	PITCH	IMPROVISE	SERVE
Time Traveler	X					
Try a New Conversation Starter	X					
Map It	X					
Measure Your Positivity Ratio		X				
Re-Explain Rejection		X				
The No's Have It		X				
Ask the Five Whys			X			
Jolt Yourself			X			
Take 30 Minutes to Become a Better Curator			X			
Calibrate Your Pitch				X		
Discover Your Invisible Pitch				X		
Email Subject Line Review				X		
Slow it Down					X	
Ask the 2 Questions at the Heart of Traditional Sales and Non Sales Selling						X

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