



**SCENE:** \_\_\_\_\_

# ***ACT* Like a Sales Pro!**

**How to Command the Business Stage  
and Dramatically Increase  
Your Sales with Proven Acting  
Techniques**

**By  
Julie Hansen**

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Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase  
Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques**

By Julie Hansen

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## What People are Saying:

*“Julie brought a new energy and awareness to our office meeting recently by linking acting, scripts and sales. She has a charm in front of a group which puts the group at ease and ready to learn from Julie’s expertise. **We all know that acting is a vital part of all that we do**, even if we are unaware of it, and this type of presentation was very valuable for my sales force not only in their careers but in their lives in general.”*

Jill Croteau, Managing Broker  
**Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage**

*“Your coaching program was instrumental in producing a record month for my client – nearly double the same time last year!”*

Terry Datz, President  
**Datz Marketing**

*“I’ve sold the same way for 18 years and the past few years I realized my pitch had gotten stale. Julie has helped me look at sales in an entirely different light and gave me confidence by providing specific techniques to use for each step of the sales process. **It was fun and I’ve picked up several new clients using her methods.** I recommend her program wholeheartedly!”*

Molly Gibson, President  
**Overflow Marketing**

*“This book should be on every real estate agent’s desk. Hansen shows agents how to enhance their authentic selves for both client and agent successes!”*

---Laura Dirks, author of **Marketing without Mystery**

*“Honestly, your input was so valuable. This new round of commercials is head and shoulders above the previous commercials, in large part due to your coaching.”*

**Dianne L. Sawaya, Esq., Attorney at Law**

*Your class was everything I thought it would be - fun and informative with a lovely, charmismatic teacher. Your love of your subject was infectuous - we all caught it!”*

Tricia. Forbes, Instructor  
**University of Denver**

*“Great things ahead for you! **Your passion will take you over the top!***

*Keep me up-to-date! You Got WHO!”*

Bob Beaudine, author of **The Power of Who**

*I've always had the suspicion that acting skills would increase sales performance. I felt this when I first "performed" in a sales presentation...I eagerly await your book. So much more to learn. I need to learn the acting dimensions to increase my business in 2010.”*

Jeb Brodrick, Executive Producer

**iXCast, inc.**

## **ACT Like a Sales Pro**

As a rookie seller in the eighties, I would spend hours preparing to make cold calls, only to quickly hang up when someone actually answered. (Thank God this was before Caller I.D.!) Presentations would tie me in knots, my confidence dissolving as soon as I opened my mouth to speak. I envied those “natural” salespeople; the ones who always seemed to be “on,” or at the very least, not on the verge of passing out! What was I lacking? After all, everyone said I was good with people. What did these “natural” sellers have that I didn’t: And how could I get my hands on it?

Despite dozens of training programs and vain attempts at emulating the style of my peers, it wasn’t until I took an acting class that my sales career really blossomed.

The first time I gingerly stepped onto the stage I was frozen with fear. “Take command of the stage!” the director shouted. “Own the spotlight!” I learned what this meant after several more classes: I had to inhabit my role and my space with complete conviction and confidence in order to grab the audience’s attention and get them to *buy into* the “reality” of the theater. Once I learned this lesson I began winning roles in theater and television. Armed with the same techniques I used to *command the stage* I started breaking sales records in business, successfully selling to Fortune 500 companies and eventually leading a powerful national sales team.

Acting led me to discover that selling *is* performing and a truly great performance comes from within—it’s just a matter of accessing it. Acting provides the key.

For the first time ever, ***ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques*** will show salespeople and business professionals how to tap into the system behind the compelling

performances of icons like **Marlon Brando, Dustin Hoffman, Robert DeNiro** and **Meryl Streep**. This entertaining and practical how-to-guide is full of unique strategies, examples from business and Hollywood and easy-to-follow steps for salespeople--and anyone wishing to communicate with greater impact and more effectively and consistently influence others.

# **ACT Like a Sales Pro!**

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## The Book

*“Always work from inside out; if you work from the outside in, all you have is a dry husk.” Meryl Streep*

Sheryl begins her sales pitch. As she reads from a power-point slide her voice is tentative, her delivery wooden and her body language stiff. And it’s all downhill from there. A crucial *Seven Seconds* has passed and Sheryl is just now becoming more animated, adding gestures, finding her voice and *finally* injecting personality into her presentation. But it’s too late! She is past the point of no return and an important sale has slipped by. All in just *Seven Seconds*.

Next time before meeting a new client, Sheryl is coached to recall a time when she received great news. Sheryl remembers her excitement after breaking a company sales record and her eagerness to share the news with her husband and co-workers. Buoyed by this memory, Sheryl begins her presentation at full throttle; her voice clear and confident, her gaze direct and powerful. This time, she *wins* the sale!

How did a simple but strategic use of the imagination dramatically turn Sheryl’s presentation around? This is just one of many examples of the power of **ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques**—an innovative new system that adapts techniques from the famous Method School of acting and applies them to the Sales Model.

The Method System revolutionized acting by eschewing the classical style of relying upon external “indications” of thoughts and feelings, instead encouraging actors to draw upon their own emotions, experiences and imagination to produce more honest and compelling performances. Now, **ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the**

**Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques**

is here to revolutionize sales.

Make no mistake: Salespeople must be every bit the performer an actor is in order to stand out in an increasingly crowded playing field. In today's economy, that winning trifecta of right product, right price and right timing is no longer enough to ensure getting--or keeping--the business. Like an accomplished actor that draws us in with a moving performance, a successful salesperson must take command of the business stage and own the spotlight by accessing the performer within.

When an actor gives a truly great performance, we are apt to say “*Wow! They didn't even look like they were acting!*” The same can be said for great salespeople, “*They don't even look like they're selling.*” The good news is that great salespeople, like great actors, can be made--given the right set of tools.

Acting is the ultimate form of persuasion and engagement. A great actor can inspire us, hold our attention for up to three hours or drive us to purchase a product in as little as thirty seconds. Imagine if salespeople had a system to help them produce equally impressive and consistent results! But most salespeople act unconsciously, driven by habit, social expectations and improper or lack of training, unaware that the power to more precisely control their results is already within them. **ACT Like a Sales Pro!** provides a simple set of tools adapted from the powerful Method acting system to fit the needs of sales professionals.

Everything Terry was taught about sales reinforced the idea that he had to be “larger-than-life”--or someone other than he was--in order to be successful. Each day Terry would put on his “sales hat” and his normally soft-spoken, sincere demeanor would

disappear, replaced by a loud, pushy sales stereotype. While Terry had occasional successes, he felt like a phony and even his clients could sense an incongruity between himself and his message and a lack of real connection to his product.

By following some of the easy-to-follow techniques outlined in *ACT Like a Sales Pro!* such as Raising the Stakes, Substitution and Discovering Motivation, Terry found his own unique sales style. He soon gained enough confidence to hang up the one-size-fits-all sales hat for good and is now admired and trusted by hundreds of clients and at the top of his game in his industry,

No longer must sellers feel they have to put *on* a role in order to be effective. By using the tools outlined in this book, sellers will learn how to put *themselves* into their role, a rewarding journey leading to greater sales success, increased confidence and a welcome comfort in their own skin—even when presenting in front of large groups.

Through a set of action steps, examples and self-quizzes, sellers will learn how to tap into a powerful new communication tool:

**The Three Acts of Sales Showmanship:**

Act 1: Develop a strong command of voice, mind and body

Act 2: Communicate with intention and impact

Act 3: Engage consumers by creating memorable buying experiences

Acting is not only powerful, but it is sexy. Method acting in particular has a certain mystique about it. Sales can be powerful as well, but sexy and mysterious it is not. People are intrigued with actors and the magic of their craft. As a child, many dreamt of a career in the spotlight. In fact, being an actor is one of the top ten dreams of

five and six year-olds.<sup>1</sup> Few dreamt of selling insurance, financial services or software, yet nearly nineteen million people in the U.S.<sup>2</sup> find themselves with a career in sales--a primary market for this book.

For this growing, active and influential segment of the population this book does the impossible: it makes selling sexy.

***“My first language was shy. It's only by having been thrust into the limelight that I have learned to cope with my shyness.” Al Pacino***

It also addresses the large number of sellers who are not natural extroverts. While it is well-known that three out of four people fear public speaking, it seems even salespeople suffer from shyness. According to a recent study, 31% of salespeople surveyed say they are “reluctant to engage others in conversation.”<sup>3</sup> Imagine the inner conflict this presents when one is dependent upon engaging others to make a living!

**ACT Like a Sales Pro!** shows sellers how to flex new muscles, build confidence, develop presence and communicate with greater impact through a process that has produced some of the stage and screen's most memorable performances and influential stars, such as **Meryl Streep, Marlon Brandon, Cate Blanchett, Philip Seymour-Hoffman, Dustin Hoffman, Robert DeNiro, Al Pacino**, and many others.

Each chapter demonstrates how acting techniques can be readily applied to the five steps in the sales process:

- Getting the appointment
- Delivering the presentation

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<sup>1</sup> The Guardian, UK Oct. 10, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Selling Power, Oct. 2007

<sup>3</sup> Behavioral Sciences Research Press 2009

- Overcoming the objections
- Closing the sale
- Generating the repeat business

***“When I started acting, it was really the way for me to be able to communicate.”***  
**Richard Gere**

Other business professionals and non-actors engaged in the broad definition of sales: *to cause or persuade another to accept, convince or buy a product or idea*<sup>4</sup>, will also find this book beneficial for improving their communication skills and ability to more effectively and consistently influence others.

The universal appeal and simple application of this subject gives the book legs for years to come!

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<sup>4</sup> Dictionary.com

## The Author

Julie Hansen has achieved dramatic results in industries as varied as media, real estate, publishing and law by applying the techniques learned over a fifteen-year acting career to a twenty-year sales career.

As a media buyer for a Denver advertising agency, Julie was on the receiving end of sales presentations that ranged from unintentionally laughable to mostly forgettable to rarely influential. After two years of watching salespeople drive off in their Lexus or BMW to pitch yet another client over a three martini lunch (this *was* the eighties!), she suspected she was on the wrong side of the desk.

During her first week at a new Top-Forty radio station Julie made a shocking discovery: customers seldom returned sales calls! After struggling in her new role for several months, Julie joined an acting workshop and instantly recognized it as a system that could be applied to many of the challenges she faced as a salesperson: quickly establishing relationships, adapting to change, overcoming obstacles and discovering creative solutions. Soon she was consistently earning top sales awards and breaking records at every radio station she worked at, including **KQKS FM, KHIH FM, KHOW AM, KBCO** and **KBPI FM**.

Julie went on to New York where she led the national advertising team for *The National Enquirer* and *Star Magazine* and personally garnered increases in account revenue by nearly 200% in a single year and succeeded in winning **Procter & Gamble's** business back after an eight year mandated hiatus. She worked with major advertising agencies, such as **McCann Erickson, Saatchi & Saatchi, BBDO, Ogilvy & Mather** and **Grey Advertising** as well as the following Fortune 500 companies:

**Kraft**  
**Coca-Cola**  
**Procter & Gamble**  
**Frontier Airlines**  
**Pfizer**  
**Wyeth**  
**Kodak**

**General Mills**  
**American Express**  
**Visa**  
**Verizon**  
**Chevrolet**  
**Toyota**  
**BMW**

An accomplished actress, Julie received formal training at New York's **Academy of Dramatic Arts** and has performed in many theatrical productions in New York and Denver. Julie appeared in the **HBO** series *Sex and the City* and *Oz*, as well as in over a dozen national television commercials for companies like **Sears, Procter & Gamble, Lifetime Television, Westin Hotels, Kellogg, Philip Morris** and **Cricket Communications**.

Julie has presented seminars on the sales and acting techniques described in her book to over 100 real estate agents at **Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage** in Colorado (part of **NRT**, the world's largest real estate franchise with 120,000 agents in U.S and Canada), media salespeople at **National Public Radio** in Denver and business people at the **University of Denver**. Julie also teaches a weekly **Sales Improv** class for sellers in a variety of industries.

A member of the **National Speakers Association** and **Toastmasters**, Julie has spoken at several **Denver Rotary clubs** and continues to expand into groups outside of the Denver area. She is currently scheduled to speak to at least 600 additional **Coldwell Banker** brokers in Colorado and a mid-sized publishing company in New York.

After writing hundreds of commercials for local businesses as a salesperson, Julie's love of writing blossomed into a key sales tool and rewarding passion. She is a

contributing writer for a variety of sales and business sites like **Colorado View Magazine** (circulation 25,000), **Salesopedia**, **Ezine Business** (2700 hits), **SmallBusinessNet** and her blog, **ActingforSales.com**, which receives an average of 2000 requests each week and recently hit 3047 in one week.

Julie has also completed two screenplays, one of which was a finalist in the **Breckenridge Film Festival**, as well as a 335 page novel. Julie also won “best critique” in the **2005 Border’s/Amazon Breakout Novel Writing Contest**.

## The Competition

Although there are many books comparing selling to other things: selling is like baseball, selling is like poker, selling is like pizza, surprisingly little is written comparing sales to acting--even though selling *is*, in fact, a form of acting. In a Google search of “Sales and Acting,” the first three listings were links to this author’s website, **ActingforSales.com** and several articles written by the author. The only book that appeared, *Stop Acting Like a Seller and Start Thinking Like a Buyer*, by Jerry Acuff (2007) uses acting in an entirely different context and can not be considered a direct competitor.

As a Sales Method book, *ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques.* will likely compete with the following titles:

- *Spin Selling*, by Neil Rackham, McGraw-Hill (1988).

Written by a research psychologist with no real-world sales experience, this book is basically the findings of a study on sales performance. It boils down sales success into four areas: situation, problem, implication and need-payoff. Heavy on theory, light on application and now *over twenty years-old!*

*ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques offers a fresh new approach to sales based on over twenty-years of personal research and application in contemporary sales scenarios.*

- ***Little Red Book of Selling: 12.5 Principles of Sales Greatness***, by Jeffrey Gitomer, Bard Press (2004).

A small book with catchy packaging and an occasionally hokey and confrontational style (“*Principle One: Kick Your Own Ass*”), it directs sellers to go back to the basics of why people buy. Easy to read but lacking in real substance, it serves primarily as a refresher course on basic sales techniques that anyone with a rudimentary understanding of sales will already be familiar with.

***ACT Like a Sales Pro! will appeal to both the novice and the experienced seller as it builds on well-known basics while providing never before offered sales techniques and strategies.***

- ***The Never Cold Call Again Online Playbook: The Definitive Guide to Internet Marketing Success*** by Frank Rambauscus, Jr., Wiley (2009).

Like the name suggests, this book concentrates on internet marketing and social media, giving best practices and tips for salespeople, business owners and entrepreneurs. The catchy title appeals to salespeople who want to AVOID personal contact by hiding behind a computer.

***Passive marketing is ultimately not a winning strategy. ACT Like a Sales Pro! focuses on improving one-on-one communication, which can never be replaced by a computer--and gives those who are uncomfortable with face-to-face interaction easy and practical steps to overcome their fears.***

- ***Ultimate Sales Machine: Turbocharge Your Business with Relentless Focus on 12 Key Strategies*** by Chet Holmes, Michael Gerber, Penguin (2008).

This book hammers home the need to consistently practice and apply new skills in order to achieve lasting improvement. A valid point, but deserving of an entire book? Many of the “12 Keys” focus on time management and one-third of the strategies are aimed at the organizational and managerial levels.

***ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques*** is dedicated to providing the **individual seller with practical tips and specific, action steps that can be put into immediate use.**

- ***Secrets of Question-based Selling***, by Thomas Freese, Sourcebooks, (2000)

One-hundred short (two-three page) chapters providing strategies to differentiate yourself and your company, such as: making clients feel special, doing the little things, and not being too available.

Although concise and simple, **Secrets of QBS** relies primarily on common sense and offers little in the way of ground-breaking ideas or tools. ***ACT Like a Sales Pro!*** **offers techniques not found in any other sales books on the market in an entertaining format, and presents them in an identifiable and easy-to-follow way.**

- ***The Elements of Persuasion: Use Storytelling to Pitch Better, Sell Faster and Win More Business***, by Richard Maxwell and Robert Dickinson, Harper Business (2007).

Written by a screenwriter and an actor, the authors fail to establish credibility among their primary market: professional sellers. This book stretches many aspects of storytelling in an attempt to fit sales scenarios. Readers looking for quick tips and solutions will be disappointed.

***ACT Like a Sales Pro! is based on first-hand experience as a successful seller and actor and offers tried and tested strategies for winning sales. In addition, while *The Elements of Persuasion* focuses strictly on words and language as the message, this book covers both verbal and non-verbal aspects of the seller's craft.***

- ***One Minute Salesperson, The Quickest Way to Sell People on Yourself, Your Services, Products, or Ideas--at Work and in Life***, by Spencer Johnson , M.D, Harper Perennial (1984, re-release 2002).

This 122 page book is an example of one of the many business/sales books written as a parable. As with others in this genre, it offers familiar sales advice like positive thinking and goal-setting in a story format but lacks clear, practical direction or action steps. It produces a warm feeling but is unlikely to produce lasting change.

***Though also an entertaining read, ACT Like a Sales Pro! is ultimately a how-to-guide packed with tools, examples, self-quizzes and exercises which a salesperson can easily put into practice and start seeing immediate results.***

- ***The New Strategic Selling: The Unique Sales System Proven Successful by the World's Best Companies***, by Robert Miller, Tad Tuleja, Stephen Heiman, Business Plus (revised 2005.)

Originally published in 1985, at 448 pages, this revised edition could double as a door-stop! It continues to sell well, indicating a continued demand for the subject matter, but a lack of genuinely new material. Based on the not-so-new-now concept of “win-win,” this book focuses almost exclusively on challenges related to selling big ticket items to large companies and offers strategies with limited appeal, like preventing internal sabotage and managing territories.

**Unlike this book, *ACT Like a Sales Pro!* will appeal to anyone in sales—whether they work with a single customer or multi-level, multi-national corporations. In addition, it offers truly new concepts that sellers will not find anywhere else.**

- ***Go-Givers Sell More***, by Bob Burg, John David Mann, Portfolio (2010).

A follow-up to 2007's *The Go-Giver: A Little Story about a Powerful Business Idea*, this book's entire premise is that creating giving relationships is the most fulfilling and effective path to success. Though it offers some examples from sales, as one reviewer aptly observed: “*Just a little secret: this book is NOT about selling! It is about life, how to interact with others...*”

Another spin on the “win-win” philosophy, this book falls into the “feel good” category of sales books: simple concepts with vague instructions on their actual application. ***ACT Like a Sales Pro!* follows the logical sequence of the selling**

**process—from preparation and presentation to follow-up and it offers related steps and clearly defined exercises that are easy to implement.**

- ***Selling 101: What Every Successful Sales Professional Needs to Know,***  
by Zig Ziglar, Thomas Nelson (2003).

Short (96 pages), this book professes to be for anyone new to sales or experienced sales people who need a refresher. Part motivation, part how-to book, *Selling101* covers the very basics with chapters like: “finding someone willing to buy,” call reluctance, need analysis, closing and time-management.” Underwhelming and out-dated, this book could more accurately be titled, “*Selling 101 BC*” and marketed as daily “sales affirmations.”

**Unlike *Sales 101, ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques* assumes that today’s sellers want more than generic bite-size tips and delivers a never-before-offered set of tools to give them a significant edge over the competition.**

## The Audience

The primary market for this book is the 19 million salespeople in this country<sup>5</sup>—whether it’s the seasoned professional looking for new ideas or the novice just beginning his career, however, anyone with the desire to communicate more confidently and persuasively will benefit from the concepts presented in this book.

There are five key markets for the book:

1. **Individual Salespeople** wishing to improve their skills.
2. **Entrepreneurs and Small Business Owners** who must put on the “sales hat” but lack a selling background or proper training.
3. **Corporations** heavily-reliant on sales forces.
4. **Direct Sellers** for multi-level sales organizations.
5. **Actors** entering the business world.

### 1.) **Individual Salespeople:**

While the number of sellers in the U.S. workforce continues to grow (a 35% jump since 2000<sup>6</sup>) the pool of buyers is shrinking, production is declining and companies are laying off their once protected frontlines in record numbers.

Individual salespeople must fight like never before to stay marketable in today’s highly competitive environment; they are hungry for innovative and effective new ideas that will produce profound and immediate results. That is precisely what **ACT Like a Sales Pro!** promises and delivers.

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<sup>5</sup> 2006 National Employment Matrix

<sup>6</sup> 2000 U.S. Census

## **2.) Entrepreneurs and Small Business Owners:**

Many entrepreneurs and small business owners are thrust into sales out of necessity with little or no selling experience. It is currently estimated that there are 29.6 million small businesses in the United States—that is a lot of people selling their products or services without proper sales training!

Women-owned firms are growing at twice the rate of all U.S. firms (23 percent vs. 9 percent) and there are an estimated 10 million women-owned, privately-held U.S. businesses.<sup>7</sup> This growing segment is a particularly strong market for **ACT Like a Sales Pro!** as women are more likely to seek business advice (69 percent women vs. 47 percent men)<sup>8</sup> and embrace the creative aspects and self exploration components of the book.

## **3.) Direct Sellers:**

The number of Direct Sellers in the U.S. is currently estimated at 15 million.<sup>9</sup> With a 4-5% projected annual growth, this non-recessionary industry is a gold mine during tough economic times as more and more people turn to direct sales to supplement declining incomes.

In addition, 88% of Direct Sellers are women, correlating well with the average book-buyer profile. 77% of these Sellers are married and may introduce the book to their spouse and 98% belong to a multi-level sales organization which offers additional opportunities for networking the book.

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<sup>7</sup> SBA, Office of Advocacy

<sup>8</sup> American Express

<sup>9</sup> Direct Sales Association, 2008

**4.) Corporations:**

The top 200 largest service-industry companies employ 636,000 salespeople and the top fifty insurance companies *alone* employ 679,000 salespeople.<sup>10</sup> Because many sellers are concentrated within specific corporations or industries, there exists an enormous potential for large group book sales by getting added to corporate reading lists or gaining entrée through the author's corporate training program and speaking platform.

**5.) Actors:**

Actors entering the business field are an untapped market and offer another opportunity for book sales. Nearly two-thirds of the Screen Actor's Guild's 163,000 members are unemployed and make less than \$1000 per year acting.<sup>11</sup> This does not include the 100,000+ members of AFTRA, Actor's Equity members, or the millions of non-professional actors across the country. The number of actors auditioning for roles well exceeds the number of available parts, forcing the majority of actors to supplement their incomes by holding jobs in other fields. This book will give actors the confidence and necessary tools to transition into a successful sales career.

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<sup>10</sup> 2000 U.S. Census

<sup>11</sup> New York Times, 2008

## **Book Promotion Plan**

An accomplished actress, coach and salesperson, Julie Hansen is the ideal person to write and promote a book on acting and sales. The author's expertise in marketing and advertising, which includes attaining press coverage for clients from media outlets such as, *The L.A. Times*, *Yahoo-Finance*, *Forbes*, *Houston Chronicle*, *The Denver Post*, *The Denver Business Journal* and **Fox News**, reaffirms her ability to expertly promote herself and her book.

### **Author's Platform:**

Julie currently delivers seminars on how to use acting techniques to increase sales for businesses ranging in size from five to 125. Recent seminars include real estate agents at Colorado's largest real estate company, **Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage**, media salespeople at **National Public Radio's Denver stations** and students at the **University of Denver's Lifelong Learning Center**.

Julie has also spoken at several **Denver Rotary groups** and is a member of the **National Speakers Association**, **Toastmasters** and **The Sales Association**. Her speaking opportunities are rapidly expanding, including plans to speak for 600 more **Coldwell Banker** agents in Colorado and a mid-sized publishing company in New York this summer.

Julie has affiliations and contacts with a number of media companies, including: **CBS**, **Clear Channel Communications**, **National Public Radio** and **Marconi Media Ventures** and will pursue media interviews and exposure in company communications as well as getting added to recommended corporate reading lists. **Coldwell Banker**, part of

**NRT** (the largest network of real estate sellers in the country with 120,000 agents in the U.S. and Canada), has also expressed interest in providing Julie with press exposure.

Julie has a full page article on her method coming out in the August issue of *Colorado View Magazine*, an upscale lifestyle magazine reaching 25,000 top female C.E.O.'s and business owners. Her articles have appeared in several other magazines and sales publications, including: *Salesopedia*, *SmallBusiness.com* and *Ezine Sales* and the real estate industry publication *CBagentinfo.com*.

Julie's website, **ActingforSales.com**, is the first result on a **Google** search of "acting and sales" and fifth for "acting sales training."

As her platform continues to grow, Julie anticipates delivering 20 seminars and speaking at five sales-driven industry trade shows during the first year the book is out. Bulk orders will be solicited prior to each seminar or talk. The author will commit to purchase a minimum of 500 books to sell at these programs.

**Additional Press:**

The author will issue bi-monthly press releases through PR Newswire and send 200 promotional copies of the book to:

- 100 to sales managers at top sales companies
- 100 to media contacts

Julie will give press interviews in at least fifteen major markets: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, San Francisco, Oakland-San Jose, Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Denver, Phoenix, and Miami/Ft. Lauderdale.

**Internet:**

The book will be prominently featured on a website of the same name: **ActlikeaSalesPro.com** as well as the author's current websites, including: **ActingforSales.com, ActingforBusiness.org, OwntheSpotlight.com** and **Sales-Improv.com**. Each site will include a separate page devoted to the book featuring: book cover, table of contents, excerpts and a downloadable media kit.

Julie's weekly video blog featuring tips and excerpts from the book will be promoted via *Twitter, Facebook, Digg, Delicious* and other social networking sites. Subscribers will be invited to submit a sales challenge for a video enactment using solutions from the book.

The author will host a series of webinars on sales and marketing association sites she is a member of, including **The Sales Association** (200,000 members).

The author will seek endorsements from mentor and friend Bob Beaudine, author of the best-selling *The Power of Who*,<sup>12</sup> C.E.O. of **Darden Restaurants**, Clarence Otis Jr., , who stated: "The thing that prepared me the most was theater..."<sup>13</sup> as well as James Gilmore and Joseph Pine II, authors of *The Experience Economy: Work is theater and Every Business a Stage*.

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<sup>12</sup> Center Street Publishing, 2009

<sup>13</sup> *Ensemble Acting in Business, New York Times*, June 7, 2009

## Book Series

**ACT Like a Sales Pro! How to Command the Business Stage and Dramatically**

**Increase Your Sales with Proven Acting Techniques** will be the first in a series of four books including:

1. **Seven Seconds to Sell: Proven Acting Techniques for Winning a Sale...Fast!**

First impressions are formed in as little as *Seven Seconds*—and may take a lifetime to change! This book offers sellers' techniques on how to make a powerful first impression that will lead to a successful sale.

2. **Sales Improv! 10 Rules of Improv for Selling on Your Feet!** Most of selling

is unscripted and always changing; **Sales Improv!** offers a blueprint for working with change in a spontaneous and proactive way. 10 key rules of improvisation, business examples and fun exercises teach sellers how to quickly and confidently react to anything that is thrown at them. Except perhaps, the odd tomato!

3. **Good Direction: Director's Secrets for Leading a Successful Sales Team** will

provide sales and business managers with powerful tools used by stage and screen directors for getting top performances out of salespeople and teams, as well as hiring secrets from casting directors.

## **Book Contents/Book Specifications**

Introduction: The Myth of the Natural Salesperson

### **ACT I: The Rehearsal: Develop a Strong Command of Voice, Mind and Body**

Chapter One: The Casting Call: Setting Yourself Apart

Chapter Two: The Role: Building a Better Salesperson

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### **Book Specifications:**

- Approximate length: 265 pages
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## Chapter Summaries

### Introduction:

### The Myth of the Natural Salesperson

*“I feel I have to work hard to nurture whatever talent I have as an actor. I feel like it's not natural to me. So I don't take it for granted ....” — David Duchovny*

As a rookie seller in the eighties, I would spend hours preparing to make cold calls, only to quickly hang up when someone actually answered. Thank God this was before Caller I.D.! Presentations tied me in knots, my confidence often dissolving as soon as I opened my mouth to speak. I envied those “natural” salespeople; the ones who always seemed to be “on,” or at the very least, not on the verge of passing out! What was I lacking? After all, everyone said I was good with people. What did these “natural” sellers have that I didn't; and how could I get my hands on it?

Despite dozens of training programs and vain attempts at emulating the style of my peers, it wasn't until I took an acting class that my sales career blossomed. The same techniques I used to win roles and own the spotlight on stage helped me break sales records, sell with confidence to Fortune 500 companies and eventually lead a powerful national sales team. Acting led me to discover that a truly great sales performance comes from within—it's just a matter of accessing it. Acting provides the key.

I developed the concepts in **ACT Like a Sales Pro!** for the many sellers I've worked with, coached or led--and the thousands more out there--who like me, felt they lacked some innate sales talent bestowed at birth. This book sets out to destroy the myth of the “natural” salesperson, offering a system based on proven acting techniques to help sellers harness their own unique sales talent, discover the performer within and consistently deliver *The Sales Performance of Their Life!*

**ACT I: THE REHEARSAL**

**Develop a Strong Command of Voice, Mind and Body**

## Chapter One

### The Casting Call: Setting Yourself Apart

***“Actors ought to be larger than life. You come across quite enough ordinary, nondescript people in daily life and I don't see why you should be subjected to them on the stage too.” Donald Sinden, Royal Shakespeare Company***

Joan, a buyer for a national chain, sits at her desk listening to her third sales pitch of the morning. It is part of her daily routine and after awhile, the faces all blur together: “*We’re the best...blah, blah, blah...Buy me, blah, blah, blah.*” But then Roger enters her office. He commands her attention from the moment he shakes her hand: his presence is powerful, his actions are interesting, his delivery compelling. Roger takes Joan out of her routine. Every seller who came prior is pushed out of her mind – and the sale is his.

Your customer is not unlike a casting director, sifting through a steady stream of unmemorable actors all vying for the same part, waiting for that one actor to wow them. What will take your customer out of his everyday routine, wow them and set you apart? This chapter reveals eight tips from Casting Directors to stand out from the pack.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to project confidence
- How to be in the moment
- How to really listen
- How to say something interesting
- How to have good timing
- How to capture attention immediately
- How to make good eye contact
- How to take direction

## Chapter Two:

### The Role: Building a Better Salesperson

***“With any part you play, there is a certain amount of yourself in it. There has to be, otherwise it's just not acting. It's lying.” — Johnny Depp***

A seller for a national insurance company, Corrine hated role-playing; she insisted that she shouldn't have to be someone else. Corrine was surprised to discover that she already played many roles each day: mother, wife, employee, co-worker, chauffeur, etc. Each of the personalities she exhibited in these roles varied depending on her relationship with the other person and her goals and motives in each situation.

If you're in sales, you're already acting. Whether you're doing it well or not is in the results; odds are that like most people, you're doing it unconsciously, haphazardly with inconsistent and unreliable results. What if you had a system to more consistently create the outcomes you'd like?

This chapter explores sales roles, like The Persuader and The Influencer, provides a chart of common roles and their place in the sales process, along with desirable characteristics from other areas in our lives. This is followed by a step-by-step process for selecting the most effective aspects of these roles to best fit typical sales scenarios.

In this chapter readers learn:

- How to remove pre-conceived ideas of how a salesperson *should* act.
- How to identify areas in the sales process that produce the most discomfort, i.e., the role of “Closer.”
- How to examine compensating behaviors used to deal with that discomfort
- How to identify qualities in other roles that would produce a more positive result (i.e, the tenaciousness we exhibit when learning a new skill.)

## Chapter Three:

### The Audition: Getting the Appointment

*“So here I am at my age, still auditioning.” — Geraldine Page, 85*

Carol, an ad salesperson for a national magazine in Manhattan, is expected to make eight face-to-face sales calls each day. She competes with hundreds of other magazine reps for the attention of the same core group of buyers. But Carol has a winning formula: before she picks up the phone she imagines receiving amazing news she can't wait to relate, she expects to be positively-received, and she provides only enough key information to leave the buyer wanting more.

Just as most actors must audition for every role they get (unless you're Meryl Streep or Brad Pitt), a salesperson must typically get an appointment before they ever have an opportunity to sell their product or service. Given its importance, why shouldn't getting the appointment be given as much rehearsal time as the actual performance?

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to establish a strong “Moment Before:” Emotionally, the scene starts well before an actor takes the stage. Using the imagination, readers are guided into a Moment Before that will energize and focus their call.
- How to control expectations: Expectations influence what we say and how we say it. Learn how to identify and adjust them to create positive outcomes.
- How to create suspense: Every play must have an element of suspense or surprise in order to keep viewers engaged. Readers will learn new methods for adding suspense that will boost their ability to book appointments.

## Chapter Four:

### **The Warm Up: Acting Exercises for Non-Actors**

*“The best actors do not let the wheels show.” — Henry Fonda*

Before I worked with Heather, she would rush to each appointment thinking of the list of things she needed to accomplish that day, run through her client notes in the elevator and return emails while she waited in the lobby. Sales were hit or miss. Now Heather does a physical, vocal and mental warm up and reviews her goals before she even leaves her house, runs-through her script and scans her body for tension in the car and continues her mental preparation in the lobby as she waits for her client.

Heather and her sales manager are amazed; she’s improved her closing percentage by nearly 50%.

Most of an actor’s preparation is done well ahead of the audition or performance, and it doesn’t stop at the door. This chapter covers the three primary areas that an actor trains: physical, verbal and mental.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to use the Self as an instrument to communicate and persuade
- How to explore, exercise and train that instrument in order to consistently perform at peak levels on demand
- How to discover and release tension which blocks free and spontaneous communication and increases performance anxiety
- How to perform discreet warm-up techniques in public

## **ACT II: THE CURTAIN UP**

**Communicate with Intention and Impact**

## Chapter Five:

### **The Motivation: Discovering Power Goals**

*“Acting is doing, because everything you say or do is some kind of an action, some kind of a verb. You're always connected to the other person through some kind of action.” — Mira Sorvino*

“I really wanted to make that sale!” Lynn cried as we walked out of a large Manhattan ad agency. But having been on the call with her, I was hard pressed to see it: during the call Lynn’s manner seemed indifferent, when pressed to stand up for her product she retreated, when it came time to ask for the sale she scheduled another appointment. Before the next meeting I took Lynn through a focus exercise, asking her to visualize “fighting” for the sale. She looked skeptical, but her demeanor was different from the moment we entered the room; her commitment to her goal kept her focused and led to writing an order.

It’s no good simply *wanting* to make a sale if that motivation is not carried into the present moment and projected through actions and words. Wanting is a passive verb—and there is no room for passivity in acting or in sales.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to reframe goals from: “What do I want?” to the more powerful: “What am I fighting for?”
- How to use Visualization and Sense Memory to uncover and establish an emotional connection to motivation
- How to use active verbs to stimulate sales action and break habitual reactions
- How to “score a role,” or determine the strongest motivation for each series of actions in the sales process

## Chapter Six:

### **The Script: Turning Mundane into Memorable**

*“Acting has to do with saying it as if you meant it, so for me the words are always very important. It's very important for me to know my lines, know them so well that I don't have to think about them.” — Christopher Walken*

Mary and Charles sell the same product for an international financial company. They both present the same information, yet Mary makes it sound fresh each time, as if she had just thought of it for this particular client. Conversely, Charles sounds as if he's given the same proposal for years: his voice is monotone, his emotional connection to the material is zero and he seems to be rushing towards the end - as if he had somewhere more important to be. Charles clients wish he would get there.

What we say is not nearly as important as how we say it. Most sales pitches are dull, generic and full of sales-speak.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to personalize even the most routine business scripts.
- How to emotionally connect with customers while giving a pitch.
- How to turn a monologue into a dialogue.
- How to use silence and pauses effectively.
- How to discover subtext, i.e., breaking a script down into “beats.”
- How to “Speak Out,” (verbally acknowledging challenging areas)
- How to find different cadences and pacing to unlock new meanings.
- How to use gibberish and non-words to force creative thought.
- How gestures and non-verbal communication helps to locate key points.

## Chapter Seven:

### The Drama: Creating Urgency

*“I love acting. It is so much more real than life.” — Oscar Wilde*

Mary conveys an infectious passion and belief that her radio station is the single most important tool her client has to increase their business because of her listener’s emotional connection to the station.

Chuck relies on facts and statistics to prove that his station can deliver more bodies for his client’s business each week.

Who do you think sells more?

Just as no one would sit through a play about an ordinary day in an ordinary life, sellers need to find the extraordinary in every business encounter in order to succeed in these highly competitive times.

This chapter delivers three powerful Method acting techniques to help sellers uncover the extraordinary in real sales scenarios.

In this chapter readers learn:

- How to use “The Magic If”: A basic tool of Method acting, using the imagination to create circumstances that propel one into heightened action.
- How to Raise the Stakes: Escalating the importance of any situation through a series of associations builds urgency and leads to quicker decision-making.
- How to use Substitution: By mentally replacing a negative or neutral person or thing with something positive, sellers can stimulate an emotional connection and build momentum for closing.

## Chapter Eight:

### The Scene Partner: Welcoming Objections

*“Maximum conflict is what you should be looking for. The more conflict... the more interesting the performance of the play.”*  
— Michael Shurtleff, Casting Director/Author, *Audition*

James and Donna, both real estate agents, compete with 2000 other local brokers in a market of discounted rates, shrinking buyer pools and increasingly panicked sellers. Donna retreats from conflict, waits for the phone to ring and commiserates with other agents about the dismal economic state. James embraces the new reality by finding innovative ways to deal with buyer’s and seller’s changing needs. Donna considers a career change while James has his best year yet; each fulfilling their own expectations.

Movies and plays aren’t written about people pursuing a goal with nothing standing in their way. A scene’s progression is dependent upon conflict in order to keep the audience engaged. Sellers too, should strive to keep customers engaged, and engagement brings with it the potential for conflict.

Like most people, sellers tend to shy away from conflict and obstacles. This chapter presents the benefits of conflict in the sales process and strategies for working through common sales objections.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to establish product/service need
- How to create product/service urgency
- How to beat out the competition
- How to handle price objections
- How to determine ability to buy

## **ACT III: THE PERFORMANCE**

**Create a Memorable Buying Experience**

## Chapter Nine:

### The Opening Night: Winning the Sale

*“A lot of what acting is is paying attention.” — Robert Redford*

A buyer for a large retailer remains silent after Laura delivers new pricing information about her clothing line. Assuming the buyer is in agreement, Laura continues on. A week later she finds she has lost the sale to a competitor. When asked why, the buyer explains that she thought the pricing was way out of line but non-negotiable. Unfortunately, Laura will have to wait until next season to get another shot.

Actors learn what many salespeople don't: communication involves giving *and* receiving. This chapter presents examples for each stage of the communication cycle: message delivery, acknowledgment of receipt, acceptance or objection and the three possible outcomes: agreement, tabling or termination.

While missing a scene partner's cue can lead to a confusing performance, not picking up a buyer's cue can mean the difference between winning or losing a sale. In order to be aware of cues, an actor must know his lines and stay “in the moment.” Three acting exercises for keeping the focus in the moment and on the client are presented.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to communicate with clear intention
- How to make discoveries and determine what is new about the client/situation
- How to use all of the senses to read cues

## Chapter Ten:

### **The Props: Making Mistakes Work for You**

*“I’ve permitted myself to learn and to fail with some regularity. And that is probably the one thing I was given, and that I’m still grateful for.” — John Malkovich*

In the middle of Karen’s power-point presentation, the screen freezes. After several minutes spent trying to determine the problem she reboots the computer; when this doesn’t work, she calls in an AV expert. Finally, Karen gets the presentation back on track. Unfortunately, during this time the clients have started their own conversation and are anxious to get back to it. Karen’s lost their attention—and the sale.

When an actor stumbles over a line, stops the show and goes back to retrieve it, he has suspended the audience’s belief or “broken character.” Just as an audience wants to embrace the reality of the world created within a play, the customer wants to believe that what they are hearing has been created just for them.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to “Use it or Lose it.” Either use mistakes to emphasize a point or involve the client or drop them with minimal fuss or explanation.
- How to find the humor. Being human is fraught with embarrassing possibilities. Learn how to lighten up, laugh and move on.
- How to keep the show going. Long drive in? Late night out? Stomach flu? No one wants to hear about it! Keep the focus on your client and he’ll keep his focus on you.

## Chapter Eleven:

### The Audience: Overcoming Fear

*“If you give an audience a chance they will do half your acting for you.”*

— Katharine Hepburn

Friendly and outgoing, Lisa freezes up whenever she gets in front of more than one person to pitch her creative services. When Lisa focuses on a specific object in the room until she feels grounded, gradually expanding her circle of focus as she grows more comfortable; her enthusiasms is contagious and leads organically to a sale.

Naturally gregarious and knowledgeable about his product, Joel gets nervous and tongue-tied around top-level executives. When Joel uses his imagination to transform his audience into a group of friendly, anxious-to-buy peers, his salesmanship shines and he moves comfortably through to the close.

If you're not always comfortable in the spotlight, you're not alone. Not all great salespeople are fearless extroverts; yet many less outgoing types are very successful. Anxiety and nerves can negatively impact a presentation, a call or a sale. Fortunately, actors' secrets for overcoming stage fright work as well in the board room as on-stage.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to channel pre-performance energy into a positive force
- How to create circles of concentration to gradually increase confidence
- How to channel “Marsha Brady.” Coined after a famous episode of *The Brady Bunch*, this technique uses Stanislavsky's “Magic If” to transform an audience from intimidating to receptive.

## Chapter Twelve:

### The Cast: Selling on Your Feet

*“Improvisation is too good to leave to chance.”*

— Paul Simon

Like most sellers, each time Sarah walked into a client meeting she was met with a new surprise: a new decision maker, a competitor’s price cut, a new performance requirement, etc. After adjusting to each change, Sarah would feel prepared for the next meeting -- only to be confronted by another unforeseen change.

Through the Seven Rules of Improvisation, Sarah learned to prepare for ANY change by increasing her overall ability to think creatively and spontaneously.

Because it is virtually impossible to prepare for all the unknowns that can be thrown at you in a presentation or sales call, sellers need an overall system to maintain control and handle surprises with confidence.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to memorize material
- How to turn off self-judgment
- How to be in the moment
- How to commit to choices
- How to use specificity
- How to move the action forward with “Yes, and...”
- How to communicate beyond words

**ACT IV: THE ENCORE**

**Keep Them Coming Back for More**

## Chapter Thirteen:

### **The Call Back: Generating Repeat Business**

*“An actor entering through the door, you've got nothing. But if he enters through the window, you've got a situation.” —Billy Wilder*

After meeting with the same decision makers on three separate occasions, Shelly had said everything there was to say about her new accounting software. When the clients requested yet another meeting, Shelly turned the tables, asking her clients to sell *her* on the software so she could see if she had done her job properly. She asked them to name the three major benefits of her software, the length of the guarantee and the discount for signing up that day. When they answered correctly they were rewarded with a Starbucks gift card – and Shelly was rewarded with a new contract!

Techniques used by actors to breathe new life into encores and callbacks are the key to keeping repeat sales performances fresh—especially critical with big ticket items or complex products and services involving multiple decision-makers or buying channels.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to use opposites
- How to benefit from unpredictability
- How to take small risks for big results

## Chapter Fourteen:

### The Critics: Surviving “No” to get to “Yes”

*“You have to believe in yourself, that's the secret. Even when I was in the orphanage, when I was roaming the street trying to find enough to eat, even then I thought of myself as the greatest actor in the world.” — Charlie Chaplin*

It was common in Jeannie’s industry to close on less than five out of fifty presentations. She thought she could handle the odds, but her confidence suffered and she quickly spiraled into a self-fulfilling prophecy. By learning to master resiliency and applying a self-evaluation program to her sales presentations, she not only increased her confidence but turned the sales pendulum swinging back her way.

Many successful actors are repeatedly rejected before getting that “big break.” Had they given up too early, the world would have never seen the likes of Fred Astaire, Marilyn Monroe, Clint Eastwood – or even The Beatles. Could you be the Clint Eastwood of sales?!

The sales axiom: in order to get to “Yes,” you must hear a lot of “No’s” is true, but the handling of the “No’s” can determine the difference between success and failure. Successful actors are more familiar with “No” than “Yes” and offer practical tips for dealing with disappointment.

In this chapter readers learn:

- How to master resiliency
- How to separate the subjective from the objective
- How to re-label losses as lessons
- How to judge the performance and not the performer
- How to fully commit and let go of results

## Chapter Fifteen

### The Director: Casting a Successful Sales Team

*“The director is simply the audience. . . . His job is to preside over accidents.”*  
— Orson Welles

Greg’s first sales manager constantly rode him to push his clients more; Greg quickly grew frustrated and quit. Jeannie, his new sales manager, recognized that Greg was excellent at all aspects of the sales process--with the exception of closing. By using some of the techniques in earlier chapters, like circles of concentration and creating powerful goals, Jeannie helped Greg outgrow his fear of closing. Greg went on to be the top salesperson for the quarter and Jeannie gained a productive, loyal team member.

Good directors foster an atmosphere in which actors can grow. They allow actors the opportunity to experiment: to succeed and fail without fear. They are leaders who help actors find their way through blocks and make the strongest choices. This chapter focuses on powerful directing techniques for leading salespeople as well as steps for developing strong “ensemble performances.”

Imagine Al Pacino playing Gandhi or Gwyneth Paltrow as Julia Child and you have an idea of the importance of proper casting. This chapter also reveals tips from casting directors that can be applied to hiring successful team members.

In this chapter readers will learn:

- How to drop pre-conceived ideas
- How to set sellers up to win
- How to foster creativity and risk-taking

**Conclusion:**

**The Oscars or the Razzie's**

*“An ounce of performance is worth pounds of promises.”*

— Mae West

Candace, a seller for a national equipment supplier, loves creating detailed sales proposals for her clients along with elaborate graphs and statistics; in fact, she loves it so much that she spends twice as much time doing that than pursuing new business. Soon, her own sales statistics started sliding away.

Richard, an account executive for a printing company, spends most of his day on the phone or in front of clients. He uses very little sales material, focusing instead on establishing a strong emotional connection to his clients in order to best respond to their needs at that moment. It's no surprise that Richard won the award as top salesperson in his company.

Ask any great actor and they will tell you: it takes commitment, time and practice to deliver a great performance. Oscar winners aren't made overnight and neither are sales winners. So ask yourself: am I committed to doing what it takes to be a great salesperson? Am I headed for the spotlight and the Academy Awards equivalent of my industry? Or the Razzies? What kind of seller do I want to be?

This book offers you all of the tools you need to give a star-turn sales performance, but the magic and the motivation are within you.

## Sample Chapter

### Chapter Five:

### **The Motivation: Discovering Power Goals**

*“Acting is doing, because everything you say or do is some kind of an action, some kind of a verb. You're always connected to the other person through some kind of action.” -- Mira Sorvino*

Bob was pulling down six figures selling printing equipment when the industry hit the brakes. Easy money turned into hard work and Bob grew increasingly impatient and unhappy. After going through the discovery process in this chapter, Bob was able to uncover a strong personal motivation that would propel him to seek new ways to overcome market and industry conditions rather than run from them.

There's nothing inherently wrong with financial motivation, but without an equally powerful emotional purpose, how much effort will you consistently put in to your career – especially if the money starts to slow down or the competition heats up? Will you be one of the multitudes of salespeople who jump from job to job in search of that winning trifecta of right product, right client and right timing? Sure, you may get lucky and ride the wave for years. But watch out when the tsunami comes – as it surely has in this new economy! Will you run for cover, or take your cues from dedicated actors and continue to hone your skills and find new ways to adjust and grow?

Eighty-five percent of Screen Actor's Guild members make less than \$5000 a year. The number of actors auditioning for roles well exceeds the number of available parts, forcing the majority of actors to support themselves through other means while continuing to work on their craft. For most dedicated actors, money is rarely the chief motivator. If it were, you can bet there would be a lot fewer actors in the world! Why do

they do it? What drives them to devote so much time and energy to the pursuit of something with so little chance for financial reward?

As salespeople, we would quickly turn and run from such odds. In fact, I would wager that the majority of people that choose a career in sales do so chiefly for the money. It's nothing to be ashamed of. After all, where else can you virtually write your own pay check? The ability to earn commensurately to the work we put in is part of the American dream! Certainly there are other factors that lead one in to sales: excitement, variety, freedom, working with people, creative problem-solving. But lets be honest; couldn't you achieve those same things working for Apple or Google?

### **Financial Motivation Equals Efficiency**

In the office products industry, it takes an average of six calls before a prospect buys; however, 48% of reps quit after the first call and another 25% after the second call. Only 10% of salespeople make more than three calls.<sup>14</sup>

Other statistics on prospecting show that it takes five to seven attempts to get a hold of someone in person, and an average of nine attempts to get an executive to return your call.

Say it along with me: "Sales is a numbers game." It's drilled into us from day one on the job. It takes X number of "No's" before you get to a "Yes." While true, when approaching anything from a strictly financial motive, efficiency becomes your master, and any performance, whether you're acting or selling, driven by efficiency creates cookie-cutter behavior, rote speech and limited time devoted to finding creative solutions.

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<sup>14</sup> OP Sales Training, 11-03-2008

How many of us go to the trouble of making that second, third—let alone *ninth* call?!

Everyone has a limit to the amount of time and effort they are willing to invest in a sale. With a little self-observation, you'll recognize when you've reached yours. And unfortunately, so will your customer. It may be after the second or third objection or the fourth un-returned phone call, but at some point most of us will mentally and emotionally check out: in the middle of a presentation that isn't going well you find yourself devising a quick exit strategy; on the phone with a client that is giving you another excuse, you catch yourself checking email. How often do you fully commit to seeing the sales call through, much less the entire sale? If the answer is less than you care to admit, you're not alone.

Successful sellers who have survived the tides of economic change, committed to their craft and managed to make a good living while maintaining their sanity, have found something else that drives them. Something beyond a paycheck. I challenge you to find something deeper as well. What follows are a key set of acting tools to help you lock in strong, personal motives that will keep you focused and committed even in tough times.

### **Wanting is a Passive Verb**

What do I need to sell to meet my quota? How many calls do I have to make to close a deal? What do I want to make this year? When it comes to goal-setting, the focus is on wants and needs. Both the company's and our own. There is nothing wrong with wanting, but we must remember that wanting is a passive verb. It's just a feeling, a need, a desire; it can be strong or weak, but it still has only the *potential* to lead to action. In

contrast, acting and selling are active words; they put you in a state of “doing,” rather than “being.”

We all have wants. Some are long-term, like a fancy sports car, a house on the golf course, or a college education for your children. Some are more immediate, like a hot dog or a cold beer at the baseball game. Many wants are simply wishful thinking: yes we want it, but we’re not necessarily fully committed to do what it takes to get it. In fact, if something better, easier-to-achieve or more immediate comes along, we readily get knocked off course.

### **What am I Fighting For?**

Anna really *wanted* to sell more, but her actions proved otherwise: most of her free time was spent on other interests, such as pilates, book club and girls’ night out. When she committed to *fighting* to sell more, her entire attitude changed. Suddenly there was little that would stand in the way of her getting a sale. She found her energy more focused and her days more productive, which still left her time for her hobbies and friends.

Actors must make strong, active choices for motivation in order to keep a scene moving forward. Reframing goals from: “What do I want?” to the more powerful: “What am I fighting for?” as famed casting director and author Michael Shurtleff suggests in his best-selling book *Audition!*, inspires action and increases the stakes.

Wanting that big house on the golf course is one thing, but fighting to get it by doggedly pursuing those ten extra sales, scrimping and saving and putting in hours of overtime to actually place a down payment on it is an entirely different mindset. Think

back to the last time you fought for something. Was it a job? A relationship? A parking spot? It doesn't matter how trivial it may seem to others, if you are emotionally committed to it or the consequences are of great enough significance, even that first cup of coffee in the morning can be worth fighting for.

When you're fighting all of your senses are engaged. You are emotionally charged, determined. You are not on the fence. You consider all the possible ways to reach your goal. You charge ahead. You convince. You charm. You commit yourself to attaining A and you will not settle for X, Y or Z. You do not hit a speed bump and head straight for the first exit. You try different ways of attacking that speed bump: slowing down, going around it, jack-hammering if you must, but you do not give up.

Perhaps you believe that your product or service speaks for itself. Merely presenting its benefits should be sufficient to convince anyone of its superiority. Your emotional commitment is not really necessary. That may be in some cases, but as Michael Shurtleff puts it: "The truth is not enough (sic) unless it is invested with sufficient emotion to make it important." Does your product or service *really* sell itself? If so, I suggest you put this book down immediately and start searching for a new job as it is surely only a matter of time before you are replaced with a computerized buying system!

"But I'm only selling paper or scissors or widgets," you say. "There is nothing important about it. Even I find it boring." True, your product may not be the cure for cancer or even a hangnail, but if you search hard enough, you will find something that personally connects you to your product or service. Try answering the questions below and see if you can't hit on something that works for you:

**Does Your Product or Service:**

- **Benefit the buyer?** Then get connected. Who is your buyer – what is their personal story? Get to know them. Is your product/service saving them money? Money they can use toward another important need? Is it saving them time that they can spend with their family? How does that make you feel to know you have contributed value to another’s life – and that of their family?
- **Benefit the user?** Who ultimately benefits from your product/service? Put a face on the end user. What’s their story? How do they benefit? What would they lose if they did not have access to your product/service?
- **Benefit the community?** What does your product/service add to the community locally, nationally or beyond? Are you feeding the economic system by creating jobs? What does it feel like to be a responsible, contributor to society? What is that worth to you?

If you still can’t find a sufficiently strong motivation to get behind your product or service, you can go back to finding the importance in your own circumstances as discussed earlier. Think about your personal stakes: Are you fighting to keep your job? To earn money to pay the mortgage? Are you fighting for respect? Power? Attention? Do not pretend that you don’t care or that you’re O.K. with whatever happens. Personally invest in the outcome. Follow Yoda’s advice in Star Wars: “Do or do not. There is no Try.”

### **What Are You Fighting For? A Sales Conversation:**

Lets look at an example from a real sales situation: LB sells commercial air time for a local radio station. She competes with over forty other radio stations and media outlets for a local ad budget. Over and over she hears the same thing from her clients: “I could buy any station and reach the same number of people.” LB is discouraged.

LB: I can get my client’s message out to 150,000 people over the course of a week, but my clients’ keep reminding me that they have fifteen other stations offering similar numbers. I’m having a really hard time getting passionate about it because, in some ways, they’re right. There are dozens of choices out there besides my station that will meet their needs.

JH: O.K. So tell me what your station is fighting for.

LB: To be number one in the ratings.

JH: And how are you going to accomplish that? What must you provide?

LB: We’ve made a lot of recent improvements to try and be the most important and up-to-the-minute news source out there so listeners don’t have to wait for music breaks, papers to be printed or to get to their computers to hear what’s happening.

JH: So your listeners count on you.

LB: Yes, I guess they do.

JH: And what would happen if listeners didn’t tune into your station or you went off the air and something big happened?

LB: I guess they would have to piece together news from other sources and maybe spend time at the end of the day watching news or reading the paper or going on-line.

JH: Time they could be spending with their family? Going for a bike ride?

Volunteering for a charity?

LB: Exactly.

JH: So you provide a public service; a free and convenient community service that helps people stay on top of the most important things going on in their world – as it's happening. And what's so important about getting news as its breaking?

LB: Well, if there's a traffic jam or a major storm moving in and they're on the road, they can avoid it or if the stock market crashes or war breaks out or they can get home and do what they need to do.

JH: Good. How do you think listeners feel about a service that they can rely on to provide all of that simply in exchange for listening to a few commercials each hour?

LB: I would think they have a certain sense of loyalty and good will for us.

JH: Yes. And since they are getting that information from a source they trust and rely on, your client, the advertiser, will also be the recipient of that good will.

LB: True.

JH: What about you? What are you fighting for?

LB: Well, I'd like to close the sale.

JH: You'd *like* to?

LB: Let me rephrase that. I am *fighting* to close the sale.

JH: Why?

LB: I need to make my quota.

JH: Not strong enough.

LB: I'm off in my billing and there is this young, new guy who's really rocking it.

JH: How long have you been there?

LB: Five years.

JH: So there's competition. Are you going to step back and let some new guy who hasn't paid his dues waltz in and take your spot at the top?

LB: Well, no. I don't want to.

JH: You don't *want* to?!

LB: No.

JH: So what are you fighting for? Be positive and specific:

LB: I'm fighting to be on top. To prove I'm still the best!

JH: There you go!

### **Scoring Your Role:**

After determining the overarching goal they are fighting for in the play, an actor must continue to search for an objective in each scene and a motive for each series of actions or dialogue. This is typically referred to as "scoring the role," or breaking a script down into "beats." Something drives everything we say and do, therefore to communicate clearly and effectively, our external words and actions must be in synch with our internal goals. We need to be connected to what we are saying or doing, otherwise we are at risk of blindly parroting someone else's words and feigning feeling or emotion—the antithesis of Method acting or selling.

A director instructs an actor to walk across the stage, pick up a glass and say his line.

Actor: “*What’s my motivation?*”

Director: “*Your paycheck.*”

The actor in the joke (originally attributed to Alfred Hitchcock) lacked a good, specific reason for his action therefore, he must find his own. Most likely he is thirsty. Or perhaps he has a bad taste in his mouth from a cigar he just smoked. Or maybe he is stalling so he can think of a response to a particularly challenging question. There are an infinite number of motives for any single sentence or action. It is up to the actor and the salesperson to find the strongest motive to inspire their pursuit of a goal.

To ensure your motives are powerful and sustainable, make sure they are in a positive form. You may really desire to get even with a particular customer or steal business from a competitor, but negative emotion will only drain your energy and hurt your effectiveness in the end. Even Norman Bates in *Psycho* had a positive motive: not just to kill guests at his hotel, but to please his mother. (And while a potentially fertile field, that is the last comparison between sales and a horror movie you will hear in this book!)

### **Don’t Forget Your Scene Partner!**

An actor’s motivation is also influenced by the interaction with their scene partner. Who is your scene partner in sales? Your customer! And since your customer brings his or her own needs and wants into the scene, a beat goal must be flexible and possible variations explored beforehand in improvisational or role-playing exercises.

For example, perhaps during a particular section or beat of your presentation your goal is to *convince* the buyer that your product is the best value for the price. The buyer interrupts, telling you about a particularly bad experience he had with the product several years ago. Instead of dismissing his comments and forging ahead with your pitch, you quickly shift to a new goal(s): to *prove* your product's reliability or to *demonstrate* your company's exemplary record in customer satisfaction.

Lets look at how major goals break down into beats by comparing some examples from film and theater to a common sales situation:

**Chart 1: What am I fighting for: A Comparison of Acting vs. Personal Goals:**

Movie example: *Rocky*:

<u>Main goal</u>	<u>Scene goal</u>	<u>Beat goal</u>
to <i>earn</i> respect	to <i>win</i> Adrianne's love	to <i>convince</i> her to go out

Sales example:

to <i>reclaim</i> business	to <i>re-position</i> product	to <i>demonstrate</i> new features
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Theater example: *Mama Mia*:

<u>Main Goal</u>	<u>Scene Goal</u>	<u>Beat Goal</u>
to <i>get</i> dad to give her away at mom's wedding	to <i>discover</i> father's identity	to <i>encourage</i> potential father to reveal clues

Sales example:

to <i>increase</i> sales volume percent	to <i>discover</i> client satisfaction level	to <i>challenge</i> client to by 10 expect more
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## Selecting Action Words

*“The talent is in the choices.” Robert DeNiro*

Now that you’ve discovered what you’re fighting for and what motivates you -- both overall and from moment-to-moment -- how are you going to achieve your goal? Even with strong motivation and commitment, if no action is taken, nothing happens in the scene or the sale. The audience is bored and leaves at intermission. The client makes up an excuse to rush you out the door at the first opportunity.

There are an enormous number of actions available to choose from, however most of us end up choosing the same habitual actions or reactions - even when they have failed to work for us in the past! This particular form of insanity (doing the same thing over and over expecting different results) is as rampant in business as it is in other areas of our lives. But fortunately, by reading this book, you have already made a commitment to becoming a “conscious-salesperson.” You are now becoming increasingly aware of your motives and actions and getting honest with yourself about your results. It is by becoming aware that you are able to experiment with new actions by trying them in the different “scenes” of your life, carefully monitoring their effectiveness.

This simple trick of replacing habitual actions with a different active word can trigger a whole new attitude, increase physical energy and open up new opportunities for growth. Chart Two contains a partial list of sales-related actions to stimulate your imagination. Try one on for size. For example, see if you notice a difference in your attitude or energy when you focus on *unveiling* a feature as opposed to just *telling* someone about it.

### **Chart Two: Potential Sales Actions**

Address, advice, agree, appeal, assess, assure, attest, challenge, charm, clarify, coax, conclude, confirm, confront, convince, debunk, defend, demonstrate, deliver, describe, develop, discuss, dispel, display, document, dramatize, elaborate, emphasize, enable, encourage, establish, expand, explain, explore, express, focus, forge, give, help, highlight, identify, illustrate, incorporate, indulge, integrate, introduce, invent, investigate, jolt, justify, link, list, maintain, mention, motivate, move, name, note, observe, offer, outline, persuade, pinpoint, point out, portray, predict, prescribe, present, petition, probe, prod, prompt, propose, prove, question, recommend, reconstruct, recount, reinforce, refer, reject, relate, remind, report, respond, reveal, review, scrutinize, shake up, share, shift, show, specify, speculate, stimulate, stress, substantiate, suggest, summarize, sum up, supply, surprise, tackle, tease, test, unearth, unify, unveil, urge, use, validate, vindicate, warn, woo, work out.

### **Three Key Factors to Consider in Selecting an Action:**

1. Use positive, powerful, active verbs to help focus your verbal, mental and physical energy.
2. Be specific. *How* are you going to get what you are fighting for? Refer to the active verbs in Chart Two and ask yourself questions; such as how would you *verify* a product benefit or *surprise* a customer?
3. *Why* are you taking this action? Remember, every action must be justified. Even when people take the wrong actions in life, they have somehow justified their behavior to themselves.

### **Negative vs. Positive Actions**

Whenever possible, choose a positive action over a negative. With a little work, any negative action can be turned into its positive counterpart. Brainstorm ways to reposition your action in a positive light. Here are some examples:

<u>Negative</u>	<u>Positive</u>
Argue	Negotiate
Convince	Compel
Demand	Urge
Track down	Pursue
Push	Encourage

### **Throw Out the Stage Directions**

Well-trained actors balk at stage directions describing in detail how to take a certain action or directors who tell them how they should deliver a line. They frequently disregard instructions in the script like, “smile *meaningfully*” or “hand over *gladly*.” They know that actions motivated by a strong desire and an emotional commitment develop in an organic way and are much more truthful and powerful than any attitude or affect they would restrict themselves to using. Even Shakespeare knew this, giving actors only the simple directions, “Enter” and “Exit” in his many plays.

In the same way, be careful not to predetermine how you will deliver a line or take an action. This usually involves adding a descriptive adverb to your chosen action. For example, while your motive may be to persuade or convince, resist the urge to get too

specific, for example telling yourself “I’m going to *urgently* persuade” or “ask them *forcefully*.” Adverbs limit and restrict us in our search for honest and meaningful behavior; throw them out.

### **Communicate In the Moment**

“I really wanted to make that sale!” Lynn cried as we walked out of a big Manhattan ad agency. But having been on the call with her, I was hard pressed to see it. It is not enough to *know* what your objective is if it is not communicated in the moment it is needed. Not an hour earlier in your sales manager’s office. Not five minutes before in the elevator. And certainly not sitting in your car afterwards banging your head against the steering wheel!

An actor performs when the curtain rises and the lights go on. He can’t afford to take the entire first scene to “warm-up” and hit his stride. And neither can you. Studies say people make judgments about us in the first seven seconds or less. Are you on by then? The sales call is your show and your time to shine. Every fiber in your being must be prepared, alive and awake in that moment.

How do we activate that motivation and put that energy to use in our call or presentation? There are a number of ways, including developing a strong “Moment Before,” which was covered in Chapter Three, but as the highly-acclaimed actress/teacher Uta Hagen succinctly puts it: “...Sometimes you just have to flail yourself into feeling.” What follows are two important Method acting techniques that may “flail” you into feeling in order to capture that desire in a visceral and usable way:

## **1. Visualization**

Visualization is a powerful and proven tool if used correctly and consistently. Much has been written about it and there are some very helpful books available that I encourage you to read so I will not spend more time on it other than to offer the following advice: visualizing a successful, conflict-free, quick sale is a sure-fire way to disappointment.

Expand your visualization to include more possibilities of what a positive call might encompass. If you are walking into a situation where there are sure to be objections, imagine achieving a successful conflict resolution and mutually beneficial solution. Do not restrict your visualization so much that you do not leave room for the many different paths that may lead to your goal.

## **2. Sense Memory**

If you've ever seen a stage actor cry on cue, howl with laughter or shriek with pain, you've probably wondered: "How does he do that every night?" There are many different tricks or tools actors use, but the one made famous by Method actors sometimes unconventional use is Sense Memory: a formula for stimulating physical and emotional reactions by recalling a memory from one of our five senses associated with a specific event.

Distant memories like the scent of your grandmother's house, the feel of your baby's skin or the warmth of a roaring fire can all cause an emotional or physical reaction in the present. For instance, the imagined smell of cookies may make you hungry and cause your mouth to water while the imagined scent of your mother's perfume may make

you sad or cause you to smile, depending on what memory you associate with it.

Pavlov's dog is an example of sense memory. The dog hears a bell every time he is fed so after a while, he begins to salivate when the bell rings – before there is any real evidence of food being delivered.

The rationale behind using Sense Memory is that it is difficult for even the best actors to will their emotions to the surface. If you've ever seen an actor trying to force himself to cry or laugh or scream, you know first-hand how awkward and unnatural "going for an emotion" can look.

Studies show that memories are typically locked in the subconscious, and often it is only by recalling the stimuli associated with an experience in our past that we can elicit a very real physical and emotional reaction. When recalling the event, imagining as many details from it as possible using as many of the senses as you can is helpful. Everyone's triggers are different: some people respond more to sound, while others find a visual reminder or a smell to be more powerful. If you experiment with this technique you will quickly find what works best for you.

To demonstrate, look at how the following challenges to create a particular emotion are handled in both an acting and a selling situation using Sense Memory:

**A. Acting Example:**

Challenge: An actor is given a scene in which she is expected to cry on cue.

Solution: Instead of recalling a general feeling of sadness, she picks out a specific event that drove her to tears and a sensory experience tied to that event. She thinks about the day her first child was born and the sweet smell of her baby's head when he was handed to her as she lay sweaty and exhausted

in the delivery room. She imagines the weight of the soft, warm bundle in her arms, the tiny pink rosebud of a mouth gently quivering as her baby takes its first few breaths on this earth. Soon, the actor's eyes are welling up.

**B. Sales Example:**

Challenge: You must present a new product feature with great enthusiasm, yet you can not get in touch with the sense of excitement that you would like to share with your client.

Solution: You search for a time when you felt a high-level of positive anticipation or excitement. You recall the day you got your first car: the feel of that shiny silver key in your hand, the smell of new leather as you snuggled down into your bucket seat, the sound of The Eagles "Take it Easy" playing on the radio as you pulled out of your garage on the way to show off your new ride to your friends. Soon you are sailing into your meeting with positive energy and a sense of anticipation.

**Chapter Exercises:**

1. To unearth what you're fighting for, use stream of consciousness and repeat as many times as necessary: I am...I feel...I want...I need...filling in the blank with whatever comes to mind. It is important not to edit or judge yourself as you do this and write down everything that resonates with you. What comes up may surprise you. Some of it will be silly and some unrelated to your career, but keep pushing until you get to the real stuff.

2. In your notebook or on a three by five card, write the top three things you are fighting for. Keep it in your wallet or purse and read it every morning and night, as well as before going into a sales call.
  
3. Using the list in Chart Two, brainstorm which active verbs could possibly help you get what you are fighting for and add some of your own. Be creative, and again, don't edit yourself as you go; just think and write it down.
  
4. Sense Memory Exercise One: When you have your morning coffee, pay attention to all the details associated with the experience. Note the taste, touch, smell, sound and look. Do this for three days. On the fourth day, try to recreate the sensation of holding and drinking your coffee without actually having it there in front of you. (Don't have it brewing in the kitchen either – that's cheating!) Feel the weight of the cup in your hands; your fingers curled around the handle. Let the smell of the roasted beans waft up into your nose. Taste the warm liquid hitting your lips, your tongue and finally rolling down your throat.  

On the fifth day, make your *real* morning coffee and note what you got right and what you missed!
  
5. Sense Memory Exercise Two: After you've done the first exercise for a week, select a particular emotion that you'd like to feel or convey during a specific business encounter and take the following steps:

- Recall a specific event where you experienced the desired emotion
- Make a list of all sensory experiences associated with that event
- Explore each of the senses to see which one brings up the strongest memory, physical or emotional reaction for you
- Once you've achieved recall of a specific emotion, immediately start rehearsing your sales pitch. Do not try and hold on to the memory or sensation; let it carry into your presentation and it should create a momentum of its own.
- Practice, practice, practice!