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Hiding Behind a Title

I jumped into the selling profession because it sounded a lot better than a factory job. I always figured I'd end up finding my way into a real job someday. Let's face the facts, if you're a doctor, lawyer or an accountant, people cozy up to you and want to be your friend. If you tell people you are a salesperson they shy away because they are afraid you'll start selling them something. This is why companies have come up with so many fancy titles for the position within their organization for the person responsible for selling, so everyone else can get paid.

I was sure I'd find a way out until one morning while on the way to conduct a seminar I realized I'd actually been selling for nearly 20 years. I guess I was a lifer, but every so often someone from the audience likes to point out that I am not really in sales anymore since I became a trainer, then a presenter and even now as a speaker. And still, I look at them with a puzzled look and reply, "Who do you think sold the seat your sitting in?"

Nothing in our economy happens until something is sold. A dear friend used to say, "Salespeople are the people that grease the gears that turn the wheels of progress." Everything starts with a sale, even romance. For example; a man and a woman meet, they are both attracted to one another. They talk, have a laugh and immediately begin selling themselves. Cupid draws his bow and a whole new generation is off to the races.

In the book, "Real World Sales Strategies That Work," I wrote a chapter that touches on managing your outlook. One of the five elements I reference that comprise your outlook is how you feel about the job you're doing. In this case, we're talking about the job you do as a salesperson and the long and the short of it is, if you don't feel good about and enjoy the job you're doing, you'll never excel within it.

People ask me over and over what was the one thing I did that helped me succeed in sales. It's hard to say, but if I were forced to put my finger on it I would have to say it was my ability to keep it real. I decided along time ago if I were going to do something, I might as well find a way to like it. When I first entered sales, I tried to be someone else, you know, a salesperson. I found out I was better off just being me than trying to be what I thought a salesperson was supposed to be. I started asking my prospects questions just as I would anyone else I met. All of the sudden, people started treating me like any other person instead of a salesman and I started making sales. As you know, making sales, makes the job more enjoyable and I was all for that.

So I approached the job with the notion I was going to help people identify their needs and I realized if I had a solution for their needs, they would be happy to buy it from me.

Finally, if you're hiding the fact you're a salesperson, it's only because you have a negative impression of what a salesperson represents - a solutions provider. Be yourself, enjoy what you do and above all else, take pride in your role within your company.

In closing, I can only tell you from experience if you take all the negative things you don't like about salespeople and figure out how to make them a positive you'll never wind up Hiding Behind a Title.