Sales and Sales Management Training

Selected References from *Management by the Book: 365 Daily Verse & One-Minute Management Lessons for the Busy Faithful*

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28 February

*It is not good to have zeal without knowledge…*

Proverbs 19:2a

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| In Every Human Interaction Someone Is Selling; Someone Is Buying |

**Sales**

It was the most important presentation in half a century. The sale was not made and 50,000 men died.

In November 1965 Charles Cooper was a young staffer assisting his boss, Earle Wheeler who was making a recommendation to the Big Boss for the organization’s strategic direction.

The Big Boss had to decide between two strategies, one from Earle, who had wisdom and judgment and experience. The other strategic direction was from Robert who ran an academic team of whiz kids.

The Big Boss had to choose between nearly opposite recommendations from Earle and Robert.

Although the pitch was done decades ago, Charles Cooper remembers it as if it were yesterday. Cooper was the young man holding the flip chart for Earle Wheeler; an eyewitness to history.

President Lyndon Baines Johnson picked the recommendation from his Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara over the request of his Joint Chiefs of Staff [Lieutenant ]General Earle Wheeler. LBJ and McNamara had decided how to win the Vietnam War.

And made the bloodiest mistake of the last 50 years.

Why? Because General Earle Wheeler could not sell.

The Generals wanted to do big military stuff: overwhelming force, complete destruction, crushing the morale of the enemy and their communist friends. The civilian leadership, the Secretary of Defense wanted to implement a measured response, an incremental escalation, a tit-for-tat; hoping to avoid a feared World War III with China.

Yes, LBJ should have been smart enough to adopt the counsel of his top Generals, but he didn’t and didn’t have to. It is the responsibility of the advisor (the sales guy) to persuade the boss on the benefits of the recommendation. The boss (the customer) does not have to buy anything that is being sold to him.

And so the president bought the wrong strategic package. He used the wrong facts.

The first part of Proverbs 14:2 says, *It is not good to have zeal without knowledge…*

But was not the entirely fault of the president. It was the fault of the military: the failure to influence the president.

Freedom loving countries finally defeated communism in the Cold War but it might have ended sooner with an effective sales pitch.

###

24 February

*Present your case,* says the LORD*. Set forth your arguments,* says Jacob's King.

Isaiah 41:21

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| Management Must Demand A Sales Pitch |

**Sales**

"I agree with you, I want to do it, now make me do it."

After winning his first presidential election in 1932 Franklin Delano Roosevelt met with the like-minded Socialists who worked to get him elected. The supporters had an agenda, something to sell to the incoming administration. And FDR was excited about the numerous proposals and was eager to get started implementing his New Deal. Roosevelt worked to get off to a fast start in confronting the Great Depression using relief, recovery and reform.

During FDR’s first 100 days Congress approved his every request.

How did he do this?

Roosevelt was expert in the exercise of influence. And not just his projection but also in his demanding to be persuaded, “Now make me do it.” He asked to be ‘sold’ on a course of action. He expected the best possible debate and argument and recommendations.

This sounds much like Isaiah 41:21, *Present your case,* says the LORD*. Set forth your arguments,* says Jacob's King.

It is the responsibility of the president to get the best possible advice in the crafting and implementing policy. However, the president does not have to ‘buy’ anything presented to him. FDR was insisting that the initiatives had to be ‘sold’ to him in such a compelling fashion that the president would have little choice but to adopt the proposal.

The president was looking for good policies and the frameworks that would link together competing interests in government and the private sector. Win-win-win solutions using limited resources with an obvious course of action.

Not all agree on FDR’s results but all acknowledge his ability to get things done through the thinking support of others.

A complete sales pitch makes management decisions easy.

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8 January, Ezekiel 12:27

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| See and succeed  |

**iVision**

In 1975 it was a big, simple vision. Get a computer in the hands of everyday people. It was a start-up in a garage made empty by selling a prized VW minibus for seed capital. The new small computer on every desk top would (em)power the individual and would produce unimaginable, unbelievable efficiencies. His vision changed the business and delivery of information and entertainment. His company is literally putting hand-sized computers into the pockets of everyman.

Apple founder Steve Jobs was able to see years over the horizon. Where IBM thought only a few computers would ever be needed in the entire world, Jobs was thinking bigger—and smaller. Apple sales hit $200 million in the late 70’s.

But for Jobs it was never about the money—it was the mindset. His dream was a personal micro-computer for every person.

Steve Jobs’ vision was counter-intuitive and counter-cultural. And he was not afraid to have some fun at the expense of traditional convention.

The company logo was an apple with a bite taken. The designer of the logo, Rob Janoff, says that he put the bite there so that the image would be scalable, and always look like an apple at any size. But creation myths soon arose. One story said the image had been designed as a reference to the Garden of Eden and the fruit of knowledge of good and evil. Another claimed the image was not Eve’s apple bite but a visual play on ‘byte.’ Jobs himself, wisely, remained silent on the truth, allowing romantic founding myths to grow. He was an irreverent marketing genius setting the first Apple price at $666.

John Adams, the second president of the United States encouraged always keeping a book handy. He once said, “You will never be alone with a poet in your pocket.” Today, you are never alone with the Internet and an iPhone in your pocket. Thanks to the vision of Steve Jobs.

Each CEO needs to see where her business should be in 25 years. Just like the prophet Ezekiel says in 12:27, *Son of man, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision he sees is for many years from now, and he prophesies about the distant future.'*

Steve Jobs notes, we succeeded beyond our wildest dreams.

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12 January, Mark 10:44

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| It is Better to Give and Give (With the Humility of a Servant’s Heart) |

**Give Credit**

*…whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.* Mark 10:44

As the vision for your organization comes into focus, the mission of the leader must first be understood. Research shows happiness will follow when personal goals serve other people, whatever the external benchmark the CEO uses for success. Managers at the topof the org chart should be the true servant-leaders noted in the good news of the Gospels.

So how does the manager get started?

The leader must look at presenting her long-term vision, indeed every communication, as a sales transaction: Somebody is buying; somebody is selling. The best sales professionals and the best CEO’s know that the best deals are made when the other party is made happy. Win-win negotiating and all that.

What is the first thing the wanna-be-boss can practice to be the servant of all?

The easiest way is to buy servant-hood. No, that can’t be purchased with cash but with organizational capital. That is to say: *Give Credit*.

In his First Inaugural Address, on January 21, 1981 Ronald Reagan said, "There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he doesn't mind who gets the credit."

Giving credit to others is a form of servant-hood. It’s a way of selling yourself as leader of the team. Receiving recognition creates happiness. In both buyer and seller. Being the “slave” to your staff is the best path toward getting profitable employee buy-in.

A slave owns nothing. The presidential-servant keeps nothing--not even credit.

Give it away.

###

11 October

*So the other disciples told him,*

*"We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them,*

*"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were,*

*and put my hand into his side,*

*I will not believe."*

John 20:25

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| Seeing is believing |

**Careful**

# We pressed the flesh shaking hands on the agreement. Mike was highly recommended by a trusted mutual friend. And we immediately went to work together in a pharmaceutical start-up. I should have paid more attention to the adage, “A Verbal Contract Isn’t Worth the Paper It’s Written On.” I should have questioned more and demanded that the deal get documented.

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Thomas was one of the twelve apostles who demanded physical evidence of the Resurrection of Christ. He would only believe that Jesus rose from the dead if Thomas could examine the wounds suffered by the Savior during the Crucifixion. This is the origin of “Doubting Thomas.”

The Greek work for ‘marks’ caused by the nails and the spear is translated as

Example, ensample (a pattern or model for imitation) <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/ensample> accessed Sept 28 2014) fashion, figure, form, manner, print. Yeager volume 9, page 25.

Saint Thomas wanted hard data before believing the claim of Christ’s resurrection.

In the sales process the company representative will offer proof only if the buyer is skeptical. If the prospect doubts any of the features, advantages or benefits of the product or service, the sales rep is ready with a backup for any claim.

Thomas was a skeptical buyer. He would embrace the assertion only if he experienced the declaration through his senses; seeing was believing.

But let us not be too critical of Thomas’s reluctance. Jesus had warned his apostles that there would be false [prophets and misleading messiahs and pretenders]. Thomas didn’t want to be fooled, perhaps.

Every boss needs the candor of a demanding Thomas. The former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, emphasizes the genius of Herman Kahn, Ph.D., “Hire paranoids. Even though they have a high false alarm rate they discover all the plots.”

A candid will not be moved by group think; going along with the crowd or social convention. “If a fellow CEO on the golf course says, ‘We are using this and we wouldn’t do without it,’ you have to do it too.” Peter Drucker observes, then the fellow manager will, “Yield to peer pressure.” [cite]

To believe without some evidence is a leap of faith. We can understand this in believing the Empty Tomb of the Risen Christ.

We should each be doubting as Thomas did.

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My start-up partner, Mike, would eventually renege on our verbal agreement. It was my fault. It was a self-inflicted wound.

Faith in the Risen Savior is a different business. I believe in The Written Word of God and the Power of the Holy Spirit for eternal security.

An earthly written instrument on this side of eternity would have saved me much wailing and gnashing of teeth.

*So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."* John 20:25

###

17 October

*Now get up and stand on your feet.*

*I have appeared to you*

*to appoint you as a servant*

*and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me.*

Acts 26:16

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| Do Your Job And The Results Will Follow |

**Appoint**

My cell phone bill was $1800. It was the 1980’s and business was learning the benefits of the new technology. We were seeing efficiencies gained with continuous communication for the travelling salesman: me. But I was paralyzed learning of the cost.

“This is awful,” I said to John, my sales manager. “My sales don’t cover my salary or—this month—even my expenses.” It was a thinly capitalized start-up with slow revenue.

“True,” John says. “But your job is to generate the sales—place the product in the customers hands; we’ll figure out profitability soon enough.” My sales manager was helping me to understand Peter Drucker, “There is only one valid definition of business purpose: to create a customer.” (Drucker 1954) P 36

The boss was right: establish the relationship (my job) and good management (his job) will give the product a future. It was a team effort.

My manager had played collegiate football and knew well the link between coaching in sports and managing in business.

Indeed, “Coaching *is* management,” says Dr. Jerry Bell, says founder and CEO of the Bell Leadership Institute and professor at the University of North Carolina. (Gerald D. Bell) (Dean Smith 2004) p. 1

Professor Bell writes on the basketball coaching philosophy of Dean Smith,

We asked our players to concern themselves with things within their control, our mission statement was: Play hard; play smart; play together. We knew if we did those things, we would be successful a large percentage of the time. (Dean Smith 2004) p 1

A game’s final score and a business profit are merely the byproducts; the end results of well executed behaviors. The daily drills and work and work-outs are the processes that move us incrementally to our goal(line). This is how supervision does its job.

I did not understand at the time the ‘organize’ part of management. This is the decision of the manager to select the people and the resources to do the job. My sales manager’s encouragement was part of the ‘lead’ definition. The ‘control’ part of management was the evaluation of my sales numbers. And that was to source of my worry and whining. I needed to fear less about the cell phone cost and do the work. This was my appointed task.

*Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me.* Acts 26:16. Bible teacher Randy Yeager explains,

The reason Jesus wanted Paul to stop groveling in the dust and stand up was that He had work for him to do. It is false humility and a facade behind which we conceal our sloth when we fall before our Lord on our face. We are to stand on our feet and “go and disciple all nations” (Mt. 28:19). One cannot do that when he is lying in the dust on the Damascus road. Renaissance New Test vol 11, page 86.

We do the work of sharing the Gospel. The Holy Spirit does the rest.

My sales manager promised that I would get all the resources that I would need to do the daily drills to reach my sales goals. Just as Commentator George Will, Ph.D., once wrote, “If you will an end, you must will the means to that end.” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/03/AR2006120300689.html> accessed 17 oct 2014.

My boss paid the $1800 cell phone bill.

###

24 October

*Jesus asked,*

*"Were not all ten cleansed?*

*Where are the other nine?*

Luke 17:17

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| How Many Favors Must The Manager Give For Each Favor Received? What Is The Rate of Return? |

**Rejection**

“About 10 percent.” This is the answer that comes back in nearly every seminar. In sales training classes we review the ratio of referrals given out to the number received. The estimates are always revealing and disturbing.

It is 10:1.

The sales professionals will complain that for every ten leads for new business that they will forward to other sales representatives they will get one lead back. Give 10 out; get one back. “It is not fair,” my clients would say.

“You are right,” I would reply. “It is not fair, few things in life are—especially in sales and sales referrals, but we must decide to be pro-active; to be in control of the events that affect our work—even if the returns are marginal.”

“It seems that we could get more appreciation…more love…?” The class would ask with one voice.

“So it would seem,” I would say and then pause. I would ask, “How many lepers did Jesus heal as recorded in Luke?”

Even non-Bible scholars would venture, “10?”

“Yes, and how many came back to Jesus to thank him?”

The class would sit still for a few seconds and one person would softly reply, “one.”

“Now if the Creator of the Universe—who worked the miracle of healing leprosy—can only get a 10 percent response rate, what make you think—you mere mortal—that you could do better than Jesus?”

It is not recorded if the nine cured lepers were among the mockers at Christ’s Crucifixion, but who would be surprised if they were. The Fallen Nature of the Human Condition is like that.

And hasn’t gotten much better. But good God-fearing citizens try be generous and continue to give even the gift is not recognized.

This is the American Way: to ‘give something back.’

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In 1836 Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville traveled across the young America and documented the ‘why’ of why America was so successful. In part, the new USA was acting out the good that Jesus did and did not expect the thanks of the receiver or even payment or a reciprocal payment. (Salvation is a gift that does not require payment.)

Tocqueville wrote, “Americans are pleased to explain almost all the actions of their life with the aid of self-interest rightly understood,” (volume 2, part 2, chapters 8-9 Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America via Lawler, *Stuck with Virtue: The American Individual and Our Biotechnological Future*.

Peter Augustine Lawler writes that the American people are “stuck *with* virtue.” Mankind might indeed be Fallen but Americans are a virtuous people (as only a self-governed people can be). We are a nation of good and do-gooders.

This is similar to the movie *Pay It Forward,* starring Kevin Spacey and Helen Hunt, without the sex scenes.

The theme of the film and Tocqueville was that Americans would give a favor and not expect or demand a return favor. The USA culture demonstrated that good works given generously would eventually return to the sender – but only indirectly. Favors would not necessarily come directly from the one who received the good deed.

But the Americans were not naïve. The European Tocqueville learned that Americans would give in “self-interest rightly understood.” Giving and getting was not a lateral, binary, two-way transaction. Giving was done in a loop where the favor would circle back to the originator from a different direction. But the favor was returned.

Whenever there was a barn raising, the owner would benefit and would eventually return the favor directly or indirectly to the person or to someone else in the community. This was done with out keep records; without intrusive government.

Morton Blackwell founder of the Leadership Institute says, “A stable movement requires a healthy, reciprocal I.O.U. flow among its participants. Don't keep a careful tally.” <http://www.leadershipinstitute.org/writings/?ID=30#sthash.1ma7HcuN.dpuf>

Decide to do the favor and expect nothing in return. Good will still return to you.

*Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?* Luke 17:17

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26 October

*Why do you look for the living among the dead?*

Luke 24:5b

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| Must We Sell To Every Customer Who Wants To Buy? |

**Sick**

A couple of decades ago General Hospital was located in the inner city of a large metropolis run by God-less liberals. By natural extension this meant that the purchasing personnel were corrupt.

Bill was one of the few salesmen who actually sold something to them in clean deals. But it would not last.

The crooked hospital employees had refined their art of graft into a learned, repeatable science of extorting vendors. And it nearly worked on Bill.

It operated like this. A buyer would cultivate an eager salesman (yes, this redundant, I know) (I was once one, too) with first promises and then start with small purchases. Playing hard to get always works.

Another sales rep once told me, “You could spend your whole career there and never make a sale, never make a difference.” He was right. I called on purchasing and a few doctors. It was dark and dirty and lazy. As I would visit the nurses stations, I would overhear the staff talk about their sick patients: The most common adjective of “infection” was “nosocomial.\*” There was never even urgency in the emergency department.

Bill got a call on his home phone from a purchasing agent. Diligent sales rep that he is, Bill gives his private ‘call me anytime’ number to his client hospitals. The customer home-phoned to make a request.

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Management is a practice like law or medicine, and is governed by relationships. Clinicians and hospitals and healthcare management are a case study on the intersection of ethics and money. This is not a new challenge,

Perhaps the most important premise of the medieval economic order is its insistence that economic activity be considered in the context of a social order bound by *general rules of sociability, charity, or justice that must govern human relations.*

To use an analogy, a doctor, for example, must know medial science well, even though it must be a science that is cold and objective. Yet when treating patients, he must go beyond the level of a technician and treat them with warmth, charity and compassion due to their dignity as human beings. That is why doctors have long taken the Hippocratic Oath—a code of medical ethics valid for all times and places. (John Horvat 2013) p 129

Management professor Peter Drucker explains the connection of medicine and management,

The first responsibility of a professional was spelled out clearly, 2,500 years ago, in the Hippocratic oath of the Greek physician: *primum non nocere*—“Above all, not knowingly to do harm.”

No professional, be he doctor, lawyer, or manager, can promise that he will indeed do good for his client. All he can do is try. But he can promise that he will not knowingly do harm. And the client, in turn, must be able to trust the professional not knowingly to do him harm. Otherwise he cannot trust him at all.

The professional has to have autonomy. He cannot be controlled, supervised, or directed by the client. He has to be private in that his knowledge and his judgment have to be entrusted with the decision.

But it is the foundation of his autonomy, and indeed its rationale, that he sees himself as “affected with the public interest.” A professional, in other words, is private in the sense that he is autonomous and not subject to political or ideological control. But he is public in the sense that the welfare of his client sets limits to his deeds and words.

And *Primum non nocere*, “not knowingly to do harm,” is the basic rule of professional ethics, the basic rule of an ethics of public responsibility. *(*Drucker 1973) p 368

Peter Drucker goes on to say that “business ethics” suggests that there is no difference between a ‘life lie’ and a ‘business lie.” He writes, “Executives should not cheat, steal, lie, bribe, or take bribes. But nor should anyone else. Men and women do not acquire exemption from the ordinary rules of personal behavior because of their work or job.” Drucker, suggests that “moral values and moral education—of the individual, or the family, of the school.”

Quoted in  *The Wall Street Journal Essential Guide To Management*, Alan Murray, HarperBusiness © 2010 page 155

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Bill answers the call from the purchasing agent and the hospital buyer begins talking in the elliptical indirection of “we do a lot of business with you…” with more friendly words following. Then a casual remark on how dangerous The City is and the hospital purchasing agent should be kept safe and a home security system would help everyone happy for about 12. As in $12,000. Bill could hear the wink and nod over the phone. The hospital agent helpfully gave Bill the name and number of his contact at the “security company” to drop off the request. More words follow. That vendor “is a simple cash-only business, as I’m sure you understand...”

Bill understood completely and called me. He did a million in sales with the account and he was about to lose it all.

I suggested that he go dark and say and do nothing for the time being and to talk quietly with his boss. Whistleblowers, like messengers of bad news, are not always appreciated and seldom have good days. This would require some finesse.

Bill would not be paying or acknowledging the extortion.

But then he didn’t have to ransom his account. It became moot. While we dithered in indecision on how not to act, the Hand of Divine Providence intervened.

Bill lost the account.

General Hospital was closed down when the city went bankrupt. It was a sick place to do business.

*Why do you look for the living among the dead?* Luke 24:5b

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\* An infection caught in a health care facility. The adage goes, “A hospital is no place to get sick…” The nosocomial infection rate is about 2 people per 1,000 patients. It was rumored that the dirty dealing hospital had a much greater and deadlier infection rate. But no one trusted the accuracy of the numbers. Everything had a price in General Hospital.

###

27 October

*Then he said to the man,*

*"Stretch out your hand."*

*So he stretched it out*

*and it was completely restored,*

*just as sound as the other.*

Matthew 12:13

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| What did the boss tell you to do? |

**Priority**

Bobby took the paper with the name and address and threw it out the window. “Don’t bother trying to sell to those people,” he said. “That’s in [N--] town—there’s no money there.” Bobby was my sales trainer who was often at odds with our manager.

Your (very young) Business Professor had a problem. Our boss had a simple sales priority-echoing actor Woody Allen. My manager said to, “just show up and give the pitch to who ever would listen—anyone can be a customer or a referral.”

But Bobby, my mentor-counselor, trashed my lead mumbling something about recent studies on eligible market segmentation and time management theories.

So who do I listen to? My boss or my mentor?

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Your Business Professor is often invited to speak on “new” methods of teaching managers how and what to manage. Ethics! Logic! Emotion!

Is everything new an improvement?

“The Renaissance mind,” says Bible scholar Randy Yeager, “sees the need for faith, reason and *experience in proper balance*. “ (Randolph O. Yeager 1983) p. 99. And this will help produce a firm foundation; good beginning. But,

The best plan is *only* a plan, that is, good intentions, unless it *degenerates into work*. The distinction that marks a plan capable of producing results is the commitment of key people to work on specific tasks. The test of a plan is whether management actually commits resources to action which will bring results in the future. Unless such commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes, but no plan. (Drucker 1973) p 128.

So what, then, is the work, the plan of any business?

Peter Drucker goes on to say that, “Because it is its purpose to create a customer, any business enterprise has two—and only these two—basic functions: marketing and innovation. They are the entrepreneurial functions.” (Drucker 1954) p 37.

So: I was a sales guy whose job was to create a customer.

The answer will simple: My boss gave me the direction and I should go to work.

*Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other.* Matthew 12:13. Jesus could have cured in any way He wanted. But He issued a simple command, “Stretch out your hand,” and the man faithfully obeyed first and then was completely healed.

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The address on the paper was gone out the car window but our office secretary had the original. I didn’t know what to do. So in the absence of knowing I was reduced to doing what the boss said to do and to ignore what my mentor said. I got the address.

So without telling my sales trainer, I visited the young couple. The Baker’s had a well-appointed apartment and they purchased my company’s offering. They were well-qualified buyers.

We talked a bit about cars and repairs and mechanics. We were fellow gear-heads, which, as is well known, transcends any racial divide.

Mr. Baker was the sole proprietor of Baker’s Service Center. My boss was right; my mentor not so much.

When in doubt, follow your manager’s direction. Do the behavior and the numbers will follow.

###

4 November

*Anyone whose name*

*was not found written in the book of life*

*was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Revelation 20:15

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| Managers Know The Important Behaviors And How They Get Done |

**Super**

Your Business Professor uses rather direct language in sales presentations. I was encouraged in this method acting by a beloved sales manager. “If you are not getting thrown out of an account twice a month,” my boss would command, “then you’re not selling hard enough.” Oddly, that manager was excruciatingly polite. But our job was to create a customer.

And in advancing organizational goals, I would be abrupt. I would fail at being pleasant but the numbers came through.

This is the failure of many managers: selecting the hi-performing Super Stars from the nice Turkeys.

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When talent counts, when talent determines life and death, who should get hired? Professor Kingsley Browne tells us in *The Ace and the Turkeys*,

Given the cognitive and temperamental patterns required, it is not surprising to find that the ability to fly aircraft successfully in combat is an ability that not many have. Indeed, it is not an ability that even all combat pilots have.

Aviation analysts recognize that the majority of combat kills are scored by a small minority of pilots.

[Air-warfare historian] Mike Spick has observed: “The gulf between the average fighter pilot and the successful one is very wide. In fact it is arguable that there are almost no average fighter pilots; just aces and turkeys; killers and victims.

Fighter pilots, like sales guys in a role-playing exercise, can practice and give a passable presentation. As one Air Force pilot stated,

Most guys can master the mechanics of the systems, but it’s instinctive to be able to assimilate all the data, get a big picture, and react offensively. Not a lot of guys can do that.

But the Air Force has a challenge, as do sales managers: Separating the Aces from the Turkeys,

Ideally, one would have only “aces” or “killers,” leaving the “turkeys” and “victims” to another career path. The difficulty lies, however, in the fact that there is no known way to separate the aces and the turkeys prior to combat.

Unfortunately, many of those who will end up being turkeys often do not know what they are getting into.

These pilots may have the ability, intelligence, and know-how to fly the plane well, but they ultimately lack the “fighting spirit” that they will need in combat. (Buffalo Law Review,Winter, 2001, 49 Buffalo L. Rev. 51,Women at War: An Evolutionary Perspective By Kingsley R. Browne)

The hiring manager has an advantage over an Air Force Wing Commander; the civilian Ace has a track record of Kills.

The best indication of future performance is past performance. Our armed forces are hampered by looking only to recent combat or aerial engagements — and there aren’t that many of those dogfights.

The hiring manager has different metrics of combat measures for top business talent: Eat what you kill. Who had produced the best numbers?

Super Stars and Aces can only be managed by Super Star managers who know what to evaluate. Entrepreneur and writer Richard Kock says,

*A few things are always much more important that most things.*

This is invariably true, yet difficult at first to credit. Unless we have numbers or 80/20 Thinking to guide us, most things always appear more important than the few things that are actually more important.

Even if we accept the point in our minds, it is difficult to make the next hop to focused action. Keep the “vital few” in the forefront of your brain. And keep reviewing whether you are spending more time and effort on the vital few rather than the trivial many. (Italics in original) (Kock 1998, 2008) pp. 127f

With my sales teams, Pareto’s 80/20 Principle always played out. But the top guy, usually a deviant who was always a standard deviation above the norm. My #1 sales guy was sometimes double the sales of #2, the rest of the sales team on the long tail. That #1 guy drove me nuts. But I loved his numbers.

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My sales style seemed counter-intuitive: confrontational bordering on arrogance created customers who had a need for my produce. Years later, my customers would continue to buy from me. “You didn’t waste my time,” one said. She was fast tracked into senior management.

My customer was a Super Star.

*Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.* Revelation 20:15

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# Much of the original though was written in *Small Business Super Star Hiring Hassle* for *Small Business Trends* <http://smallbiztrends.com/2006/09/small-business-super-star-hiring-hassle.html> accessed 22 November 2014

# ###

6 November

*Every day they continued to meet together*

*in the temple courts.*

*They broke bread in their homes and*

*ate together with glad and sincere hearts,*

Acts 2:46

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| Does Working Apart Really Work? |

**Remote Control**

“How many vacation days will I get?” The interview was not going well and had now gotten a lot worse. I stopped and had to ponder for a minute.

…I was thinking of the last family get-away where Charmaine and I visited with a client. It was a “vacation.” I guess. How many days off?

Who knew?

Not me…

So I answered the job candidate’s question with a question, “Why do you ask?” There was some mumbled response but it didn’t matter; I didn’t listen. I had written him off and was now mentally on to the next candidate. (I really need to work on that empathy thing. Please be patient with me.)

Your Business Professor gets this same nonsense from students on the first day of classes. The question comes up, “How many absences are we allowed?”

This always bothers me and I let it show. “The work of the semester hasn’t started and you are asking me how little you can work?”

I profile (in the worse meaning of the word) the student or the job seeker or the employee. Anyone who asked such revealing questions about holidays will get one of The Three Fs: He will be Fired, or will be a Failure or will earn an F. Workplace absence does not make the heart grow fonder. We need to be able to socialize. Like it or not.

Social Capital is defined as the, “Goodwill stemming from your social relationships.”

Management 3ed, Bateman, Snell, McGrawHill, page 17

Long distant relationships seldom work out. They are not productive.

Nobody gets any work done in a railroad station waiting room; no one gets much work done as a transient. The individual needs to belong to a “community” in which he knows people, in which he is known by them, and in which his own relationship is anchored. (Drucker 1973) p 555

Being on site is best. If the sales pitch or communiqué is important, show up in person.

There are three events in life that demand-command a person’s presence: Births, Deaths and Marriages.

And, it should now be added: work.

Miranda Priestly is a fictional character based, some say, on the editrix of *Vogue* magazine, Anna Wintour. (Some call her “Nuclear Winter.” But never to her face.) As the story goes, Anna/Miranda is directing changes at a new initiative,

You’re going to have to change your staff. I want only the best team…the transition will allow us to clean house of some of the hangers-on.

Oh, and there will be no more “flexible work schedule” rubbish.

No more “working remotely.”

We banned it at *Runway* and it’s made a huge difference. Page 340, Revenge Wears Prada: The Devil Returns, Lauren Weisberger, 2013

We work with people in person in the office. ‘Phoning it in’ is taking a short-cut; a joke among reporters. It is what an amateur journalist does when he doesn’t want to work.

A conference call-in is about as effective as enjoying box lunch date with a squawk box. Be at work and share time and experiences with your workmates. Be there. Be happy.

*Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,* Acts 2:46

###

16 November

*We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature,*

*but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.*

*No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden*

*and that God destined for our glory before time began.*

*None of the rulers of this age understood it,*

*for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

1 Corinthians 2:6–8

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| Should Follower of Jesus Deal With the Non-Believer? |

**Tolerance**

There is only one Chick-fil-A in the entire city of Washington, DC. Your Business Professor dines there often (the Chicken Sandwich the favorite). It is not too many steps from Starbucks.

They are both in the student center of The Catholic University of America. Chick-fil-A is a privately held, $5 billion restaurant business. Starbucks is a publicly held, $15 billion coffee business.

Chick-fil-A is closed on Sunday for church services. Starbucks is open on Sunday for church services.

They both represent a gospel. The difference is that Chick-fil-A wants every customer, even one who might patronize Starbucks. Starbucks does not want every investor, even those who might be Chick-fil-A’ers.

'It's a free country…” says Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, “You can sell your shares of Starbucks and buy shares in another company. Thank you very much.”

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2297856/Howard-Schultz-Starbucks-CEO-spars-anti-gay-marriage-activist-companys-stockholder-meeting.html>

Is this anyway to manage a business? It might be.

In a Fallen World.

But sales and management, as is politics, is based on relationships: addition and multiplication; not division and subtraction. Building a business requires creating a customer without betraying your highest value or your church. Starbucks might be a place of worship.

A business managed by Bible Believers understands more than the un-Believer of the complexity of working in the world on this side of eternity,

Sooner or later every executive realizes that 99 percent of the people she depends on for success don’t report to her. The success of every CEO depends far more on vendors, stockholders, board members, regulators, politicians, strategic partners, the financial community, the media, and customers than it does on the relatively small number of paid employees that report to her either directly or indirectly. (Turak 2013) p. 142

Peter Drucker, who described himself a ‘social ecologist,’ says, that, “A managerial job is defined by relationships—upward, downward, and sideways.” (Drucker 1973) p 414

Real diversity as practiced by Chick-fil-A (and less so by Starbucks) is a management competitive advantage. Openness and candor is in contrast with extreme filtering. Management Professor Henry Mintzberg writes of ‘buffering,’

It is in… linking activities that we can especially appreciate the delicate balancing act that has to be built into the art and craft of managing.

Managers are not just channels through which pass information and influence; they are also valves in these channels, which control what gets passed on, and how. To use two other popular words, managers are gatekeepers and buffers in the flow of influence. To appreciate the importance of this, consider…ways by which managers can get it wrong:

…managers are dams who block out too much of the external influence—for example, from customers asking for product changes.

This may protect the people inside the unit, but in so doing detaches them from the outside world—and external support. *Managing* Mintzberg page 79-80s

# The Disciple of Jesus is not detached. She deals. Quietly. In *Mere Christianity* C. S. Lewis says,

# Enemy-occupied territory---that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.

*We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.* Paul is writing of the philosophy of the unregenerate. The Calvinist Randy Yeager notes, “This is enemy territory and Paul’s contempt for it knows no bounds.”(Renaissance New Testament, volume 12, page 332.) *No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* 1 Corinthians 2:6–8

###

26 November

*Those who work their land will have abundant food…*

Proverbs 28:19

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| How Can The Manager Avoid The Tragedy Of The Commons? |

**Profit Hungry**

I knew the deal going in. Your Business Professor agreed to work as an understudy and learn the product knowledge and sales techniques peculiar to a high-end product and service market.

The contract outlined that I would get trained and sell in a geographic region and the sales commission would accrue to the sales representative who ‘owned’ the territory. My training period was undefined. And this was my mistake.

After my third Big Sale making more than a few dollars—for someone else—I expected to be assigned my own area. I felt I was ready, but my sales trainer and manager were in no hurry to make realignments that would disrupt the *status quo*.

I grew tired of working someone else’s land.

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The Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony had gratitude and Thanksgiving but little else. The first three years was base on a communal philosophy where the outputs (food) were independent of the inputs (work). From each according to his ability; to each according to his need. Everyone shared the load and everyone shared in the harvest.

Everyone starved.

Not 50 survived of the 102 who came to the New World. The Native Americans helped the non-threatening, starving Pilgrims. Not dying; not thriving. Management was not getting right.

Hugh Welchel, Executive Director of Faith, Work and Economics, quotes Governor William Bradford, the colony’s governor,

This system was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort.

The problem was that young men, that were most able and fit for labor, did repine that they should spend their time and strength for other men’s wives and children without any recompense.

Because of the poor incentives, little food was produced. <http://blog.tifwe.org/pilgrims-prosperity-property-rights/?utm_source=IFWE+Subscriptions&utm_campaign=5017aab86a-Weekly+Blog+Digest+Email&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8ffd80135f-5017aab86a-9598509&mc_cid=5017aab86a&mc_eid=011691074e>

Governor Bradford explains,

This change had very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been. Giving people economic incentives changed their behavior. <https://archive.org/details/historyplymouth01socigoog>

Even Plymouth Colony had problems with free riders and slackers.

\*\*\*

Garrett Hardin was an ecologist who proposed an economics theory in [1968] that he entitled the Tragedy of the Commons. It says the people will act in self-interest and not always in the interest of a larger group.

Hardin was referring to work of English economist William Forster Lloyd who, in 1833,

[P]ublished a pamphlet which included an example of herders sharing a common parcel of land on which they are each entitled to let their cows graze. In English villages, shepherds had sometimes grazed their sheep in common areas, and sheep ate grass more severely than cows. He suggested [Overgrazing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overgrazing) could result because for each additional sheep, a herder could receive benefits, while the group shared damage to the commons. If all herders made this individually rational economic decision, the common could be depleted or even destroyed, to the detriment of all. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tragedy_of_the_commons#cite_ref-1>

If a common area is owned by no one then no one would respect or a care about the territory. Today’s Tragedy of the Commons can be seen by visiting any office kitchen in America.

(“I will not wash someone else’s dishes.” “All food left in the refrigerator will be thrown out on Friday.” The nonsense managers must deal with.)

A rational economic man works best with ownership and boundaries.

\*\*\*

Your Business Professor was done with the deal and had had enough of working someone else’s territory. It wasn’t a bad exchange: I learned how to sell; the manager got the credit. I left the sharecropper’s life and set off to work my own land.

The King James Bible gives the interpretation of ownership of the land and certainly of the work in Proverbs 28:19, *He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread…*

###

September 4

*A person's days are determined;*

*you have decreed the number of his months*

*and have set limits he cannot exceed.*

Job 14:5

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| --- |
| Dated End Times can be managed |

**Book’n Hold**

“Did the quarter end?” The sales guy asked.

“Don’t know,” said the sales manager.

It was April 3rd.

On the normal human calendar the year’s first quarter would have ended on the 31st of March. But when you are attempting to make numbers, some numbers don’t matter. Like the ones on a calendar.

There is confusion in many sales units on when the books are closed and a new month/quarter/year opens. (This never happened in any organization Your Business Professor was in. No Never Ever Never.)

The bewilderment starts when a sale is made. The transaction is immediately noted as revenue even if no cash is received or any product is shipped.

This is where the pressure for income leads to creative calendaring. Here the Space-Time Continuum is stretched. The sale is booked and the product is not shipped but held toward a later date when the customer actually needs the inventory.

When the customer takes ownership of the product is ignored until much later.

For example, in the ordinary course of commerce, a product is sold in the last week of March. Normal delivery is two weeks. The sale is made in the first quarter and delivered in the second quarter.

Time is needed for a transaction to clear. Simple and honest.

Even the Internal Revenue Service recognizes this. For instance, you write a check dated December 31st and mail to your favorite tax-exempt charity; it arrives on, say, January 6th. Whenever the non-profit makes the deposit in January, the tax deduction allowed in December.

(There might be some who would write and mail a check in January but backdate it to December 31st. Or so I’ve been told.)

The actual cash is seen in January but all the accounting action, the debits and credits, are accrued in December.

But there are instances when managers feel the need to inflate or maintain sales to please the stock market, investors, or the boss. Or to make a personal bonus.

The line is crossed when the sales guy called his favorite clients and asks for a favor. For instance, it is at the end of the quarter and the story will sound something like this,

Sales Representative, “Hello favorite customer, can you reorder the xyz product?”

Favorite Customer, “It’s a little early, we won’t need it for another month and a half…”

Our sales professional is in the running for Salesman of the Year and could win a cruise to Bermuda with golfing at St. George’s (designed by RTJ). He needs this order now.

Sales Rep, “I can get you another 10% off!”

Fav Customer, “Sounds good, but we just don’t have the space for the extra inventory. Sorry.”

*Got ‘em* thinks the rep, *now we’re just negotiating delivery*.

Sales Rep, “If you can do a purchase order today, we’ll hold and ship in six weeks.

Fav Customer, “10 percent off now and we’ll take delivery in six weeks?”

“Does that sound reasonable?” The Sales Rep knows to always answer a question with a question.

“OK,” says Fav Customer, “The P.O. number is 08-27-14-7 and I don’t want to see it for a month and a half.”

The sale is booked and makes the company numbers, but the product not shipped until much later. Sadly, the Purchasing Agent left the company and his replacement cancelled the order. But the sales guy still made his numbers.

The company sales representative was taking future sales to make his immediate position look better than it was.

The intent was not to do real business but to deceive.

J.P. Morgan once said that American business must be done with “glass pockets.” Via Dead CEOs quoting Jean Strouse, *Morgan* (New York: Random House, 1999), p. 5. This should include moving money from one pocket to the other.

*A person's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.* Job 14:5

###

September 21

*If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites*

*in any of the towns of the land the LORD your God is giving you,*

*do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them.*

Deuteronomy 15:7

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| How can a business care about people more than money? |

**Budget**

The new truck battery was heavy. The customer carried it out to his pick-up in the parking lot. He refused to have mechanics install it and was a jerk about it. (Men can sometimes get irrational about their rides and their women.)

The battery slipped out of his hands and cracked open in the parking lot. He stormed back into the garage and demanded his money back.

“Why?” the Service Advisor asked.

“Because I’m not happy.”

We stared at him.

His face was getting red. “I want my money back,” as he pointed to the motto painted above the door.

“Satisfaction Guaranteed or Your Money Back,” was stenciled over the Sears, Roebuck & Company entrance.

He got his money.

Your Business Professor once had Sears as a National Account. This means that I was a sales guy whose only customer was Sears.

Every business consultant and academic will preach that we should love our customers and treat them like family and friends. Business as a force for good communicates that, “I Care.”

Julius Rosenwald was Chairman of Sears until his death in 1932. He earned his company widespread trust selling through a mail order catalog to remote, rural customers. He said to, “Treat people fairly and honestly and generously and their response will be fair and honest and generous.”

Rosenwald insisted that the company's primary goal must be responsibility to the customer. He established the "satisfaction guaranteed or your money back" pledge and conducted his business dealings by the creed "Sell honest merchandise for less money and more people will buy."

Under Rosenwald's direction, the business positioned itself as a direct extension of the farmer's eyes, ears and wallet, making purchasing decisions in the best interests of the farmer. (Sears 2014)

Sears had changed the way commerce was conducted and it had a surprising result. Management Guru Peter Drucker writes,

[T]he age-old concept of *caveat emptor* had to be changed to *caveat vendor*—meaning the of famous Sears policy of “your money back and no questions asked.”

Customers, I am given to understand, actually return less merchandise to Sears than to most of the large American department stores—it’s the basic policy and what it expresses that makes the difference.(Drucker 1973) p 52

Jack Welch would promote a similar concept in his book *Gut*, “I always tried to leave some goodwill on the table when the seller’s ongoing involvement was important to the company’s success.” Jack Gut page 141.

Goodwill is hard to measure on financial statements; it is even harder to measure in a budget.

Drucker reminds us of the challenge,

The late Nicholas Dreystadt, head of Cadillac and one of the wisest managers I have ever met, said to me once: “Any fool can learn to stay within his budget. But I have seen only a handful of managers in my life who can draw up a budget that is worth staying within.” (Drucker 1954) p 87

A worthwhile budget has to have a heart. Business writer Joan Magretta, records that Robert McNamara was the consummate facts and figures man. He was Secretary of Defense during the Viet Nam War. Before that disaster he,

…led a team of Whiz Kids who “brought a management-by-the-numbers approach to the Ford Motor Company.” This form of finance was conducted by *bean counters;* is a derisive term that “has become a permanent part of our language, referring to those who use numbers without understanding their significance.” What Management Is: How it Works and Why It’s Everyone’s Business, Joan Magretta, Free Press, 2002. Page 126

A budget must include care. The poor customer is like family who is enriched by our company.

*If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them.* Deuteronomy 15:7

###

September 30

*Pride goes before destruction,*

*a haughty spirit before a fall.*

Proverbs 16:18

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| A Helpmeet Gives Free Consulting |

**Hubris**

Your Business Professor was giving the medical device a close examination. Not because medical sales used to be my interest; not because it used to be my business. But for two other reasons:

1. The device was sticking out of my body. And,
2. It was imprinted with the trade name of one of my old companies.

\*\*\*

Your Business Professor signed the offer letter. The deal awarded me 2.75 % of the company for my expertise as hired gun as Vice President of Sales and Marketing. A big percentage and even bigger bucks. I lusted after that wheelbarrow loaded with loot. I was blinded by the money.

I could not see. I was, I thought, simply the best manager on the planet for that company. I had extensive product knowledge; I had close relationships with potential customers; I knew the blood and bones of that market. I could see through the sales complexity as clearly as a peeled-back illustration in Gray’s *Anatomy of the Human Body*. I was, in a word, perfect. And I knew it. The New England based venture was lucky to get me.

Charmaine raised some questions. But what does she know about High Risk; High Reward? The Big Picture? What could she know? A woman…?

Anyway, while waiting for the start-up’s legal beagles to get their signed copy back to me, I got down to work.

Even before the job offer I had proven the value of my customer network by selling the product and opening a new account delivering a purchase order to the CEO. The technology solved a problem that my clinicians had been struggling with for years.

Life was good and going to get better. I would launch sales and marketing, drive the numbers then I would cash-out and get his and her Lamborghinis.

I brought in key salesmen and some two dozen clinical trainers from my previous start-ups. I open-up my customer list of helpful contacts and decision makers.

A few months later Charmaine joined me while I worked a trade show with my new CEO. He was a smooth guy. But around Charmaine he went from slick to slimy. He would drop the F-Bomb. At a memorable dinner he recited to Charmaine passages from some bodice-busting Harlequin novel. More distaste would follow.

On the drive home from that meal, Charmaine asked, “Jack, did you ever get that signed offer letter?”

I am silent.

“You never will,” she says. She was right. She always is.

\*\*\*

In every class I tell students why Your Business Professor is driven to have students review the “why?” as Simon Sinek outlines in his book, *Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*.

I tell the story of the “Why” in why I teach because I don’t want people to make the same mistakes that I did. And why I made them. For example, a job had better not be all about the money as it had been for me. And that attention-to-detail in paperwork is important.

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As Charmaine predicted, I never got the “executed document,” as the lawyers called them. I got nothing back on the signing-off detailing the equity position or compensation. We soon parted company. No stock and no final paycheck. A few decades later, the medical device company was sold for hundreds (hundreds!) of millions of dollars. I got 2.75% of nothing.

I got nothing but a good story and an eye-opening lesson in humility.

###

*Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.* Proverbs 16:18

###

10 August

*Does not the ear test words as the tongue tastes food?*

Job 12:11

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| The wrong combination can leave a bad taste |

**Consistent**

The salt-water taffy candy tasted terrible. It was safe to eat and would hurt nothing but sales. And it was my fault.

Your (much younger) Business Professor did it on purpose. It started as a noble experiment but then devolved into a base prank.

One summer, I was working as a candy cook with two other bored confederates. We dreamed up a chemistry research project combining two of the five senses: color coordination and a taste response. No animals were hurt in this human testing.

Our hypothesis was simple, “If the taste and coloring were different, would the tongue “taste” what the eye saw? Or would the eye “see” what the tongue tasted?”

So we mis-mixed the purple coloring with the lemon flavoring, instead of with the grape additive.

And we combined the yellow lemon coloring with the grape flavoring. This produced a mix-message that tasted awful, or so I was told.

We dreamed of getting published in the *Journal of Food Science*. We later lost interest and I did the next best thing: I went into sales and marketing. (Who would think anything ‘salt-water’ would taste good? That’s marketing management.)

But we did prove the old sales training maxim that says, “A confused mind always says no.”

The taster had to think about it…and too much thinking; overthinking is dangerous.\*

Positive is easy. Contra-indications are not. Mixed taste is a negative, the confusion; the inconsistency takes a fraction of a second longer for the human mind to process. A positive can be processed fast. A negative takes longer.[cite]

Authors Gary Mack and David Casstevens wrote in their go-to sports psychology book, *Mind Gym,* that, “Doubts cause intellectual confusion. Doubts can be paralyzing.” (Gary Mack 2001)

The best managers will avoid the confusion of mixed messages and have one theme; one voice and reduce risk for the good of the company and community. And marketers remind us that, “Consumers are too good at sniffing out inconsistencies…” (Godin 2009) p 10.

Unless you’re trying to cause trouble.

In the mid 1970s, IBM was noted for inducing fear, uncertainty and doubt, or FUD, into the decision process of buyers considering purchasing a competitive product. If a buyer had concerns about a computer company – even if those concerns were introduced by a competing vendor – the purchaser would slow down and then not consider a new supplier. August Turak, author of *Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks*, reminds us of the adage (promoted by IBM), “No one was ever fired for buying IBM.” (Turak 2014)

Purchasing agents were fearful of buying anything else. FUD at its finest.

Planning activities include the ability to, “Analyze current situation. Anticipate the future. Determine objectives. Decide on what actions to engage in. Choose a business strategy. Determine resources to achieve goals.” (Thomas S. Bateman 2013)

Planning is easy if you have a single objective, unless the cooks in the kitchen making fud(ge) take you in two different directions.

*Does not the ear test words as the tongue tastes food?* Job 12:11

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\*The over-thinking part was not dangerous to me. The mixed-up salt-water taffy tasted just fine. I am partially color-blind.

###

16 August

*And so it was with me, brothers and sisters.*

*When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you*

*except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*

*I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power…*

1 Corinthians 2:1-4

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| --- |
| What did the listener hear and walk away with? |

**Simple Message**

Your Business Professor was immersed in Army literature. I was studying a repair manual for M151, 1/4 ton 4x4 Military Utility Tactical Truck (Or MUTT as the Pentagon would call this Ford product.) The troops in the field simply called it a “Jeep®” violating all matter of Chrysler copyright and trademark protection.

I noticed two points in my book learning. The manual was not entirely error-free—it had a mistake rate of something like 5%. 95% “perfection” was close enough for government work (100% Perfection would have cost too much.)

But most important: it was written on a fifth grade level. Another vehicle manual had more cartoons than words.

It was simple and effective. Simple communication is simple and humble and can be understood.

James E. Hall was President Clinton’s Chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. In a speech on Intelligent Transportation Systems, he said,

I don’t need to remind you that 80 percent to 90 percent of all transportation tragedies are the result of human error.

Aviation maintenance documents are written at a third-grade level – not because mechanics are illiterate – but to ensure that the instructions can be easily understood.

However, the same approach is not being used in regard to the computer systems designed to fly the planes. As a result, we are seeing more and more aviation accidents caused by a failure in the interface between human and computer. (Hall 2004)

## Clear communication is the challenge of management. Business professor Henry Mintzberg, listed among *The 50 Most Influential Management Gurus*, by *Harvard Business Review*, writes,

[At least 40 percent of a manager’s time is spent in communicating in some form and the manager’s communication is most effective when it is delivered with humble, respectful simplicity. Managing Minzberg page 53]

[And] managing to be between 60 and 90 percent oral. Mintzberg, Henry (2013-09-02). Simply Managing: What Managers Do — and Can Do Better (Kindle Location 318). Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Kindle Edition.

**\*\*\***

The Apostle Paul had delivered a brilliant discourse on the Good News of Jesus Christ to the Athenians at Mars Hill about 50 AD. Athens was home to renown philosophers: Pericles to Plato, Socrates to Sophocles, to Aristotle and Demosthenes. Theirs was a heritage of learning and debate.

However, the sophisticated Greeks were not impressed with Paul’s eloquence and his evangelization was not a success. Paul knew he had failed and he knew why. He did not mention the Cross. He would not make that mistake again. He then traveled to Corinth and preached the simple message of Christ crucified.

Bible scholar Dr. Randy Yeager illustrates the need for simple communications,

An insurance salesman in western Missouri knew a great deal about actuarial tables and statistical probability, and could make very clear to a prospect why the premiums were what they were and why the odds were that it was better for the prospect to buy than not to buy. After an hour filled with his didactic eloquence, the prospect knew practically all that is to be known about life insurance. But he did not buy the contract. The sales manager took the brilliant agent aside and employed what is commonly known in the industry as the KISS principle – “Keep it simple, stupid!” The salesman got the message and became a successful representative of the company. Preachers who do not know the difference between preaching the gospel of Christ and teaching the theology of Christianity should employ the KISS principle. (Randolph O. Yeager 1983) p. 62.

*And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power…* 1 Corinthians 2:1-4

25 August

*The Lord detests lying lips,*

*but he delights in men who are truthful.*

Proverbs 12:22

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| --- |
| Every CEO needs a truth squad |

**Public Relations**

“I hope you have a strong personal relationship with your customers and the media -- because now is not the time to start…”

My company’s medical device products were suspected in making patients sick. There was a rumor of a death. An “adverse event” is the medical euphemism. We didn’t know the details but there was enough evidence to recall the offending lot number.

Independent experts were ‘speculating’—let’s not call it lying—in the trade press and it was not positive for us. (These were the consultants that I did not hire because they were too expense. Now I was paying an even hirer price.) (Hint: always be nice to vendors you don’t hire…)

“Public Relations is a planned process to influence public opinion through sound character and proper performance based on mutually beneficial two-way communication.” [CHEHOU Oussoumanou](http://galatasaray.academia.edu/CHEHOUOussoumanou) quoting Dennis Wilcox, et. Al.

 <http://www.academia.edu/2939835/Public_Relations_Strategies_and_Tactics>

Management in a word is ‘relationship’ and is more than bossing the individual contributors in your chain of command. It is controlling events inside and outside the organization. The first part of our PR definition is ‘plan.’ This communication is not random—it is a component of the management process.

When my product did not work as advertised, customers could forgive the company quicker, if the decision makers trusted the character of the device representatives even if the product performance was in question. The key influencers have confidence in the representation of the supplier.

The Public Relations relationship works only when, as in any human relationship, there is a healthy, vigorous two-way communication. The PR professional does more than the promotion; more than pushing out press releases or mass advertising. She also works to get information from the market.

Listening to the customer is technically easier than in generations past. In the pre-internet days, a company might get a complaint card or call if there was non-performance. Usually the customer bad word-of-mouthed about the product to friends and abandoned the merchandise. Sales and market share could be lost for weeks before a company could determine why.

Complaining now is instantaneous. This is a good thing even if anonymous: it is feedback that is critical to two-way communication. If (when) Your Business Professor screws up, I will be notified by an Alert Student within minutes.

Not so long ago, my incompetence could go undocumented for years. Businesses must welcome each of the social media sites including, as of this writing, Twitter and Facebook as part of that necessary two-way communication. It is easier for the customer to contact the company and complain. Indeed, Your Business Professor encourages my customers (students) to comment on [www.RateMyProfessors.com](http://www.RateMyProfessors.com); which is the Yelp! for academia.

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My medical device company was able to collect the questionable lot numbers. But that was the easy part. My concern was that the customer would allow us to replace product that was pulled with different lot number.

Customers did not ask for their money back and allowed the lot swap. Some might say we were lucky. Perhaps. But we were blessed with a sound, on-going public relations strategy.

The old joke goes,

Question: How can you tell if a salesman is lying?

Answer: His lips are moving.

The insult will not apply when communicators abide by Proverbs 12:22, *The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful.*

###

30 August

*If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.*

Mark 4:23

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| If no one is listening, it matters not what you say |

**Calling an audible**

Your Business Professor had been regularly calling on the hospital account making dozens of sales presentations. I knew the decision maker, a nurse, for years. She asked me, “Do you have a 26 gauge?”

I stared at her. We were the only company on the market that did. And I had told her that dozens of times in dozens of pitches.

She had been paying little attention to me. I was little more than a professional visitor. All of my company’s marketing efforts and budget, and my personal selling genius were dust in the whirlwind that was her Intensive Care Unit. My glossy, four-color direct mail piece did not catch any attention; she did not hear me.

I was selling the Good News of teeny-tiny catheters for intravenous therapy, but no one had ears to hear. No one was buying my copy.

There are Biblical references to hearing with understanding before a person can get the Gospel. Recent literature and studies confirm ancient understanding. In a 1898 issue of *Printers’ Ink*, a writer noted, “The mission of an advertisement is to sell goods. To do this, it must attract attention…” (Wikipedia 2014)

Later in 1921, sales trainer, C. P. Russell wrote that selling could be best be done after the salesman has first gained attention from the customer, then interest, desire and action. This popular formula has made its way into countless modern marketing textbooks under the rubric-acronym AIDA. (Russell 1921)

More recently in 1963, marketing management scholar, J. A. Howard, reminded sales and marketing professionals of Cognition, Affect and Behavior for another nifty acronym, CAB. Cognition, or reasoning and understanding, comes first. (Howard 1963)

Management of the sales process is successful when a deal is done, the sale is closed and the account opened. Sales representatives as Account Managers are the best communicators: they accomplish organization goals with the active support of their company’s customers.

These sales managers, like all leaders, get the attention of other people. People listen.

Your Business Professor, as a teenager, once sold vacuum cleaners door-to-door. I was acting as a Rainmaker where I performed all the actions of both marketing and sales. I studied under an experienced sales trainer, George, whose last name is lost to the decades.

He encouraged a simple method to catch the attention of the prospect and provoke some action with—literally—a sales pitch. He threw an attachment, usually a lightweight nozzle, at the customer. Now it was a gentle, high arch toss, released after George had his catcher’s eye (he never threw to a woman). The baseball pitcher assault and battery analogy always caught the buyer’s attention. Notice that when the prospect has made the catch, it was easier for him to see and feel the product features to—most important—hear and understand the customer benefits.

My decision-making nurse was distracted by a beeping monitor. But I answered her question, “Yes, we have the 26 gauge.” My hands were full. I clumsily pulled a product sample from my bag and asked her, “Can you open this for me?”

She didn’t drop the ball.

She finally heard the message and took action.

*If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.* Mark 4:23

###

19 July

*To answer before listening—*

*that is folly and shame.*

Proverbs 18:13

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| --- |
| Talking is not selling |

**Listen Up**

“We use the xyz product,” the decision maker said. My sales manager, Jim, did that Lean In thing and was about to leap. I held him back. We both knew the product line intimately. And it seemed that we knew something that our customer did not.

In the next few seconds, our sales call was going to go very good. Or very bad.

The sales manager was jumping in one direction. He was about to start talking. I moved in the opposite direction. Not because I knew more but because I knew less…

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The ancient Greek sage Epictetus, who lived from 55 to 135 AD, said, “We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.” He was a stoic and, born a slave, may well have been trained to keep his mouth closed and his ears open.

This anatomical rule, ear : mouth ratio can expand the manager’s ability to manager a wider field. Jack Welch says, “Make your company flatter. Managers should have ten direct reports at the minimum and 30 to 50 percent more if they are experienced.” This expanded control of the experienced manager is possible not because she talks more—it is possible only because she talks less and listens more.

All organizations could benefit. Even Christopher Moltisanti, in the “46 Long,” episode on *The Sopranos*, lamented, “Maybe one reason why things are so [messed] up in the organization these days is guys running off, not listening to middle management.”

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…The customer was using our xyz devices. Our company had just purchased the product line and no one knew that we were the new representatives. I stopped my boss Jim and jumped in with a question for the decision maker, “How do you like xyz?”

“Hate it,” said the customer; not happy. “Looking for a new vendor.”

Jim then rigged for silent running.

I asked some probing questions, gently, gently: What was wrong? When did these problems occur? How many adverse events?

After getting the background, I confessed to being the new owner of her problem product but was able to negotiate a plan to keep the account (new product evaluations are such a hassle). If we had not listened we would probably have had a different outcome.

The best exercise in power might be less in the use of words as in the use of silence and questions.

*To answer before listening-- that is folly and shame.* Proverbs 18:13

###

We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak, [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/e/epictetus106298.html#UcG9fuIhqZ0JvTMm.99](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/e/epictetus106298.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22UcG9fuIhqZ0JvTMm.99) accessed 5 April 2014.

Epictetus <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epictetus> accessed 5 April 2014

*The Sopranos* Quoted by Osterman in middle management, page 151.

###

30 March

*Pride goes before destruction,*

*a haughty spirit before a fall.*

 Proverbs 16:18

|  |
| --- |
| The horror of asking for directions. |

**Lost is Good**

Decades ago Your Business Professor was a sales guy carrying a bag from account to account. I spent most of my years with start-up companies selling new medical devices and advanced medical procedures in hospitals. On the first visit to any unfamiliar department I would start the sales process with the same two worlds:

“I’m lost.”

I would debase myself and throw myself on the mercy at the clinician. I was a humble unthreatening rube who didn’t know what to do or where to go. (It had the added benefit of being true.)

It is a cliché that no one ever wants to be sold – as in “being sold a bill of goods” where the buyer pays for a receipt and little else. “Being sold” sounds and feels like a subservient subordinate position where the sales representative dominates.

To get things done; to get products sold; to execute a plan trust must be established. The best method I found as a new-guy to an account was to, well, ask for directions. This would disarm even the most wary gatekeeper. It is a well-documented fact based in academic literature that males never ask for directions.

So I left my pride and my substantial ego at the customer’s front entrance. This helped me to be a better sales rep probably kept me out of temptation and trouble as Proverbs 16:18 says, *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

I found that even the most battle-hardened heart surgeon would stop and give me directions to help this lost soul. A prideful, haughty spirit does not sell; does not get things done.

###

5 March

*I put Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and a Levite named Pedaiah in charge of the storerooms and made Hanan son of Zakkur, the son of Mattaniah, their assistant, because they were considered trustworthy. They were made responsible for distributing the supplies to their fellow Levites.*

Nehemiah 13:13

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| --- |
| Managers: Male and Female; The Con and Confident |

**Gender Difference**

I once worked for a brilliant, laid-back CEO of an early stage, high-risk venture, Dave, who was able to make decisions on scant information. When I asked him about still another successful implementation, he replied,

“I got ‘em fooled.”

He didn’t have all the data or all the answers.

He faked it.

This is something few woman would never say or admit. Dave was proud of it.

For men confidence is often simply an act as part of a game. For women this looks like a confidence-game-scam where crooks color outside the lines. Women will use different skills.

When I was carrying a bag as a sales guy I regularly competed against other sales women both inside my company and from other companies. They were tough competitors, who produced without the confident bravado of us guys -- who were Macho Men (which included Your swaggering Business Professor) who comprised most of any sales team.

A woman’s source of confidence came from using a different charm angle in relationships. They seemed to earn creditability faster and were entrusted by their clients to take on more responsibilities, that is, billable work.

*I put [them] in charge of the storerooms, because they were considered trustworthy,* Nehemiah 13:13.

I would ask the women how they managed to beat my numbers.

“Kids,” the women would say. “Ask about the customer’s children – and mean it.”

Of course. Here I would come with product Features! Advantages! Benefits! The customer would love the goods.

Then buy from a woman.

Women knew how to manage the interaction of people. That ‘soft skill’ nonsense. Girly stuff. I was stuck on numbers. Stuck on stupid.

Yes, we men could handle better the constant rejection in sales. But our female counterparts managed the real constant: relationships.

Where I may -- or may not -- have been putting the ‘con’ back into the consultative sale; women would be consoling sister. Women earned trust faster and got the sale.

Women as account managers use persuasion to gain support form staff and peers and seem to understand quicker that management is a sales process of buying and selling.

###

25 March

*A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.*

Proverbs 17:17

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| --- |
| Stand by your man to get things done |

**A Friend**

“I don’t believe it.” William Donald Schaefer just heard a terrible irrefutable truth about a friend. Reporters pressed him on the obvious evidence of a misdeed of a member of the mayor’s inner circle. Schaefer stood with his friend.

Even journalists paused in what seemed to be near amazement. Politicians are like countries: they don’t have friends, they have interests.

The Mayor of Baltimore was a public servant for some 50 years. In the mid-80’s he also served as Maryland’s Governor (perhaps simultaneously-it was hard to tell).

He understood loyalty. He trusted and was trusted. This was how he got things done.

The staffer must understand that his manager will not always seem to make the right decision. Even after considering all the options and recommendations the boss will make an “odd” decision. Sometimes there won’t be time to explain the direction. Or, more likely, the boss can’t share confidential background information or the timing is wrong. Or the manager is still learning management on the job and the l,000 variables to weight. And sometimes the CEO just gets it wrong. How can the staffer manage his manager in this situation?

A team of professionals can take most any unusual decision and deliver the desired outcome. If senior management falters on those plan-organize-lead-control skills, the skilled subordinate managers and staff can still accomplish the task through execution.

This is how loyalty can help the mission to succeed. The team will adopt and implement the senior manager’s decision as if it were their own.

This assumes that the decision and execution are legal. A dangerous assumption in business or in Louisiana politics.

The story is told of Governor Earl K. Long (1895-1960) who was counseling one of his staffers. The smug young aide says, “I’m with you when you’re right. But not when you’re wrong.”

Governor Long snaps, “You stupid son of a b!tch. I don’t need you when I’m right.”

The aide might have been more concerned that ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ meant legal and illegal. Our actions today remain in the legal. Every manager knows, as Long knew, that few things are more valuable than a faithful friend. Because not every decision will be right or correct if not ethical.

Proverbs 17:17 says, *A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.*

Morton Blackwell, founder of the Leadership Institute is a shade more direct, “In politics, [or office politics] you have your word and your friends; go back on either and you're dead.”