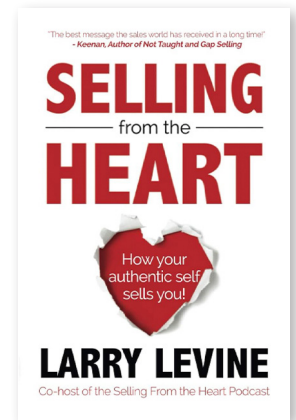


Selling from the Heart

How Your Authentic Self Sells You!

by **Larry Levine**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

The world of sales has progressed beyond manipulative, self-serving, and pushy mantras for “closing the deal.”

The book *Selling from the Heart: How Your Authentic Self Sells You!* helps readers build a fail-proof recipe for success by using the power of authenticity. The pages within talk about the importance of building relationships, being authentically you, and genuinely taking care of your clients.

By deploying learnings from his successful sales career, author Larry Levine lays out insightful and actionable ways salespeople can truly know themselves, operate with brutal honesty, prospect consistently, understand clients deeply, build lasting relationships, and finally become successful at sales. His lessons help learners evolve from mediocre “sales reps to winning “sales professionals.”

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to be authentic and sell from the heart.
- How to prospect consistently and build lasting relationships with clients and prospects.
- How to truly understand and fulfill the needs of clients.
- How to use the power of content and social media to start meaningful conversations.

Introduction

Authenticity. This was the word that started me on the journey of selling from the heart. This book is divided into two sections: Finding Your Authentic You and The Sales Skills of an Authentic Sales Professional.

Authenticity is the key to being a sales professional instead of a sales rep. It allows you to get rid of sales chaos, where you must be in control of everything. When you are truly yourself, you learn to own your story and use it to sell.

Join me as I take you on a journey to sales success. Throughout this book, we'll be looking at what it means to be authentically you and how to use this to brand yourself. We'll also be looking at the skills authentic sales professionals possess, including prospecting and leadership.

Part 1: Finding Your Authentic You

Chapter 1: I Finally Found the Real Me

The first year of my sales career was pure torture. In that entire year, I made a minuscule \$18,000. But my failure triggered my biggest breakthrough. I knew there had to be something better. I had learned the basics, but my education was far from complete. I had learned a long time ago there's no shame in asking for help, but I wasn't getting the help I needed from my first sales manager. So, I decided to become my own sales manager.

I tracked and monitored who I was losing to, who the sales reps were, and where they worked. I set up a meeting with each sales rep I was losing to. They started sharing with me why they enjoyed working for their respective companies as well as a bit about themselves. The insight into their processes was the start of learning to build professional relations.

One of the things I was never coached nor mentored in was the art of building relations. Throughout my journey, I began to learn how to read people, understand them, and treat them the way I want to be treated. I started to sell to my customers the way I wanted to be sold to.

Commitment to excellence is the key to unlocking your success today. If you want to get ahead in life, you must hold yourself accountable to YOU. A true sales professional takes ownership of everything they do as they facilitate the buyer's journey. Become serious about your work and put in the time it takes to become a true sales professional.

I've seen so many salespeople hindered from achieving

success because they're trying to be someone they aren't. Instead, learn to align your actions with your core self, be genuine, be authentic, and get to know yourself. You can be your true, authentic self and be great at sales.

Chapter 2: Brutal Honesty – It's the Only Way

You're reading this book because you want to become better at the art of sales. The first step is recognizing who you are in the sales world. What do you stand for? One of the main reasons why you may view yourself as a sales rep instead of a sales professional is chaos. What does chaos look like inside the mind of a sales rep? Let's look at these symptoms:

- Only looking through your own eyes
- No planning
- Lack of time management and patience
- Not doing the small things right
- You get beat on price
- There's no coaching from the leadership
- Actions do not match words
- A need to control everything

So, how do you get rid of Sales Chaos? The first step is self-reflection. Continuously reflect on your performance. What helped you to succeed during the day, week, or month? What caused you to lose a deal? What caused you to win a deal? Self-reflection allows us to understand what's important while focusing on what could be done differently. Self-reflection is never easy, but for sales professionals, this is the difference between just getting by and making it happen.

The next step is self-awareness. Are you always your authentic self? Are you living as the real you and not someone else? Do your thoughts match your actions? Does your walk match your talk? Are you emphasizing the positive aspects of your personality? Acknowledge the good and the bad within your story. Learn how to let go of past guilt, failure, and regret as you start living your life with conviction.

The third step is to challenge yourself. Are you investing enough in yourself? Whether it's investing in learning a new skill, developing yourself professionally or personally, or contributing to community service, you need to give to yourself first before you can give to others. Investing in yourself sends a powerful message to yourself and those around you. I encourage you to build confidence in your abilities. I challenge you both personally and professionally around these five areas:

“... everyone has a brand. It’s the opinion people form about you that will equate to a part of your brand.”

- Seek to become an expert in your field of work
- Constantly crave feedback on YOU
- Be brutally honest with yourself
- Set goals and create a business plan
- Never, ever stop learning

Chapter 3: Validating Your New Identity

Something special happens on your journey of self-discovery. You start becoming more aware of who you are, and how your uniqueness contributes positively to your clients, your prospects, your centers of influence, and those who know you the best. But how to share your story in a way that it positions you as the go-to sales professional everyone wants to work with...

First, everyone has a brand. It’s the opinion people form about you that will equate to a part of your brand. One simple keyword: it’s your promise! Every single day your brand is being built by your actions: How do you interact with your clients? How do you communicate with your prospects? How do you interact with your fellow employees? How do you associate with your manager? These actions are all formulating the foundations of your brand.

It’s imperative in today’s business world for sales reps to learn how to market themselves proactively. After all, how do you expect to get noticed in your marketplace when nobody knows you exist?

To market yourself and grow your business, be clear about the value and your uniqueness you bring to the marketplace. Go back to the clients who know, like, and trust you and ask them, “Can you share with me three ways I have brought added value to your business?” If you are a young sales professional, go back to your friends and family and ask them the same question. Understanding how to brand yourself begins with self-awareness and becoming brutally honest with how well you know YOU. Building your brand is understanding your combination of interests, beliefs, aspirations, values, talent, and skills. All those characteristics are combined to form 2 words: your promise. Always

remember to communicate your promise; this is your brand identity. Broadcast your value into the business community. Become the difference maker! Communicate your promise; This is your brand identity.

Create your unique sales story and tell it in a way that resonates with your clients, through their eyes. Get better acquainted with your current clients and understand the difficulties you’ve settled for them. Then, use those stories to help you as you prospect for new business. Now, you can’t tell a story about something you haven’t experienced yourself. For instance, if you’re selling software to help reduce the amount of paper someone has in their office, why not personally experience what it can do?

Even if a sales rep has come up with “a story,” they fail to capitalize on having it validated. A sales professional, on the other hand, backs up their stories with testimonials. This is why it’s so important to validate your story by interviewing your clients and understanding how they feel about you.

Chapter 4: The Hard Work Mindset

Why is your mindset important in sales? All too often, we beat ourselves up. We turn the mental hammer on ourselves when we feel like we’re getting beat up by our clients and prospects. Then our sales managers hammer on us about what we’re doing wrong as opposed to what we’re doing right. Before you know it, you find yourself in a deep, dark hole and you don’t know how to crawl out of it. How do you fix it? Surround yourself with positive people, ones you can trust. Create an inner circle of mentors, friends, and family who want to see you succeed.

Let’s face it: in sales, we get a ton of rejection. You’ve got to be strong-minded, strong build, and thick-skinned. You will get beat up, and you must be able to handle it and take it in stride. Develop a learning mindset. I know you’re capable of cultivating it.

Sales reps today have hypnotized themselves into believing what they aren’t doing doesn’t work. The scarcity mindset limits your ability to accomplish great things. It doesn’t matter if it’s outbound, inbound, all-bound, traditional, mod-

ern, or social; you must use every single prospecting tool available when it comes to developing your business. Some other flawed mindsets sales reps face include:

- Victim mentality
- Not believing in yourself
- Constantly complaining
- Fear of change
- Fear of ego
- Giving up
- Knowing it all
- Trying to impress

All these issues lead to them giving up. If you're dealing with any of these mindset issues, it's time for you to start having a serious talk with yourself. Remember, there's no gatekeeper except the mental one. Acknowledge you are important and start making daily appointments with YOU. Set an appointment with yourself to read for fifteen minutes, exercise, write thank-you notes (to your friends, people who mean a lot to you, and your clients), and uncover what you could be doing better.

Part 2: The Sales Skills of An Authentic Sales Professional

Chapter 5: What Consistent Prospecting Looks Like

The biggest problem with salespeople today is they're consistently inconsistent with how they go about developing their business. The root of all sales evil is an empty pipeline. The reason why an empty pipeline exists is your fault. Not your company's fault or anyone else's. It's the failure to make a non-negotiable deal with yourself, repeating to yourself every single day, "I must set aside the time to prospect." It all boils down to a few things: lack of patience, laziness, poor management, and a reactive, not proactive, approach to prospecting.

To me, a sales professional does the complete opposite of that of the average sales rep. They're proactive and offensive-minded about prospecting. They operate as if they're the CEO of their own business, whereas an average sales rep operates as if they are an employee of the business doing the bare minimum expected to get by and collect a wage.

Sales professionals control what happens inside their sales funnel because they know that sales are ultimately a numbers game. For instance, to reach \$125,000, you must make a certain number of sales. To make those sales means you must do so many qualified meetings. To get those meetings, you need to make "X" number of calls and speak to "X" number of people to coordinate these meetings. You must then break this down into how many you must do every day, week after week.

Combine both offline/face-to-face prospecting and online/social media prospecting. Equate face-to-face prospecting to business development or networking. Become actively involved in community groups. Interact within your centers of influence. Get to know your city officials. Face-to-face prospecting is not dead. It is still alive and well. The only difference is you adjust it according to the market.

Online becomes an augmented prospecting approach based upon the social channels your clients and buyers hang out on. When leveraged correctly, these social tools integrate strategically into a business development cadence. Use social media platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook to observe and learn more about your clients and prospects online. Strategically engage, educate, and create awareness on these platforms to drive conversions.

Social Window + Social Phone + Social Selling = Enhanced Sales Funnel.

But what if you're brand new to sales? Develop a cadence for what prospecting tools to use daily, weekly, and monthly. Then develop a rhythm around it. Some ideas include email, social, face-to-face, quarterly business reviews, networking events, community involvement, and referral partners. The right activity + enhancing the skill set + daily habits = Sales Success.

Chapter 6: Servant-Led Sales Leadership

Servant-led leadership is learning how to serve with heartfelt sincerity instead of learning how to service.

Adopting a servant leadership mindset takes a conscious effort by learning and committing to develop self-effectiveness in areas such as listening, empathy, healing, persuasion, and foresight.

Actions speak louder than words when serving with the heart. Serving a client goes beyond actually doing what you've been hired to do.

“Serving a client goes beyond actually doing what you’ve been hired to do.”

Seek to open up communications. Have meaningful conversations with your clients outside of the selling process. The best of the best know how to bring the conversation out in the open. It is about uncovering the conversation your client or prospect is having with themselves. This enables open and honest communication to what is really going on providing the freedom to engage in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Use community service to enhance your sales. Ask yourself, “What does community service mean to me?” When prospecting, look at your target list of accounts and start conducting research. Look for charities, schools, or even the local events inside the community they volunteer within. Get involved and volunteer because you may never know who you will run into.

Understand the client’s needs on a profound level. This means you must make personal commitment to yourself to understand your client inside and out. Help them identify emerging needs. You must have your clients’ best interests – which means you have to be continually educating them. Be full of ideas and solutions. Help them notice some new business opportunities.

Whoever wants to become a sales professional must become a servant!

Chapter 7: Taking Care of Your Clients

If you don’t care for your clients and provide them with an outstanding experience, I guarantee there’s someone else waiting in the wings to enhance the experience.

You must lead with a servant mindset by bringing the human element back into sales. Make it about the customer. Continue to take them through the journey after the purchase. Salespeople discuss everything that leads up to the sale but a true sales professional shares what’s going to happen after the sale.

Sales professionals start by setting up a post-sale game plan that’s mutually agreed upon between the client and themselves. They make a post-sale interview on how everything went during the buying journey, making sure they fulfilled

and acted upon all the promises made up to the point of sale. Then they share what will happen next:

- This is what you can expect from me on a monthly or quarterly basis
- This is how I’m going to grow our relationship
- This will be ongoing and continued
- This will be through the insights I will bring to your organization
- Sales professionals take it to the next level: you must make three promises:
 - You must have a consistent touch point with each contact inside every current account. Pledge to develop relationships with at least six people inside every one of your current accounts.
 - You must conduct monthly site visits. Become visible and valuable inside your accounts. Diversify your relationships while establishing consistent communication patterns during these visits.
 - You must conduct quarterly business reviews that are designed to create engagement. Demonstrate on a strategic level top-of-mind awareness with your clients.

Other important things for sales professionals to do include building trust, providing strategic advice, showing you are accountable, and thankfulness.

Chapter 8: Continuing Education

Sales is evolving all the time. If you fail to educate yourself continually, the sales world will pass you by. Salespeople must know ten times the content than that of the buyer.

A true sales professional takes pride in their profession. They know that if they don’t invest in themselves, nobody else will invest in them. They hold themselves personally accountable for their learning and development. They’re constantly purchasing books, listening to podcasts, and seeking out other sales professionals for advice. Here are five things sales professionals do:

- They hold themselves to a much higher standard

- They continually prospect, keeping their sales funnel full
- They never stop learning
- They are always helping (by keeping the customer's needs before their own)
- They have become digitally savvy sales professionals

Always be on top of your industry, look ahead and monitor trends, master the short and long-term goals for your clients, and be keenly aware of your competitors. Invest in yourself and never stop growing.

Chapter 9: Content That Creates Conversations

Content is an important strategy for building sales in today's world. Your prospects are constantly conducting pre-purchase research to understand their options via a combination of channels including search engines, social media, email, and numerous competitive websites. Learn to digitally fish in the same online ocean that your clients and prospects educate themselves with.

Integrate the use of content as an additional method of communication along with all your other outbound prospecting endeavors. In cases where sales and marketing may not be aligned, take ownership by building a digital library of content which can then be used to teach and tailor your audiences through the buying and sales journey.

Use content as a sales positioning tool. Capturing, conversing, collaborating, and connecting along with providing relevant and insightful content to grab the attention of the executive buyer will determine your sales success in the twenty-first century.

Leverage content as bait. Gather the top questions you hear from your clients and prospecting and answer them in a blog format. Potential prospects researching for those answers online could end up finding your blog posts. Remember, your clients and prospects not only search by keywords but by topic entered into a search engine.

Leverage LinkedIn as your own personal website. Position yourself as a valuable resource to educate, engage, and delight your network. Use testimonials from your previous clients. Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook are a few other channels you can focus on. Know how to position yourself on at least two social media platforms correctly.

Chapter 10: No More Empty Suits!

Commission breath describes a sales rep who's so hungry

for a deal that they will say or do anything just to get it. These sales reps are more interested in the commission than the relationship.

Your prospects are smart. Your clients are even more intelligent. They can smell commission breath a mile away. Commission breath can be cured by adopting a Selling from the Heart lifestyle, by genuinely caring about your clients, and becoming absorbed with their needs and not your own.

Remember, sales professionals are leaders, not empty suits. An empty suit is someone puffed up with their own importance but having little effect on the lives of others. A sales professional is heartfelt, and sincere, and fills out a suit with empathy, emotion, and excitement.

Don't be mediocre. You can survive and get by operating with a mediocre mindset, but you'll never thrive. Sell from the heart and wage a war against mediocrity by practicing your selling skills like an athlete and refusing to chase the shiny silver bullet to success.

It's a bunch of little things done well, every single day that make a great sales career. It's consistent prospecting, building a strategic network, gaining business knowledge, self-awareness, practicing the art of conversation, and time management. So, always keep learning.

Conclusion: Writing Your Manifesto

How much are you willing to commit to yourself and to your future? One of the things I did this year was to create a manifesto, a series of commitments to myself that I choose to live by daily.

I'm not going to tell you there is a right or wrong way to write a manifesto; The style is completely up to you. You may want to make it simple, and straightforward and state with passion why you believe in each principle.

Write down your beliefs, motives, and intentions around each type of topic. Your manifesto is an opportunity for you to lay it all out there by being real, genuine, and staying true to YOU. I want to close with this. I believe in you, now it is time for you to believe in yourself. It's time for you to take your sales career to the next level.



Named a top 50 sales influencer by The Daily Sales, **Larry Levine** is catalyzing a movement of authenticity in the sales profession. With 29 years of on-the-street selling experience in the Los Angeles market, Larry discovered the key to success in sales is to bring your authentic self to your prospects and clients. Companies large and small are taking notice. Larry has trained thousands of sales professionals across many industries. In addition to co-hosting the Selling From the Heart Podcast, Larry leads a growing community of sales professionals inside the Selling From the Heart Insiders Group.

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