

The 40 || 40 Solution in Sales

*“In sales, it’s not what you say;
it’s how they perceive what you say.”*

—Jeffrey Gitomer

While much of the discussion in this book involves dramas at work, The Plot shows up in sales story as well! One of my favorite things to do is teach The 40 || 40 Solution to salespeople.

In every story about sales, the buyer has been cast in the victim role.

Caveat Emptor! Buyer Beware!

And in every story about sales, the seller has been cast in the villain role. Name one sales story otherwise, including the ones you heard as a kid from your mom. If I say the word salesperson, images of the shady car salesman comes to mind; the manipulator who can sell snow to Eskimos; the desperation of Glengarry Glen Ross.

There’s a reason so many people fear doing sales—*they don’t want to be villainized*. The fear of that judgment by others paralyzes people.

Years ago I worked with several MLM’s (known as Network Marketing companies, Amway if you will), and helped them realize the power and nature of this fear of judgment. I suggested that new salespeople may be in fear of judgment

from a neighbor, family member or friend, but not so much of somebody they don't know. I suggested they sell "one-step" down the line. You sell to their friends. And they sell to their recruit's friends, and so on down the line. And, it worked.

Because we all grew up domesticated in this sales story, the buyer's emotional sensors are trying to feel if they are being conned or manipulated. Often eager ... or desperate... salespeople trigger a flight or fight response because of how they relate energetically with the buyer. It's not the logic they are fleeing from; it's the energy behind how it is presented.

Earlier I talked about how Gary said the most important thing he did every day was to make people feel good about themselves... by finding the good in them. Over the years he has outsold just about every insurance executive I know. Gary does not play some "I am the hero sales game." He focuses on relating with people first. He doesn't put them in pain. He encourages them to become their own hero.

When you sell from 80%, you end up with a whole bunch of 20% clients. They will exhaust you with their neediness. Sell from 40% and amazing clients will come to you.

I've noticed that when salespeople make enough money to know they will have a good retirement or meet other financial goals they have set, the desperation (20% game) and manipulation (80% game) disappear... and their sales get better! Now they can sell from a 40% perspective. Sales become more fun. They are not needy. They are not feeling

“I will make X if I get this sale and that will pay for Y, so I better get this sale!” They can finally be present with people. And...their sales get even better.

40%rs allow their clients to be the hero in the sales process. They sell through connection. When that happens, sales becomes an act of service.

I have had sales veterans tell me The 40 || 40 Solution workshop explained something they inherently understood but could not express. It explained why learning the logic of sales is not enough.

Think about playing 40 || 40 in sales when I talk about Holly later in the book.

How can you do a better job of selling from 40%?

Holly



Holly was introduced to The 40 || 40 Solution energy solution at its inception. She has a background in high-end sales to an affluent client base, including yacht and helicopter charters and time-shares for a major resort.

Holly shared that the most powerful reference she obtained was the understanding that, “We are both good people and that sales is about playing 40 || 40.” She focuses on building a relationship from the heart first, before coming close to discussing the subject of her sales call. Because of this approach, she believes many people buy from her just because they feel good being around her, because she finds the good in them. (Sounds like Gary, doesn't it?)

Holly had a story to share about her days employed selling timeshares for a major company. Year after year Holly was the top-selling agent. She had a very personable boss who was low key in his ways and basically just let her do her job.

Unfortunately, while his approach worked for Holly, it did not work for other sales agents who needed more guidance and focus. Her boss, despite being a likable man, managed from a 20% energy level, which was not enough to coax, encourage, and inspire most of his workers.

Eager to boost sales, the company fired her boss and in his place hired a “real mover and shaker.” Apparently this fellow was not only a mover and shaker but also a person willing to “churn ’em and burn ’em,” losing no sleep over it. Holly felt he was a villainous 80%. His motivational tactics were all fear-based. Any progress by poor performers was born out of fear and short-lived. Most ended up terminated, and a few of those who stayed robbed the company blind. (Fight or flight anyone?)

Not surprisingly, the company faced numerous legal difficulties due to this manager’s tendency to misrepresent facts. He would promise things to employees and clients he never followed up on. He also motivated the employees to work long hours without extra pay to make the numbers look good.

I have seen these managers come and go. They are part of what I call the “million-dollar executive club,” and it’s not because of what they get paid; it’s because of the damage they cause! In my experience, these managers seldom get fired. That is the last thing they want on their resumes. After they wear out their welcome and cause their damage, they will move on to another unsuspecting company,

continually building their squeaky-clean resume. Because so many employers are afraid when asked for a reference to “tell it like it is,” these villainous executives usually escape without repercussion.

Holly has been successful selling high-ticket items to affluent customers because she views them as human beings first. She says rich people are human and have relationship needs like everyone else. Unlike many people, she is not intimidated by people with money. She does not get caught up in whether she is accepted or rejected by them. She does not play a 20%rs less-than game.

She knows that many affluent clients are concerned about other people trying to use them. She is very concerned that many sales techniques tend toward the manipulative, which is villainous in its nature. She believes that sales as a numbers game falls into The Plot, whereas sales as a relationship-building exercise does not.

Again, many successful and affluent people are 80%rs and running for their lives. They fear what may happen if they stop to be in the present moment. As Holly discovered, you can slow them down from their 80% energy by touching them at a personal level and making a heart-to-heart connection.