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Sell With A Story: How To Capture Attention, Build Trust, And Close The Sale

HOW TO CAPTURE ATTENTION,
BUILD TRUST, AND CLOSE THE SALE

SELL WITH A STORY

PAUL SMITH

Author of LEAD WITH A STORY

Foreword by MIKE WEINBERG, author of NEW SALES, SIMPLIFIED.



Synopsis

Despite all the high-tech tools available to salespeople, the most personal method still works best. Storytelling packs the emotional punch to turn routine presentations into productive relationships. It explains products or services in ways that resonate; it connects people and creates momentum. Stories speak to the part of the brain where decisions are made. Paul Smith, author of the acclaimed *Lead with a Story*, shifts his best-selling formula to the sales arena. In *Sell with a Story*, he identifies the ingredients of the most effective sales stories and reveals how to: Select the right story Craft a compelling and memorable narrative Incorporate challenge, conflict, and resolution Use stories to introduce yourself, build rapport, address objections, add value, bring data to life, create a sense of urgency, and more Complete with model stories, skill-building exercises, and enlightening examples from Microsoft, Costco, Xerox, Abercrombie & Fitch, Hewlett Packard, and other top companies, this powerful and practical guide gives you the tools you need to turn your experiences into stories that sell.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 4 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: October 18, 2016

Language: English

ASIN: B01LX3DV62

Best Sellers Rank: #31 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Marketing & Sales #46 in Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Sales & Selling #79 in Books > Business & Money > Skills > Communications

Customer Reviews

Truly the best book on this topic! It's not the cheapest on the market but it fully worth it. *Sell with a story* is full of valuable examples which make all the difference. Usually, those kinds of books give you a whole load of theory, but then it's pretty difficult to visualize how to put this into life. Thanks to Paul Smith's examples -- Stories, in fact :-) -- I think I got a better idea on how to make this stuff work for me. Highly recommended.

As a storyteller, I naturally love books on the subject. Smith's book is more than a book on storytelling. It is a workbook that you can use to craft the 25 sales stories every salesperson needs (and who knew that you needed that many?). Not to worry about the workload, Smith makes it incredibly easy to work through the stories you already have, crafting them into compelling vignettes you can put to work immediately. I love actionable books, and this is that kind of book. You will be a better storyteller after reading this book. You'll be amazing after doing the exercises!

Captivating and engaging book. Check it out!

Great advise! Purchased the audio version and listen to it on long car rides!

I've long enjoyed the impact of a story to drive a position, but have never had a model to fully develop a quality story. This genuinely reads like someone that has put in the 10,000 hours plus of bringing the concept into the field, and subsequently perfected the model. The overall model itself makes story development seamless. And this was something that I and my business needed urgently. This book has helped me both personally and professionally. But I want to speak to the area of greatest impact. As a small business owner, this book is a game changer for two critical problems we've faced. First, we are a company with 40+ years of history. We've seen a lot of growth and change in our own industry and the industries we serve. And we struggle with telling the stories of our experiences. We have no repository of any, and when something in alignment comes up in a sales meeting, we have missed opportunities. At my company, we have a great story to tell overall about who we are, what we do, and why. I've spent the past year struggling with getting something on paper. I didn't have to read far to get there (page 30), and in ten minutes, we have an elevator story to tell anyone, from the POTUS to my 9-year old niece what we do. Running through our experiences over the years, we have a list of somewhere around 10 different scenarios we face when meeting with a prospect. And we have more than 10 great stories we can have ready at the helm. Then the surprising, expected, and welcome outcome is solving problem #2. Our second problem is with employee engagement. Among the many wins from this book, this was the unexpected. My partners and I came to realize a year or so ago that one of our challenges of engagement is our need to articulate the magnitude that our employees have on solving problems for our clients. But it is not as simple as saying, "Hey Will, you solved a fifty-thousand-dollar problem today for Widget Co!" For the client, the impact is apparent, but employees in all companies often do not understand the impact of their efforts. But armed with a

story, and all the tools imparted by Smith, we now have a powerful way to express our gratitude to our employees. This book gets right to action. I enjoy that Smith executes the argument for the concept itself flawlessly, and then moves on. I find it frustrating when an author spends the bulk of their content reminding us of the validity of their original claim(s). The examples offered and the execution about each component drive buy-in without you having to revisit the original claim. This is a book should be on the shelf of every business person that has something worth saying and something worth buying.

Great read.

I firmly believe that this book can help transform your sales results. So much so, that this instant sales classic should be required reading for anyone who sells for a living, leads salespeople or simply finds themselves occasionally having to persuade someone to do something. As the person who was honored and happy to contribute the foreword to *Sell with a Story*, I feel like I'm in a unique position to recommend this great book to you. Rather than trying to come up with a new "second impression" after rereading the book, it seemed better to simply post the actual foreword here as a review. This will provide insight as to why I love this book (and topic) so much and hopefully convince you why you'll benefit from it, too. Paul Smith's first book, *Lead with a Story: A Guide to Crafting Business Narratives That Captivate, Convince, and Inspire*, dramatically increased my effectiveness as a speaker and consultant. So you can imagine my excitement upon learning that Smith was applying his storytelling expertise to a new book on my favorite topic: selling. I spend my days helping sales leaders and salespeople develop new business and acquire new customers. More than any other topic or sales skill, the area where sellers require the most help is with telling their story. Almost every day I am proclaiming to anyone who will listen that "your story is your most critical sales weapon." Yet, executives and salespeople tend to be awful at storytelling. Just awful. Their stories are boring, confusing, often pointless, and almost always self-focused. In fact, as you'll read in Chapter 1, according to Smith, many lack the essential components to even qualify as a story. A great sales story changes everything. It causes buyers to put down their defense shields. It helps them relax (Chapter 2). It engages their minds and their hearts by appealing to both their intellect and emotions. A great story builds credibility and properly positions you in the eye of the buyer. Instead of being viewed as a pitchman (see the pearls of wisdom Smith pulled from procurement people in Chapter 25), a compelling story helps you come across as the value-creator, professional problem-solver and

consultant you so badly want to be. Possibly even more important, your powerful story opens up buyers to share theirs (Chapter 5.) Nothing softens prospective clients to answer your probing questions and reveal their problems, needs, desired results, frustrations, and opportunities better than your ability to tell a relevant story in the appropriate way at just the right time! Too often, we blow quickly through the discovery phase because buyers are not forthcoming when it comes to sharing information. Typically, our probing isn't effective because we haven't warmed up the prospect, built credibility, or earned the right to ask provocative questions – all things a great story can accomplish for us. *Sell with a Story* delivers on the promise of its subtitle, *How to Capture Attention, Build Trust, and Close the Sale*, by relaying how real salespeople tell stories throughout every stage of the sales process. These authentic stories (of how sellers deploy their own stories when building rapport, presenting, handling objections, closing, and servicing customers after the sale) are worth the price of admission alone. One of the most interesting facets of this book is that while it's highly entertaining and easy to read (because it's filled with intriguing stories!), it also helps you get to work putting these valuable principles to use. Smith implores readers to treat this as a workbook: keep a pen and pad handy; download the templates; identify the narratives you need and then craft them into compelling stories you can use. The author did his homework (interviewing hundreds of people for this book), and he has earned the right to ask you do yours. If you're serious about increasing your effectiveness as a communicator and looking to transform your sales results, *Sell with a Story* is for you. This book empowered and energized me, and I know it will do the same for you. Mike Weinberg, Consultant, Speaker, and Author of the Bestsellers *New Sales. Simplified.* and *Sales Management. Simplified.*

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