



An Abbreviated and Personal View on Sales

I've often been loath to identify myself as being in sales as the profession is too often made up of opportunists, egotists, or those looking for an easy way to make a buck. (Harvard Business Review did some great work on the typical makeup of salespeople and it was not flattering.) Far too few apply themselves towards mastery of the trade.

And of those that do, even fewer have the awareness or discipline to go beyond their instinctive strengths. It's these instinctive traits that define their style or approach, all of which can be of great good when properly tempered, those being:

- Relationship Builders
- Hard Workers
- Lone Wolves
- Reactive Problem Solvers
- Challengers

The rare among us blend the best traits of each as their situation and abilities allow. How? By overcoming the natural tendency to adopt resignation from a task when one's natural talents fail, to press on, looking for and learning new models and skills. And fewer go a step farther and develop classical *business* acumen, creating more value among two or more partners than is possible alone. (Again here, one's environment may limit development of this potential.) And even fewer go a step further and make serving their fellow man a north star of how their work is conducted. "The path to mastering something is the combination of not only doing the best *you* can do at it, but also doing it the best *it* can be done." From the book *The One Thing* by Gary Keller.

In my opinion, a pinnacle of sales is when one's integrity is the most valuable trait, when one approaches the marketplace from one of servitude, where the work becomes selfless. Another is when there's vision involved and executed, where the responsibility and opportunity of the moment is seized. An example would be impacting the market in a positive way that will impact the marketplace in large and rippling ways, creating a multiplier effect of its own over time, benefitting all in its wake.





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Reaching the pinnacle is not for everyone as it requires mastery of several facets, some of which may not provide the return needed to justify the time and attention needed given other goals the person may have. And reaching the pinnacle is quite aspirational. Don't expect to master it until practicing the profession for possibly decades.

But regardless of how far you push yourself, my wish for you is to be a paragon of virtue in the ranks calling themselves a sales rep.

