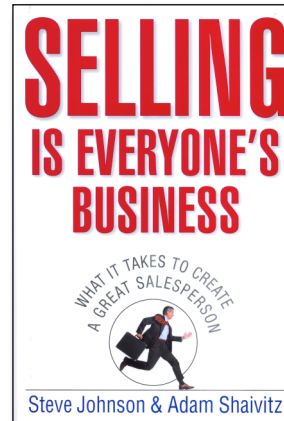


For Immediate Release

For an interview with Steve Johnson or a review copy of the book, please contact Dottie DeHart, Rocks-DeHart Public Relations, at (828) 459-9637 or DSDeHart@aol.com



Selling Is Everyone's Business—Including Yours. Six Tips for Becoming a Super Sales Coach and a Truly Valuable Employee.

A new book explains the art and science of creating great salespeople.

Hoboken, NJ (April 2006)—Want to make yourself valuable at work? Learn to sell, sell, sell. Want to make yourself *indispensable*? Teach and coach others to sell, sell, sell—and sell some more. That's right. Nothing is more important to a company than bringing in revenue, and no one brings in the revenue like a good sales coach. Become the best one you can possibly be and you'll always have a place in 21st century Corporate America.

Steve Johnson, founder of consulting firm The Next Level, knows that true *career* security (not just *job* security) awaits those who have the ability to develop the skills of the men and women who bring in the bucks. Johnson is co-author of *Selling Is Everyone's Business: What It Takes to Create a Great Salesperson* (Wiley, April 2006, ISBN: 0-471-77673-4, \$24.95), a new book for those visionary executives and sales leaders who want to do precisely that.

The book is a practical, readable, and fun guide to finding and nurturing your inner sales coach. Based on Johnson's experience working with thousands of sales teams and sales coaches, *Selling Is Everyone's Business* is deeply credible. Its format—packed with dialogue scripts, charts, templates, and colorful real-life examples—will reassure you that great sales coaching is a very learnable skill.

“Organizations know that the quickest way to improve their salespeople is to improve their sales coaches because the coaches have the most leverage—when a sales coach improves, her salespeople improve,” says Johnson. “The challenge is that for most coaching is a vague, intangible, and nebulous concept. So like other challenging topics, there are a lot of theories out there, but few proven-effective best practices. This guide makes coaching specific and tangible, and puts it into a simple format that can be most easily executed.”

Here are just a few tips from the book:

- **Understand the difference between a boss and a coach.** In which category does your management style put you?
 - ✓ A boss drives his people; a coach leads them.
 - ✓ A boss depends on authority; a coach depends on goodwill.
 - ✓ A boss inspires fear; a coach inspires enthusiasm.
 - ✓ A boss uses people; a coach develops them.
 - ✓ A boss lets his people know where he stands; a coach lets his people know where they stand.
 - ✓ A boss takes the credit; a coach gives it.
- **Make sure you’re creating good habits in your salespeople—not just measuring the numbers.** Yes, good sales numbers *can* be an indicator that a salesperson is following proven procedures and doing the action steps you’ve given them. But they could simply indicate a streak of good luck. That’s why Johnson dedicates so much ink to helping you create systems for ensuring your salespeople are developing and perfecting the right sales habits. For example, regular goal-setting meetings (GSMs)—in which coach and salesperson meet one-on-one to review performance from the previous period and commit to a game plan and short-term action steps for the upcoming period—help you keep an eye on what your salespeople are doing *consistently*. Good habits will carry your salesmen and women through the hard times as well as the easy times.
- **Demonstrate to establish “street cred.”** Step two in the five-step training process (Explain, Demonstrate, Practice, Observe, Feedback) is critical. A strong demonstration is a great opportunity for the coach to build credibility with her people. Establishing this “street cred” is essential in opening the lines of communication and successfully tees up future training opportunities. In other words, if salespeople see their coach in action and think, “She’s really good at this stuff. I’d like to be as good as her one day,” they become open to feedback and training from the coach moving forward.
- **Regularly follow up with these three magic words: “How’s it going?”** The best coaches spontaneously and regularly follow up with their salespeople by asking “How’s it going?” to check the status of goals, action steps, and skill areas. “This idea didn’t come from some high-level academic study,” says Johnson. “It’s just what the best sales coaches naturally do. It’s field tested and proven to be highly effective. Say, ‘So, how’s it going on your goal to make 75 cold calls this week?’ You can then follow up by asking, ‘So, what’s working best for you so far?’ and ‘Is anything in particular NOT working for you?’ You’ll be amazed to discover how much these three simple open-ended questions reveal.”

• **Coach top performers, too.** There is a myth in many sales organizations that sales coaches should just leave top performers alone and let them do their thing. Coaches should be careful, because often “their thing” could become staying put and performing only until another sales coach from a competitor or headhunter contacts them and shows them greener pastures. Obviously a coach’s approach and time spent with a top performer will differ from the way he works with a green bean or mediocre performer, but everyone needs love and attention. Often top performing salespeople can be the most open to sincere constructive feedback because they know how hard it is to perform, and since they probably already have a solid sales process, they can easily incorporate new ideas to their existing approach.

• **Keep a public scoreboard.** A scoreboard that keeps track of your sales team’s performance, updated weekly during your sales meeting, can be very motivating. The top 20 percent likes being in the top spot and wants to stay there. The middle 60 percent aspires to copy top performers’ aggressive goals and best practices. The bottom 20 percent quickly decides whether they are going to move up—or out. Johnson, whose consulting firm works with the Los Angeles Clippers basketball team’s sales organization, sees the same dynamics played out as those that occur during Clippers games. “Think of the salespeople in your meeting as the fans at the game,” says Johnson. “Depending on what the numbers on the board are, they’ll cheer or boo. Meanwhile, you, the coach, are using the numbers to strategize for the whole team as well as for individual players.”

Admittedly, becoming an effective sales coach is no walk in the park. This is true even if you’re already the best salesperson in the world: moving from “selling” to “coaching” requires developing a whole new set of skills and is always a challenge. But it’s one that’s well worth the effort.

Polish up your own sales coaching skills—and implement a sales coaching program in your company—and you’ll see your company’s economic picture become brighter and brighter. You’ll develop an unshakeable sense of confidence. And you’ll almost certainly notice your work life becoming a lot more rewarding.

“It is possible to go to work every day and not feel anxious about your future employment,” says Johnson. “Frankly, the ability to help others become great salespeople is a skill that can be developed. It allows you to shape your own destiny. So mastering the art and science of sales coaching is not only a pathway to prosperity but to peace of mind. And there is no substitute for that.”

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About Steve Johnson:

Steve Johnson is one of the most dynamic leaders in the sales and service arena. He is co-author of the 15 times *Los Angeles Times* and Amazon.com bestseller *If You're Not Out Selling, You're Being Out Sold*.

Steve has been working with clients to increase their sales and service efforts for over 19 years as a salesman, sales manager, sales coach, and sales trainer. In his first 10 years in sales, Steve was a top award winner for one of the largest sales training companies in the world. He was recognized as being in the top 1 percent of a worldwide 1,000-person sales force. Steve has been on over 5,000 face-to-face sales calls and has dialed the phone over 150,000 times to schedule appointments, follow-up, and close sales. He is a top achieving expert in the trenches and knows how to coach others to become top achievers.

Steve has developed and implemented hundreds of selling programs for clients such as Morgan Stanley, Countrywide Financial, UBS Financial Services; A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc; RBC Dain Rauscher; Piper Jaffray, and Enterprise Rent-A-Car. Over 50,000 sales people have gone through many of the different workshops that Steve has created for clients.

Steve lives in Manhattan Beach, California, with his wife, Elisa, and two children, Matthew and Anna.

About the Book:

Selling Is Everyone's Business: What It Takes to Create a Great Salesperson (Wiley, April 2006, ISBN: 0-471-77673-4, \$24.95) is available at bookstores nationwide, major online booksellers, or direct from the publisher by calling 800-225-5945. In Canada, call 800-567-4797.

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