

Foreword by Deb Calvert

SUCCEED

— WITHOUT —

Selling

The More You Think About Selling,
THE LESS YOU WILL SELL

Diane Helbig

Advance Praise

There is so much to applaud in Diane Helbig's new book, *Succeed Without Selling*. Diane has created a pathway which travels along the new rules of selling that is incredibly well signposted and so easy to follow. The old rules for buyer-seller engagement have been consigned to the annals of history and sadly, whilst buyers have changed the way they prefer to buy, most sellers are still clinging on to approaches and methodology that are now completely redundant. As an example, Diane urges us to forget "Always be closing" and rather focus on "Always be curious" This is a must read for both seasoned frontline sales professionals and students alike.

**JONATHAN FARRINGTON, Founder & CEO of JF
Initiatives (Top Sales World, Top Sales Magazine
& Top Sales Futurists)**

P-r-a-c-t-i-c-a-l. That's how you spell the secrets to success by Diane Helbig. Diane demystifies successful sales with advice any small business person can follow. This book is Exhibit A as to why Diane has been such a valued columnist at Small Business Trends—for years! Every small business owner interested in boosting revenue should get this book today!

ANITA CAMPBELL, CEO of Small Business Trends

If you aren't closing the sales you want, you might be doing it wrong. *In Succeed Without Selling* Diane gets straight to the point about what works, and what doesn't work in today's marketplace along with tactics you can use to improve your results.

KEVIN KRUSE, Founder and CEO of LeadX

Curiosity and trust are two of the most vital sales accelerators that all small business owners must adopt if they want to win in today's marketplace. But how often do we push aside curiosity just to close the deal? Diane Helbig does a remarkable job of uncovering this critical approach to sales that will shift your mindset from how we've traditionally be taught to sell! *Succeed Without Selling* will open your eyes to the truth about how to sell successfully regardless of industry, business size, or prospect base. I highly recommend it!

**MIKE MOONEY, Driving People Forward,
Author of *Reputation Shift***

A terrific book. With trademark clarity and insight, Diane Helbig teaches the new mindset that is required for sales success in today's business world. The practical yet powerful examples show how to bring this fresh approach to life in any organization, small or large.

SHANE SPIERS, Summit SCALE

It's a new economy. The "Winter" economy as proposed by the late Chet Holmes. Business approaches that worked in the Fall economy will not work in the Winter economy. Diane has done an amazing job of breaking down the sales and sales management process for these times. Her approach is client centric and focuses on how to serve the client rather than how to close them. And by doing so, create long lasting and profitable relationships. This book is a must read for anyone who is involved in the art of selling. And if you own a business, you are selling! Without a doubt reading this book will be a worthy investment of your time!

**WILLARD BARTH, Author, Business Consultant and
Transformation Expert**

Succeed Without Selling

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Diane Helbig



NEW YORK

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Foreword

By Deb Calvert

Writing a good book is like selling. Both require discipline, creativity, and an abiding belief that you have something special to offer. Both are hampered by self-serving motivations. Both can open doors and provide unlimited opportunities for those who strive to do more than merely producing a result.

When Diane Helbig described her compelling desire to write a book about transcending the negative stereotypes and antiquated approaches to selling, my interest was piqued. After all, her books and podcasts and articles and presentations consistently deliver solid advice about simple, practical ways for SMBs and sellers to increase revenue. *Lemonade Stand Selling* demystified selling for small business owners 10+ years ago. Ever since, Diane has been the voice of reason and simplification

for sellers of every stripe, including business owners who don't think of the work they do as *selling*.

Who better, then, to write a book about selling for people who aren't comfortable with sales?

Diane's dedication to genuinely helping small business owners and sellers shows up in selfless ways. She's a prolific writer and contributor to international publications. She's recorded hundreds of podcast episodes that examine every aspect of what it takes to succeed in business. Diane is also "in the trenches" as a consultant and trainer, helping her clients achieve their professional goals and dreams.

Diane is candid. She won't sugarcoat or withhold the truth that can set you free. She'll tell you when you're about to make a mistake, and she'll point out the thinking and behaviors that prevent you from achieving all that's possible. When you've spent a couple of decades watching sellers (including many who are, in Diane's words, "behaving badly"), you spot problems quickly and intervene effectively. When a seller or business owner says "How can I convince them they need my product," Diane frankly responds "You don't." She explains that they're trying to sell instead of trying to meet existing needs. Mindset matters, and Diane works with people on this fundamental first.

When you add it all up, you get *Succeed without Selling*, a book with both practical advice and compassionate, heartfelt support. You get game-changing takeaways for anyone who sells, including those who don't want to sell and those who don't know how to sell.

The subtitle of this book addresses a common misunderstanding: *The more you think about selling, the less you will sell.*

Writer's block occurs in much the same way. If you think about writing, it's not very good writing... you have to think about the reader instead. Diane did. She poured out her heart, spoke the truth, and conversationally addressed the self-inflicted challenges many people experience in selling. She also presented solid alternatives. This is a book about how to sell without being sales-y. It's a book about professional sellership in the modern age. And it's a book that comes from the author's experience, observations, and burning desire to give something of lasting value to others.

Acknowledgments

I am so very grateful for so many people who have contributed to my success, and the completion of this book. First and foremost, I am grateful for my husband, Frank. Without his continued support and encouragement I wouldn't be where I am today. Thanks also go to my kids, Aaron and Macey, for their understanding when I travel and work late. Thanks guys!

I also want to thank my mother Bette, sister Debbie, brother David, and all of my in-laws for their support: Michael, Gerry, Sara, Stan, Jim, Cindy, Dennis, Toni, Marybeth, Jim, John, Dawn, Loretta, and Jim.

I am blessed with an incredible number of friends and associates who have always been in my corner and have supported me in my endeavors over the years. The list is long. As I fear I would leave someone out unintentionally, I am not going to list you here. I trust you know who you are and how much I appreciate you.

I could not have accomplished this piece of work without my awesome editor, Amber Chapman, or my incredible publisher, Morgan James. And my marketing support team, Kristen Wise,

Maira Pedreira, and Dawn Bassick of PRESStinely, are without equal. I am beyond grateful for Deb Calvert for providing an incredible foreword.

I am the businesswoman and sales professional who I am today because of my father, Bob. He taught me so many valuable lessons. I wish he were here to see my achievements.

And, to all of those small business owners and sales professionals struggling to master a sales process that works, as well as those who have figured it out, thank you for being you. I've watched so many of you over the years. This book is inspired by your challenges, and accomplishments.

Thank you my Patron Sponsor, SACS Consulting, Inc. as well as the following people who pre-ordered the book at the Sales Builder Level: Angie P, Ann R, Barbara D, Bonny C, Craig C, Craig Z, Debbie J, Deby L, Tricia B, Diana F, Diane M, Douglas J, Faith S-P, Farnoosh B, Frank A, Harry L, Jan C, Janet G, Jason B, Jessica P, John G, Karen Z, Kate H, Kathleen B, Kelsey L, Laura L, Laura S, Liz R, Marilyn B, Marty M, Megan P, Michael D, Michael S, Michele K, Pamela C, Pat A, Paul N, Bob C, Sandra H, Terese M, Toni M.

The ABCs Of Sales Have Changed

*“Selling should be about discovery, connection,
and problem-solving.”*

Back in the 1980s and 1990s, salespeople were taught a very specific method of selling. The environment was such that the salesperson held the power. Consumers, including company purchasing professionals, did not have easy access to information about the products and services they needed.

There was no easy way to gain insight into new products or upgrades to existing machines, equipment, or processes. The buyer was at the mercy of the salesperson, so salespeople were taught to develop a sales ‘pitch’ and strategy that could convince someone they needed or wanted the product or service being sold. The more persuasive they could be, the more likely they were to make the sale.

Sometimes that persuasion came across as pushy or coercive. The buyer felt like they were being talked into something or

bullied into buying. This is how buyer's remorse happens. When someone is talked into buying something they're not convinced they need or want, or can afford, they then end up feeling bad about the purchase—and the salesperson.

In 1992, the movie *Glengarry Glen Ross* hit the theaters. It became an iconic depiction of the sales industry. “Always Be Closing” became a mantra. Salespeople were trained to always be thinking about the sale. They looked at everyone they met as a prospect. Enter the ‘elevator pitch.’ This idea was developed around the same time. In short, the idea behind the elevator pitch or commercial, was that a salesperson should be able to spark interest in a total stranger in the time it takes to ride an elevator with them. Salespeople were encouraged to strike up conversations with people in line at the grocery store, at the barber, at school functions. No place was off limits. The focus was to ALWAYS be closing.

There is an argument to be made that this thought process was successful back then because the salesperson was in the driver's seat. I'm not so sure that was the case, though. I think it took a certain type of person to be able to pull that sort of thing off. Many people who tried to become salespeople failed miserably. They just couldn't talk someone into buying from them. It's no wonder that the word ‘salesman’ developed a negative connotation. Being a salesperson was far less than noble. So, one could question whether Always Be Closing was ever a successful mindset.

Thankfully, once the internet became a household presence, it also quickly became a significant part of the buying and selling process. Now, consumers would have the opportunity to learn

about the products and services available to them, not just rely on a pitch from the salesperson. Consumers could now research the companies as well. The seller no longer had the upper hand. Now it had shifted to the consumer. Whether or not Always Be Closing was a successful tactic in the 80's and 90's, it had suddenly become not only ineffective but in fact harmful.

Today the ABCs of sales are: **Always Be Curious**. When you lead with the premise that the more you think about selling, the less you'll sell, you can see that choosing curiosity over convincing is the way to go. When you are curious, you are thinking about someone else. You aren't concerned with yourself, your mortgage or your payroll. You want to genuinely learn about the other person, the company, the situation. There is so much that is good about being curious. First of all, it relieves you of the feeling that you should be the one talking. Because, in all actuality, the opposite is true. You should be listening. And you can't be listening if your lips are moving!

Next, this approach allows you to be present and in the moment. When you are actively listening, you will become more attentive, interested, and engaged. The beauty is that other people will now want to be around you! When you are curious, you are building relationships. You're discovering not only the problem you might be able to solve, but who the person/company is; how do they show up? Do they have integrity? Are your values aligned? Are they difficult to deal with or easy to communicate with? All of these things are important.

Think about it this way—when you bring on a new client or customer, you are, in essence, marrying them. Face it, you're going to be in a long-term relationship with them. So, are they

someone you want to deal with every day? Will the marriage be joyful, or will it be unpleasant? The only way to really know is to learn about them. When you are curious, you're open to seeing all of the signs, especially the non-verbal ones. Then you can realistically determine if there is an opportunity to help them.

Additionally, when you're curious you're not assuming everyone you meet is a potential customer, but just the opposite. You're wondering how, and if, they fit into your world. Will they be a resource, a sounding board, a mentor, a partner, a client? Or will they be none of these?

Curiosity means you aren't jumping to conclusions; you aren't making assumptions. And you aren't trying to make someone a client or customer just because you need one. Another wonderful thing about Always Be Curious, is that it takes away the pressure to be persuasive. Heck, it removes any expectation that you're going to do all the talking!

Remember when I said sales should be enjoyable? Well, what is more enjoyable than learning something new, or making a new acquaintance? Sales becomes enjoyable when you stop selling.