The Inner Game of Selling

By Ron Willingham
We at Integrity Systems® have observed several hundred thousand people who have been in our courses in over 65 nations. We wanted to know what separates people who sell on high levels from others who don’t.

It’s our belief that learning sales skills in traditional two- or three-day seminars has little, if any, influence on selling success. In fact, much of what’s taught to salespeople today can actually hinder or prevent them from selling well.

Offering no sales training is often preferable to the types of training that some organizations give their people. Why? Because much of what’s called “sales training” actually conflicts with salespeople’s values, their views of their own skills, and their beliefs about their success possibilities. The intensity of these conflicts then impedes people’s ability to sell.

To take this further, let me emphasize that the ability to successfully sell isn’t an issue of learning sales skills, having product knowledge, or knowing market conditions. While all these factors are important, they aren’t the real reason for sales success.

Why? Because selling is an inner game; it’s 85% feelings, attitudes, values, emotions, and self-beliefs. A person’s ability to sell well is an issue of deep internal factors.

FOUR CORE TRAITS OF HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL SALESPEOPLE

We’ve observed that all highly successful salespeople share four core traits. To the degree that these are present within a person, they sell well.
Sustained sales increases only happen to the degree that these traits are strengthened within people. They are only developed through certain types of experiences, and not through intellectual learning.

Here are the four traits.

1. Strong goal clarity
2. High achievement drive
3. Healthy emotional intelligence
4. Excellent social skills

Here’s a description of each of these success traits.

*Goal Clarity* is having specific goals or objectives of what you want to sell, earn, accomplish, gain or possess.

Research indicates that the more clearly defined and focused people’s goals are, the more directed their effort will be and the more energy and achievement drive they’ll release.

*Achievement Drive* is the desire or drive level a person has toward the attainment of goals. People with high achievement drive usually bring more effort, energy and enthusiasm to their professional and personal lives.

It’s important to emphasize that achievement drive is released from within people rather than poured in from without. Not understanding this explains why most attempts to motivate salespeople fail.

Your salespeople’s view of their own possibilities, support systems, and what they want money for all influence their drive to succeed.
Most people exhibit about the same level of achievement drive throughout their lives, unless they take conscious steps to change it. It can be changed.

*Emotional Intelligence* is a type of “social intelligence” that helps people monitor and understand their own emotions, and to act wisely in human relations. It’s emotional stability, steadfastness.

Emotional Intelligence defines a person’s ability to work well with others, deal with problems and ambiguities, stick with tasks, and be self-motivated and optimistic about work and life.

It includes these important characteristics:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-motivation
3. Self-control
4. Persistence
5. Resilience
6. Interpersonal skills

High emotional intelligence gives a person stability, mental toughness and “stick-to-it-iveness.”

*Social Skills* are a salesperson’s ability to move in and out of different social situations with grace and ease. It’s the ability to ask the right questions and listen to people. To gain empathy and rapport. To understand how others think, make decisions, and see the world. Salespeople with strong social skills have the ability to adjust to varied social situations. They like being around people and cultivate relationships easily.
Salespeople with high degrees of these four traits will almost always find ways to succeed, regardless of product, market, territory or other variables. As people develop these traits, their sales will almost always go up.

**A FOUR-TRAITS ASSESSMENT**

The following is a self-scoring assessment that can help you evaluate yourself, or any of your people, in the four traits.

On a scale of one to ten, (one meaning the statement is never descriptive, ten meaning that it’s always descriptive), please evaluate yourself, or another person, in each attribute.

### Goal Clarity

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Has clear, specific, written down goals for sales and income.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>2. Revises and updates goals each month.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>3. Goals are consistent with his/her values.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>4. Immediately rewards self when he/she reaches a sales goal.</td>
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<td>5. Consistently sets goals for higher and higher achievement.</td>
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### Achievement Drive

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a very high level of achievement drive and desire for goals.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Self-motivated and committed to high achievement.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Totally believes that goals are within his/her possibilities.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Exhibits a very high level of persistence and energy.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Able to recognize plateaus and challenge self to set higher goals.</td>
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### Emotional Intelligence

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Is in total control of his/her natural fears of rejection or call-reluctance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Maintains a level emotional response despite ups and downs.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Understands emotions and their influence upon his/her sales behaviors.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Able to keep going despite repeated rejection.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Knows how to replace negative emotions with positive ones.</td>
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**Social Skills**

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<td>1. Adjusts well to different types of people and situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Listens well and is sensitive to people’s ideas and needs.</td>
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<td>3. Is especially effective at calming people in stressful situations.</td>
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<td>4. Is highly intuitive – able to pick up people’s unspoken meanings.</td>
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<td>5. Works well with a wide diversity of people.</td>
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Total = ____________

**WHERE DO THESE FOUR TRAITS RESIDE WITHIN YOU?**

If these four traits can’t be *intellectually learned*, but must be *experientially developed*, then where, within us, do they reside?

To answer this question, let’s look at three separate dimensions within us.

They are the:

1. Intellectual
2. Emotional
3. Creative Unconscious

To further understand each dimension, please look at the following model:
Let me give you a brief description of each of these three dimensions.

The “I Think” is the logical, rational, cognitive part of you. With it you make decisions, select options, learn information, and remember dates, names, and places. This is the part at which most, if not all, of your education was directed.
Most sales training is also directed at this part of people. People sit and listen to someone tell them what sales skills are, expecting them to hear, remember, and practice what they hear. This is a poor learning model, because upwards of 95% of the information is forgotten within 21 days, and little action is taken on the remaining 5%.

The “I Feel” is the emotional part of you. You feel up one day and down the next. You make a sale and experience a high. You lose three sales in a row and your positive feelings plummet.

What causes your emotions? Can you control them? If you can, then how?

To answer this question, let’s learn about the third dimension.

The “I Am” is the unconscious part of you that houses your self-image, your values, and your deep feelings of worth or value. Deep within the caverns of your “I Am” is your Life Script programming that has come to accept what your possibilities are—what’s possible for you to sell, earn, or produce.

This Life Script is so powerful that it totally controls all your actions, feelings, behavior and abilities. Your outer lives will be played out consistent with these deep beliefs—whether they’re true or false.

**INTEGRITY SELLING® TOUCHES ALL THREE DIMENSIONS**

Integrity Selling® is an on-going curriculum that helps people develop the four traits. It also touches all three of the dimensions that were just presented.
Integrity Selling\textsuperscript{®} touches:

1. The “I Think”—teaches sales, human relations, communication, and self management skills.

2. The “I Feel”—develops confidence, a positive view of the future, enthusiasm, and success expectations.

3. The “I Am”—strengthens inner confidence. Sales power is released because of the congruence of sales skills with values and views of possibilities. New deep, positive beliefs are formed.

**INTEGRITY SELLING\textsuperscript{®} IS A PROCESS THAT CAN SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE YOUR PEOPLE’S SALES**

Integrity Selling\textsuperscript{®} is a one year curriculum to help salespeople and managers increase their sales and customer loyalty.

The Integrity Selling\textsuperscript{®} curriculum is:

1. An initial six-hour seminar to learn a six-step customer focused sales system.

2. A pre-assessment Sales Skills Inventory.

3. An eight-week follow up to help participants develop unconscious habits of practicing the six-step system.

4. A post-assessment Sales Skills Inventory.

5. Monthly advanced sales meetings for reinforcement.

6. An annual review process.

7. Ongoing managers’ coaching.
Our objective is to teach people appropriate customer needs-focused sales skills, and then to cause them to develop what they learn into unconscious behaviors.

Decades ahead of anything else called sales training, your trainers or managers can be certified to conduct the Integrity Selling® curriculum in your organization.

RESULTS, RESULTS, RESULTS

When results count, you can depend on Integrity Selling® to bring them. With courses offered around the globe, here is a sampling of some of the results we hear about:

- Trade New Zealand increased their trade $500 million after training their people in 35 nations.
- Infinite Energy increased their customer base from fourteen thousand to over fifty thousand in fifteen months.
- Paul Reviere, a multi-million dollar producer with ERA, increased his sales twenty-six percent.

Yes—results, results, results.

Integrity Selling® . . . When you really want results.
To find out more about how we might help your organization increase your sales and customer loyalty, please call us or visit our web site.

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