<Every Job is a Sales Job>

<How to Use the Art of Selling to Win at Work>

<By Dr. Cindy McGovern>
I have three important truths to share with you.

First, you are a salesperson. Everyone is, like it or not.

Second, you should be selling, at least unofficially, all the time.

And third, selling, even unofficially, will help your career and company.

Here’s how I know that: I’m a born college professor. Or I was. Or I thought I was. I’m not anymore.

I’m a former college professor. Turns out, I’m a born salesperson.

Turns out, I’m pretty good at convincing people to do what I ask them to do. I’m persuasive, I know what I want, and I’m passionate about getting it.

That passion, when coupled with what my Grandma called my “gift of gab” and my naturally outgoing nature, seems to be contagious. If I really, really believe in something, I often can infect others with that same energy and confidence. And then they want to help me. Or give something to me. Or work with me. Or be my friend.

It’s a gift, I know, and I’m grateful for it, because it has helped me live my best life, both career-wise and personally.

This gift, this energy and confidence, helped me change my career path from college professor to sales consultant. It eventually led me to embrace my inner entrepreneur and open a business to help people who aren’t born salespeople—and who probably don’t even want to be salespeople—learn how to sell. And be more successful.
But I never, ever would have called myself a saleswoman when I was a college professor. Yet, without realizing it, I sold all day long.

Guess what? So do you. No matter what you do for work. No matter if you’re outgoing like me or a little shy or even an introvert.

That’s an important revelation, because no matter what job you’re in—college professor, lawyer, Uber driver, maintenance engineer, receptionist, coder or anything else—you have to sell stuff. You might not think so. You might not realize it. But you do. Every day. Every single day. As a professor, I had to sell my students on coming to class and turning in their assignments on time. As a lawyer, you have to sell clients on accepting plea deals and juries on finding your clients not guilty. As a maintenance specialist, you have to sell your company’s decision-makers on upgrading the equipment you need to do a good job and the people you work with on using that equipment properly. As a receptionist, you have to sell anyone who walks up to your desk or calls your office that you and your company are friendly and value their business. As a coder you have to sell your colleagues or clients on approving your webpage designs and taking your advice. As a manager, you have to sell your team on working together to reach a common goal.

Regardless of your job title you have to sort of unconsciously sell people every day on believing that you’re competent, deserving of their trust and future business, reliable and nice to work with. You have to—just by the way you talk and behave—sell the customers you meet every day to believe that your company is a good one to do business with.

All day long you sell your ideas. You sell your company. You sell yourself.
Let me tell you about my own epiphany. It’s the moment that led me to where I am today.

When I applied for my first non-academic job after working as a college professor of communication for four years, I answered an ad for a consultant who would advise businesses that specialized in insurance. I had never been a consultant. And I knew nothing about insurance except how to buy it for my car.

My first interview was by phone—another first for me. During my conversation with a woman named Laura, I learned that the title of the job was actually “sales management consultant.”

Oops. I had never done sales, either. Three strikes so far.

But as far as management, I knew I could do. I also knew I was pretty good at convincing people to do stuff: the administrators at my college; my students; my friends. So, I figured if I could get an in-person interview, I would be gold.

I set out on a mission: to convince Laura, over the phone, to call me in for a second interview, this time in person. I knew that if I could look her in the eye, I could convince her that I was coachable and teachable and that I could do this job. I knew that if I could meet her in person, she would see my passion.

I drew on all of the communication techniques that I learned in graduate school and that I had taught my college students: I mirrored her language and her speech patterns; I exercised active listening. I made a connection with her.

I got the second interview. And guess what? I got the job.
I didn’t know it at the time, but the process I used is the same one that the most successful professional salespeople use to sell stuff: They do their homework and plan for the transaction. They look for their opportunity. They establish trust with the person they’re dealing with. They ask for what they want. And they follow up after they have their answer.

I didn’t realize that’s what I was doing. But it turns out, Laura did. She recognized my ability to sell, and she knew I could do the job. She knew something about me that I didn’t know. She knew I was a salesperson. And after she hired me she helped me embrace my inner salesperson at a time when I still believed that all sales were cheesy.

In fact, it never occurred to me until about six months later, when my boss at this same consulting firm moved me—kicking and screaming—from consultant to salesperson, that I was onto something big: I had realized that the skills I used to get into that company are the same tactics that sales professionals use every day to sell their companies’ products and services to potential clients.

That was an “aha!” moment that eventually convinced me to write this book. I had sold myself to Laura over the phone and to Laura’s boss, once I met him in person. I sold him on my potential, even though I was far less than experienced in consulting and sales. I realized that selling isn’t something that only professional salespeople do.

It’s something all professionals do.

Selling is what I’ve always done every time I had to convince somebody to give me what I wanted or needed. I was selling all day long, on and off the job, but I never put that label on it.
You haven’t either, right? Call it what you want. It’s still sales.

The biggest thunderbolt struck me when I realized that everyone is a salesperson, nearly every day, no matter what the job title is. The cashier at a sandwich shop sells customers on adding a soda and chips to their orders. The mechanic at the car dealership sells drivers on paying to have their tires rotated so they’ll last longer. The civic association president sells the neighbors on spending a beautiful Saturday morning indoors at a meeting so they can vote on some new rules. The radio talk show host sells listeners on staying tuned until after the commercial break. Computer technicians at the help desk of a big-box store sell customers on buying their next electronic device at that same store by treating them and their problems as important and by never talking down to them.

It’s like this phenomenon called Blue Car Syndrome: Once you see something—or in this case, realize something—you see it everywhere. Like if you buy a blue car, then all of a sudden you notice that blue cars are everywhere.

Sorry. Didn’t mean to get all college professor-y. I guess I’m a little bit of a nerd at heart.

So, we all know this now: You sell, even if it’s not an official part of your job.

But, how to you do this “newfound” job better than you are right now?

By working through the steps of *Every Job Is a Sales Job*.

Did I just hear you say “ick?” I know, me, too.
But you can stop kicking and screaming! My five-step sales formula for non-sales professionals is in no way, shape or form pushy, cheesy, high-pressure, or unethical. It’s more give-and-take. It’s more like: What can I do for you and what can you do for me?

My formula will show you how to sell in a nice way. I play nice when I sell. I always play nice. So I won’t ask you to do anything but be yourself and respect the people you work with.

This five-step process will come in handy when you find yourself faced with an opportunity to sell. It’s a sort of blueprint for using the skills of the sales professional to get referrals, retain clients, impress visitors, influence your boss, or otherwise sell someone on yourself and your company.

My formula will come in handy whether you’re a freelancer, contractor, teacher, or construction worker. You’ll use it if you’re an employee, manager, executive, or business owner.

For managers, it will help you create a culture at work that encourages non-sales employees to bring in new business and rewards them when they do.

That fact is that anyone who has a job—any job—sells, or should sell. Even those whose work titles do not include the word “sales,” even those who would rather be unemployed than accept a sales job, are selling—or should be and could be—every day. If they’re not, they’re not doing their best work.

Every Job Is a Sales Job has two goals:

1. To convince you that everyone who works, sells, like it or not—including you.
2. To teach you how to sell successfully, even though you do not work in an official capacity as a salesperson.

This is the book that I wish someone had given me when I made the transition from college professor to consultant to sales professional early in my career.

To be honest, I wish someone had given me this book before I even accepted my first job out of college as a professor of communication. I know now that I was selling students, administrators, other faculty, and even office managers every time I needed a signature on a form, permission to attend a conference or a better effort on an undergraduate assignment.

But I didn’t realize it then. If I had, I would have done way more of it.

If I had had this book way back then, it would have saved me a lot of time “figuring it out.”

**The Formula**

*Every Job is a Sales Job* is broken into two parts.

In Part I, I reveal both obvious and hidden opportunities for an employee with any job title to attract new business, to retain existing customers, and to spot opportunities to sell themselves and their ideas. I will share a secret that inevitably will lead to the “aha” moment when readers will realize that they already sell all the time—and therefore, they already know how to sell.
In Part II, I will break my process into 5 steps that show you exactly how to employ the tactics, secrets, and strategies of successful sales pros so you can use them when opportunities to “sell” yourself or your company arise.

In *Every Job is a Sales Job*, I share my proven, five-step “sales” process for people who are not sales professionals. The first step is to **PLAN**. Here, we will figure out what you really want and plan a way to achieve that.

The second step is to **IDENTIFY** when and where opportunities arise to make those sales.

The third step is to **ESTABLISH TRUST** with the people who can help you.

The critical fourth step is to **ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT**.

And finally, the fifth step is to **FOLLOW UP**, no matter if the answer was “yes” or “no,” to maintain relationships, and paying it forward.

Through these 5 steps and the lessons taught throughout this book, I will convince you that “getting” is indelibly intertwined with “giving.” And, perhaps most importantly, I will help you overcome the learned limitation of fear when it comes to asking for what you want, need, and deserve.

I will also address what I like to call the “ick” factor of sales. My guess is that you would rather do without than do anything that resembles sales. I was just like that, too, until I discovered a kinder, lighter-touch style of sales based on clarity, listening, mutual benefit, and gratitude. That is what I introduce in *Every Job Is a Sales Job*. 
If you’re like most people, you are reluctant to ask for what you want. You might not even believe you deserve it. So you rarely ever ask for what you want. Or what you deserve.

The fact is that employees who ask a customer or potential client, a friend, a colleague or anyone to do business with a company, to buy something, or to do anything, really, is exponentially more likely to hear a “yes” than if they don’t ask.

Likewise, someone who is brave enough to ask for a job or a raise is more likely to get it. There’s simply no reason why you should settle for what is offered if you believe you deserve more. Whether it’s a higher salary, a vacation, a great work schedule or a job, you deserve more.

And, if you don’t think you deserve more, I hope to convince you that you do, in fact, deserve more. I’m going to help you overcome the fear of rejection that might be preventing you from asking for what you want, need, and deserve.

Maybe you just don’t know how to ask. Or perhaps it doesn’t even occur to you that you should or can ask.

By the time you finish reading Every Job Is a Sales Job, you will. You will know how to use proven sales strategies to come out on top during every one of the constant interactions, which are really transactions, that any employee of any company makes throughout the day. Every Job Is a Sales Job will lay out a formula for turning that “nice doing business with you” handshake into a request for future business in a way that is fair to both giver and receiver and that is comfortable even for those who are shy or lack confidence.
And it will fire you up to do that without resorting to the cheesy, pushy tactics so often associated with used car sales or timeshares. But frankly, even those salespeople are moving away from those tactics. This brings to mind the signs I used to see at every restaurant, gas station and store that said, “Come again.” We should do that every time we meet with someone: Invite them to come back.

Don’t assume that your excellent service speaks for itself and that your client or customer will automatically come back for more. Instead, come right out and ask for what you want.