

CHAPTER 1

Why You Are a Salesperson

Before we begin discussing the science of selling, we should remember that we all are attracted to this profession because of our desires and values. No one chooses to sell because they want a simple 9 to 5 job. Here is a fact I want you to always remember:

Salespeople are the income providers of every other person on earth.

Every single person on earth who is not in the business of selling is completely in debt to those who do. There is no customer-service department without the salesperson. There is no government without salespeople. There is no military funding without salespeople. Every single monetary exchange begins and ends with a salesperson.

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who generate money and those who consume it.

Every person on earth owes an eternal debt of gratitude to salespeople because without salespeople there would be no jobs for anyone.

Salespeople are more than special; they make the world go 'round. The profession of selling is literally the most important profession on earth. Without you there is no government. Without you and other salespeople there is no economy, no retirement, no Medicare, no military . . . there is nothing. You're making the world go 'round. Thank you!

The Birth of a Salesman\Autumn 1972

Selling: My Only Hope

I (KH) started selling when I was ten years old. I had to. I was the oldest of five children and we had no money. My stepfather was going to die in less than eighteen months and Mom's time was divided between her job and taking care of Dad, who was confined to a hospital bed in our home. It was a heck of a way to live. We lived in a "lower-middle class" suburb of Chicago. If I wanted to have money for anything (and I did), I would have to sell something.

I sold my services in the wintertime as the kid on the street who would shovel your driveway. \$1 per hour. The Chicago winds would blow out of the north and off the lake with a bitter coldness that I'll never forget. Sometimes I'd take the \$3 I would earn and give it to Mom. Sometimes I'd keep the money and buy Pepsi and Reese's. In the summer, I would sell my services cutting people's lawns or pulling weeds. (I hated pulling weeds.)

Realizing that there was no hope for me in the lawn and garden services, I knew at age ten I would have to do something where I could utilize my time in a far more efficient manner. I saw an ad in a Sunday newspaper for Cheerful House Greeting Cards. I read that I could earn from fifty cents to two dollars for each box of cards sold. I immediately sent the company my \$10 for a sample kit. (\$10 was a lot of money in those days.)

In return, Cheerful House sent me five boxes of Christmas cards. Some quick math calculations revealed that if I just sold the five boxes I'd make one dollar per box sold! The sales literature said that there would only be four "selling seasons" per year, so whatever money was going to be earned would have to last a LONG time.

I got home from school the next day, and as soon as my paper route was done I was ready to go make some real money! I knocked on my neighbor's door. It was Mrs. Gossard. I showed her my cards and she bought a box. My first dollar was earned! Then I went to Mrs. Singer. (She couldn't buy a box.) Mrs. Hendricks bought two boxes, Mrs. Serdar bought a box. Mrs. Makela bought a box. Lots of other people didn't.

I was gone until 8 P.M. and had knocked on thirty doors and sold about eighteen boxes of cards. I looked at my watch as the sun was setting. I knew I had to go home and help put the kids to bed. I had checks totaling about \$60, of which my math whiz brain figured \$20 was mine.

Mom was so excited when she saw the order sheet. I told her that I'd

give her all the money I earned. She replied, “No. You earned it; you are going to keep it.”

Wow! The next day I left the neighborhood to start selling in a neighborhood I never went to. I was out from the time my paper route was done until sunset. I sold only four boxes of cards. Some of the people’s houses were scary looking and, being a skinny little kid, I decided that I wouldn’t go back there again! Nevertheless, I made about \$4. I showed Mom when I got home and she told me that it was mine to keep.

The problem was that I knocked on about fifty doors to earn that \$4. I couldn’t believe that more people didn’t buy my Christmas cards. They obviously weren’t as smart as the people in my neighborhood. The next day was Saturday and I remember getting up, delivering the Saturday morning *Waukegan News-Sun* (it had to be delivered by 7 A.M.!), cutting the lawn, and then at noon off I went on my bicycle. I went into neighborhoods I had never been to and knocked on over 100 doors that day. I didn’t stop to eat lunch . . . or dinner. I sold six boxes of cards.

I got home to find that there was no Hamburger Helper left. (I was eternally grateful.) I told Mom that I didn’t have a very good day. I had made \$6, but I was driving across highways and I was kind of scared of the neighborhoods I was going into. She suggested I stick with the neighborhoods where people knew me and that way I wouldn’t be crossing the highways anymore. (She would later tell me she was scared to death that her son was going into some of the neighborhoods!)

We totaled the order sheet. I had sold twenty-eight boxes of cards. My total earnings would be about \$30. I would get paid after I delivered all of the cards to my customers. I couldn’t wait!

I learned a lot that week.

I learned that people were more likely to buy from me if they knew me. I realized that if people had the money, I could talk them into buying an extra box for someone else as a gift.

I learned that selling cards was a lot better than cutting the lawn, pulling weeds, shoveling the snow, or delivering the newspaper.

I learned I could only work four weeks per year selling cards. Selling cards was going to make me \$100 next year but I’d need to think of something else to sell if I was going to make more money.

More importantly, after delivering the cards to the people a few weeks earlier, I realized how much fun it was to see people smile and say, “Thanks, Kevin.” “They’re beautiful.” “You got those to me faster than I expected.”

Most importantly, I made \$30 for about twenty hours of work that was not physically killing my scrawny ten-year-old body!

I sold greeting cards for the next four years as a source of income. I sold flower seeds and vegetable seeds. (I also continued to sell my body shoveling snow, pulling weeds, cutting lawns, and doing anything I could.) The most fun was selling cards, though. The women were (for the most part) fun to talk with, the work was all sitting down in their living rooms, and some of them even gave me cookies and milk those few days a year when I was selling. I was actually having fun working at something.

The ad from Cheerful House Greeting Cards changed my life. Not because it made me rich. It didn't. It gave me hope that I could escape living in poverty. The Boy Scouts wouldn't need to bring me clothes and turkey dinners on Thanksgiving any more. (The Boy Scouts delivered clothing and food to our home on Thanksgiving on a couple of occasions. I remember appreciating the clothes and food . . . and hating being needy.) I knew that whatever I was going to do when I was older, it would be selling.

I was right.

I discovered as a ten-year-old that the ability to think quickly and talk with people could give me a chance to escape being poor and maybe . . . just maybe . . . be rich. Selling was hard work in some ways, but it was fun. It certainly beat "physical work!"

Selling would give me security, freedom, independence, and the ability to be productive, to be valuable to other people. It was something I could do well.

Fast forward to 1998.

Autumn 1998

I've been earning a six-figure income for a few years. I've owned my own business, consulted or sold for other people since 1987. The idea of receiving an hourly wage and punching a time clock is almost a phobia. Business is good. I have several books in print, including one, *The Psychology of Persuasion*, that is doing pretty darned well in the bookstores. But . . .

I've stalled. I've stagnated. I've been earning \$1,000 to \$2,000 per speech I give. Nothing wrong with that, but I've been there and done that.

What is going on? No one is offering me more than that. I am baffled. People compare my speaking style to Anthony Robbins and my physical and offstage presence to Kelsey Grammar, David Letterman, and Drew Carey. Now, what more could a guy want? That's enough talent to feed off for FOUR lifetimes.

Enter Dottie Walters, the author of *Speak and Grow Rich*. (Dottie owns the world's most prestigious speakers bureau and publishes *Sharing Ideas* magazine for national speakers.)

I see her *Speak and Grow Rich* course listed next to mine in the Open U catalog. I have no time to take a full day off and learn what I already know, regardless of whom it is with. But for years I have been wanting to meet Dottie. She would now be about seventy, or maybe older . . . and it was her book *Speak and Grow Rich* that helped me focus my world on teaching and speaking in public for a significant portion of my current living.

I decided to take the Saturday off and go see Dottie. If nothing else, I should thank her for being inspirational in my life!

I experienced her class with about twenty other students. I enjoyed watching the woman speak for five hours. She was able to keep the group enthralled with stories she had no doubt told for decades. Her approach was simple and somewhat "grandmotherly." She was kind and direct. I was in love. (Not to mention that watching her do back-of-the-room sales was inspiring!)

I didn't get what I came for, though. I hadn't really learned anything "new." But I was in love. I approached her after everyone had left the class and her grandson had finished packing the few books and videotapes that hadn't been snatched up by the audience.

"Dottie, I'm Kevin Hogan. I want you to know you have been an inspiration in my career."

"Thank you, Kevin."

She looked up into my eyes. She was tired. I've been here before. The last person wants to keep you forever. You (I) have been on stage for six hours and you want to find the bed in the hotel and fall flat on your face and have them wake you in fifteen hours for breakfast.

"Dottie, I want you to have this." (I hand her my book *The Psychology of Persuasion*.)

"Thank you, Dear."

O.K., Kevin, her brain is fading. Either ask or get the hell out of here. She

has a date with a hotel pillow and you are being as charming as a bottle of mental Drano.

“Dottie, I have one question for you. I have been doing about \$1,500 per speech for the last couple of years. It doesn’t change. They don’t offer more than \$2,000. What do you suggest? You tell me, I’ll do it. Anything. What is going to take me to the next (\$5,000+) level?”

“Have you asked, Kevin?”

“Pardon me?”

“Have you asked for \$5,000?”

“Well, not really. I mean . . . no . . . you know, I haven’t.”

She put her hand on my arm and patted me like I was a little child.

“Well, Honey, just ask.” She looked at my book and smiled. “Just ask.”

“Thanks, Dottie, I will.”

As I walked out of the door on that brisk Minneapolis afternoon, I wondered just how stupid I must have looked. Successful author towers over sweet woman asking the dumbest question on the face of the earth. Thank God no one would ever know about this moment.

Fast forward one month.

Early Winter 1998

I have a sore throat and a terrible cold. My nose is stuffier than it ever has been. I feel terrible. CNBC is on in the background. The market is not doing well and I’m not making money today.

(Ring)

“Who could that be?” I talk to CNBC when no one else is around.

“Kevin Hogan, can I help you?” (It didn’t sound like that . . . but maybe they bought it on the other end.”

“Is this Dr. Hogan?”

“Yes it is.” (Dr. Hogan has actually left the building for dead. This is his associate who has not yet succumbed to the flu.)

“Oh, you sound terrible. This is Richard Marks (not his real name) with the Sales Association (not their real name either).”

“How can I help you?”

“Well, we were at your web site and are looking for a speaker for our winter meeting in Minneapolis. What are you charging nowadays.”

Here it is, Kevin. You spent the last month finishing Talk Your Way to

the Top. It's over. The book is at Pelican Publishing Company. What are you going to tell this guy? Your voice sounds like hell. You've just yelled at CNBC. You . . . just ask, Honey. Just ask.

"Five thousand dollars is my fee, but I'd sure like to know more about your group and what you are looking for."

Richard tells me about his group, tells me they want me to talk about "body language," and asks if I will settle for \$4,000, which is what his budget is approved for.

What's the difference between 4K and 5K anyway? You're working for ONE HOUR, Kevin? You moron. It's an hour drive and you are working for an hour. Just ask, Honey . . . just ask.

"No, My fee is \$5,000, and I think I can give you exactly what you are looking for. An hour of massive entertainment combined with an hour of data, all happening simultaneously."

"I'll have to check for approval on \$5,000. I'll call you back. Thanks, Kevin, we'll talk soon."

I thought to myself, "*You stupid moron.*" (CNBC was running a commercial with Ringo Starr in it . . . I could use a little help from my friends . . . Ringo . . .) "*What the heck are you thinking? Guaranteed \$4,000. Been paid that once for a full day, never for an hour, and you say \$5,000. Idiot. Idiot.*"

Sue Herrera talks with Ron Insana about how the market is taking a hit today and I'm feeling like a bigger idiot by the micro-second. The phone doesn't ring for the rest of the day.

Fast forward to next day.

(Ring)

"Kevin Hogan."

"That really you?"

"Who's this?"

"Richard Marks."

"Hi, Richard, good to hear your voice." (*I'll take the \$4,000. Just offer it again now and I'm yours.*)

"Kevin, we got the \$5,000 approved and would like you to . . . blah blah blah . . . (*Get out of here. DOTTIE, I LOVE YOU . . . just ask, Honey . . . I never doubted you, Dottie, I swear to . . . just ask . . . and I wrote The Psychology of Persuasion. I mean, how long does it take to realize*

that you are unable to follow your own advice? Just ask, Honey. DOTTIE, YOU ARE THE GREATEST!)

“How does that sound, Kevin?”

“Yes, absolutely. Let’s run through the details again. My head is foggy from this flu.”

Deal closed. Check received in six business days. That was the last time I doubted that still, small sweet voice in my head. Dottie is with me always.

Have you ever suffered from low self-esteem? We all do. I tell you this story because every time I think of it I remember that I’m worth an enormous amount to people, to society, to myself. I also think of my childhood because it reminds me that no matter how tough things get, they aren’t going to be that bad ever again.

*When you sell, **you** determine your outcomes.*

Whether you are ten years old or seventy years old, you are going to determine your own fate in selling. You are a free agent and can choose to sell almost any product or service you want. Once you have the product or service picked out that you want to sell remember this fact:

People don’t buy your product; they buy you.

You must represent a great product or service. What you sell is critical to your self-image and your self-esteem. It needs to be the best, and if it isn’t, dump it and go get on the team that is the best. Every product has problems. Every service has its weaknesses. My question is, did you pick the best of the group? If not, go sign up with the best. Because once you do, the rest of the story is about YOU!

Selling is an inside job. It all takes place inside people’s minds. Selling is a simple science that encompasses beliefs, values, attitudes, lifestyles, emotions, feelings, and psychological shifts. Selling is the most wonderful profession on earth because it gives you what you want:

- ✓ Freedom
- ✓ Security
- ✓ Productivity
- ✓ Independence
- ✓ Sense of Accomplishment

No longer are you a slave to anyone. You are your own boss and you are the master of your life. You'll never work forty hours again. You'll work fifty or sixty because they are for YOU and the people you love. Selling is the solution to the destructive "dollars per hour" mentality that exists everywhere. You'll never get paid an hourly wage again. You'll be "unemployed" every day for the rest of your life and you will never feel more in charge of your own life!

Dr. Horton (WH) and I (KH) will take you on a journey through your mind and the mind of the people you are selling to in this book. You will be given all of the tools you need to earn a six- or seven-figure income. If you're really ready to run your own life and learn the new science of selling, please continue reading!