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THE SALES EXPERT
MARV MILETSKY

THE PURCHASING AGENT
JAMES A. CALLANDER



**PERSPECTIVES™ ON
INCREASING
SALES**

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MARVIN N. MILETSKY**

**THE PURCHASING AGENT
JAMES A. CALLANDER**



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Increasing Sales
Marvin N. Miletsky and
James A. Callander**

**Publisher and General
Manager, Course Technology**
PTR: Stacy L. Hiquet

**Associate Director of
Marketing:** Sarah Panella

**Manager of Editorial
Services:** Heather Talbot

Marketing Manager:
Mark Hughes

Acquisitions Editor:
Mitzi Koontz

Series Editor: Jason I. Miletsky

Project Editor: Kate Shoup

**Editorial Services
Coordinator:** Jen Blaney

Copy Editor: Kate Shoup

Interior Layout:
Shawn Morningstar

Cover Designer:
Mike Tanamachi

Indexer: Sharon Shock

Proofreader: Gene Redding

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*This book is dedicated to both Donna and Jason,
without whose support and encouragement it would not
have come to life. When I hit the wall and thought
this endeavor would never be successfully completed,
they were the ones who believed in me most,
picked me up, and gave me the strength to continue.*

—MARVIN MILETSKY

*Dedicated to my loving wife Ruby,
who has seen me through all the challenges
in our life, especially writing this book.
Without her support, encouragement, and guidance
I'm afraid I could not have finished this endeavor.*

—JAMES CALLANDER

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My mentor, Alan Rubin, taught me the lessons of hard work, dedication, and commitment very early in my career. I was a young purchasing agent at an electrical contractor when this role model pushed me unselfishly in this right direction. My sincere thanks to Alan, who still checks up on me to this day.

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—MARVIN MILETSKY

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—JAMES CALLANDER

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



A sales veteran and manager with more than 30 years of experience in the electrical industry, **Marvin N. Miletsky** has been responsible for landing and negotiating millions of dollars' worth of new and continued contracts. Miletsky's visionary approach to new-business development has helped him amass an expansive client network built from some of the largest and most influential decision-makers in his industry. A nationally recognized expert, Miletsky has been a featured speaker at both conferences and universities on topics including techniques for increasing sales and maintaining profitable relationships. In the 1990s, he was a two-term president of one of the industry's oldest and most respected regional trade associations, spearheading the development of a buyer/seller networking system that continues to flourish. Miletsky has been an active member of the advisory council for New Jersey Institute of Technology and a mentor for graduating students seeking to establish themselves in a variety of sales roles. In *Perspectives on Increasing Sales*, Miletsky shares his time-tested new-business techniques with both seasoned and emerging sales professionals. He is also the author of some of the industry's most creative expense reports (but regrettably has left these out of the book).



James Callander is purchasing manager for L.K. Comstock, an electrical contractor that designs and installs electrical systems primarily for the railroad and rail-transit industries. Mr. Callander has almost 30 years of account-management, sales, and purchasing experience. As someone who has experienced sales from both the sales and purchasing point of view, Mr. Callander is uniquely qualified to provide insight into the sales practices that ensure optimal performance. His sales experience includes direct sales for GE Supply, as well as indirect sales for Panduit Corporation. His purchasing experience ranges from on-site project purchasing to the corporate level. Raised and educated in Ohio, he now lives with his wife and two sons in Atlanta, GA.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	xiii
Opening Remarks	xv
Part One	
Getting Down to Basics	1
1 What Defines a Good Salesperson?	2
2 How Much Does Personal Appearance Matter?	5
3 Should You Dress the Same as Your Customer—i.e., Formal? Casual?	7
4 Is There Such a Thing as 9 to 5? Do Vacations Really Exist?	10
5 How Important Is It for Salespeople to Really Believe in the Product or Service They Are Selling?	13
6 What Is the Importance of Learning the Product You Are Going to Sell?	16
7 True or False: There's No Such Thing as a Stupid Question.	19
8 How Important Is It to Joke Around and Have a Sense of Humor When Engaging a Client?	22
9 Which Is a More Powerful Sales Tool: Confidence or Humility? Is Enthusiasm Important?	24
10 Should Salespeople Be Themselves or Reflect the Personality of the Customer?	27
11 How Important Is Having a College Education to Being a Successful Salesperson?	29
12 Can a Person Trained in One Area Be Successful in Sales; For Example, Can a Construction Worker Sell Construction Supplies?	31

13	Is Persistence Necessary or Annoying?	34
14	Is It Okay to Stretch the Truth to Win an Account?	36
15	Should Salespeople Sell or Solve Problems?	39
16	Does It Matter If the Salesperson Is Not the Most Polished Speaker or Eloquent Writer?	43
17	How Much Does Brand Matter in Making a Sale?	46
18	Does Becoming a Speaker or Author in Your Industry Improve Your Ability to Sell?	49
19	What Is Customer Service and Does It Matter?	52

Part Two

Developing Prospects and Making Contacts 55

20	What Kinds of Results Do You Expect from Your Sales Call?	56
21	How Important Is It for You to Understand a Customer's Business?	59
22	Should Like Title Call on Like Title?	62
23	Are Personal Referrals the Best Way to Achieve Sales?	64
24	Does Cold-Calling, Either over the Phone or in Person, Work?	67
25	Should You Show Up Without an Appointment?	72
26	When Is Breaking an Appointment Okay?	75
27	What Is the Value of Attending Trade Shows?	77
28	Are Trade Associations a Good Way to Meet People?	82
29	How Do You Make the Most Out of a Product Demonstration Meeting?	85
30	How Much Time Should You Allow for a Meeting and How Long Should It Take?	89
31	How Should You Identify the Actual Decision Maker and All Players Within the Company?	94
32	How Important Is It to Remember Names?	97
33	When Do You Bring Technical Support with You?	99
34	How Do You Approach Multiple Contacts in the Same Company?	102

35	Can You Ask a Prospect Whom They Compete With?	105
36	Can You Identify to Whom Your Customer Is Providing Materials, and Is It Right to Target His Internal Customer?	108
37	Is Your Prospect a One-Time Deal? How Do You Treat Them?	111
38	Does Promotional Material Have an Influence?	113
39	Do Samples Help Open Doors?	116
40	Should Dirty Laundry Be Discussed About Your Company?	120
41	Are There People You Are Just Not Going to Do Business With?	123
42	How Does Multimedia Help to Develop New Prospects?	126
43	Can You and Should You Take Advantage of an Untrained Buyer?	130
44	Are Consumer Rebate Programs Valuable in Moving Merchandise?	132
45	How Should You Handle Rejection?	136

Part Three

Pitching, Negotiating, and Landing the Account 139

46	Is There Really Such a Thing as a Free Lunch? Does the Salesperson Really Ever Give Anything Away?	140
47	Are Sales Decisions Based More on the Price, Brand, Quality, or Salesperson?	143
48	Is the Promise of Future Work Enough to Make Up for Lowering Prices at the Outset of the Relationship?	147
49	What Can You Offer Your Customer That Will Be Seen as a Benefit in Their Eyes?	150
50	What Are the Most Important Things a Salesperson Can Do to Gain Trust?	153
51	How Important Is a Factory Visit by the Client?	156
52	Should You Bring Your Manager/VP in on a Sales Call?	160
53	Is a Direct Approach of Asking for the Order Okay?	163
54	What Is the Importance of Having the Power and Authority to Make a Final Deal?	166
55	Regardless of Legality, Do Kickbacks or Expensive Gifts Play an Important Role in Landing a New Contact?	168

56	The Client Is Willing to Pay for Products or Services the Salesperson Knows They Don't Really Need. Should the Salesperson Alert Them?	170
57	The Client Is in a Bind and Needs a Product or Service in an Emergency. Should the Price Go Up?	173
58	How Effective Are Scare Tactics in Sales? ("You'll Lose Money If You Don't..." "Your Business Could Be in Danger Unless You...")	176
59	You Aren't Getting Anywhere with the Person You're Trying to Sell To. Should You Seek a Higher Authority?	179
60	Is There a Time When You Let an Order Go to a Competitor or Even Suggest That It Does?	182
61	Can a Pitch or Presentation Be Cookie-Cutter? Or Does It Need to Be Completely Customized for Each Prospect?	185
62	Can a Salesperson Recover from a Bad Presentation?	187
63	How Important Is Determining When the Buyer Requires the Quotation?	192
64	How Important Is Determining When the Buyer Requires the Material?	195
65	Should You Ever Lose an Order Because of Delivery?	197
66	Should "Fine Print" in Your Quotation Be Divulged?	200
67	How Important Is It That You Understand the Buyer's Requisition?	203
68	When Is a Verbal Agreement Okay?	206
69	Must You Know Your Competitor's Weaknesses and Strengths?	209
70	At What Point Do You Just Walk Away?	213
71	The Client Has Called the Salesperson's Bluff. Can the Salesperson Still Backtrack and Save Face?	217

Part Four

Managing the Relationship **221**

72	Should Work Ever Get Started Before the Contract Is Signed?	222
73	The Contract Is Signed. How Often Should the Salesperson Stay in Touch?	225

74	Should the Salesperson Be Present at Project Meetings?	228
75	Are Web Meetings Acceptable? Or Is Face-to-Face the Best Way?	231
76	Can the Client and Salesperson Ever Really Be Friends? Or Will the Salesperson Always Look for the Up-Sell Opportunity and the Client Always Be Skeptical?	234
77	How Much of the Salesperson's Personal Life Can Be Shared Without Turning Off the Buyer?	236
78	How Important Is Loyalty?	239
79	Can You Work Together in Spite of a Personality Conflict?	242
80	Is It Important to Work with Your Customer to Develop a New Product for Him?	244
81	The Seller Helped the Buyer During Lean Times (or Vice Versa). What, If Anything, Is Owed?	247
82	When the Product Doesn't Work or the Service Is Poor, Does Responsibility Fall on the Salesperson's Shoulders? Or Can He or She Pass the Buck?	250
83	There Was a Mistake in Pricing. Can the Salesperson Ask for an Increase?	253
84	Can the Damage Done after a Failed Order Ever Be Repaired? How?	256
85	The Thank You after the Receipt of the Order—Is It Important?	259
86	How Do You Maintain Your Position When There Is No Business to Be Done?	261
87	Should You Expect to Know Why You Lost an Order and to Whom?	264
88	How Can You Tell If You Are Spreading Yourself Too Thin?	267
89	How Do You Avoid Overcommitting and Underachieving?	272
90	Do You Sell from the Top Down or Start at the Bottom and Work Your Way Up?	275
91	How Does Customer Service Affect the Sales Effort? Are the Two Dependent on Each Other?	278
92	How Important Is It to Look for Ways to Improve Each Year?	283
93	Is the Customer Always Right?	286

Part Five	
Just for Fun	289
94 What Was Your Worst-Ever Order?	290
95 Have You Ever Really Gotten into a Salesperson's or Client's Face?	293
96 Who Was Your Most Memorable Character You've Ever Had to Work With?	296
97 What Sage Advice Would You Pass On to Others Looking to Build a Career in Sales?	299
Closing Remarks	303
Index	305

Walk down the aisles of any bookstore or library and you're bound to see plenty of books written by two or more authors. But sit down and read through it, and it's doubtful you'll be able to tell which author has contributed which information. They've collaborated, shared notes, and have ultimately written the book from a single voice.

But is that the best way to learn about a given topic? Sure, the authors are usually recognized experts in their field and can draw from some unique experiences and insights, but each book only takes into consideration a single viewpoint—one perspective that the reader is supposed to accept as true. That might make for an interesting read, but it only tells half the story. The importance, value, and methodology of sales, for example, may look dramatically different when seen through the eyes of a representative of a sales professional than through the eyes of a purchasing agent or consumer. Each may be seasoned when it comes to the buying and selling, but their approach—and even their fundamental beliefs—could be quite opposite, simply because they work on different sides of the fence.

That's what makes the books in the *Perspectives* series so different from any other books on the shelves. Each offers a true 360-degree learning experience that gives you the opportunity to learn by providing two distinct and often opposing viewpoints. It's a rare chance to get both sides of the story so that you, the reader, can get a more complete understanding of the given topic.

In order to make a series like this work, though, the authors for each book need the freedom to write in their own voice and provide their own opinion, even at the risk of conflicting with their co-author. Therefore, it's important to note that **the authors of this book have not collaborated on their work during the course of their writing.** In fact, neither author will even have a chance to read their co-author's submissions until after the book has been completed. This is what makes *Perspectives* books such a unique concept, and a true opportunity to get both sides of the story.

In *Perspectives on Increasing Sales*, Marvin Miletsky represents the sales perspective, while James A. Callander speaks on behalf of the customer. Through a total of 97 questions divided into five distinct parts, Marvin and James give their expert opinions on important topics including the basic foundations of sales, developing prospects and contacts, pitching,

negotiation, and managing the salesperson/customer relationship. Part how-to book, part philosophical debate, *Perspectives on Increasing Sales* covers all the topics that anyone involved in sales would need in order to vastly improve their knowledgebase and skill set.

We hope you have as much fun reading *Perspectives on Increasing Sales* as we had working on it. Sometimes the authors whole-heartedly agreed with each other. In other instances, they couldn't have been more different. There's no question, however, that it's eye-opening to see the different perspective each author provided. But the perspectives don't end in this book. We want to hear your point of view, as well. Visit the blog site for this book at PerspectivesOnSales.com to comment on select content, read questions and answers that don't appear in this book, and let us know whose perspective you agree with more.

OPENING REMARKS

MARVIN MILETSKY

It started innocently enough: I was on my summer vacation and realized that I was in need of direction, of some motivation, something to keep my brain challenged and satisfy my thirst for being in the game. My entrepreneurial juices were flowing as I tried to envision a business enterprise that would reward me with the wealth I sought in return for my dedication. I considered what business to open and the best site for its placement. And then, as if by divine intervention, it came to me: a lemonade stand, right in front of my house. I was five years old and I was on my way.

I had it all worked out: The commute was manageable, the raw materials plentiful and cheap (actually, they were free, provided by my family). But it wasn't as easy as I thought it would be. I gave free samples to my friends—only to discover that my sample quenched their thirst, meaning that they didn't need to buy any actual product. The sun's heat warmed my thirst quencher to a point that it was undrinkable and had to be thrown out. I paid a playmate a dime (in advance) to watch the store while I went inside; when I returned, he was gone—and so was all my stock. The worst blow of all came when a kindly officer told me I would have to move to another location as I was blocking the sidewalk.

The products and services have sure changed since those days, and so have the people. And the simplicity of setting up shop without any care or planning has long ago disappeared. Plus, there are threats to a business from angles not even invented when I was hawking my lemonade. But my passion for making the sale, for positioning myself properly, for networking has never waned. In fact, it's more like the story of the hungry lion: The more success I had, the more I wanted.

In writing this book from the sales point of view, I hope to share with you various techniques I've used over the years that have helped in developing leads that eventually turned into negotiations, which led to the ultimate reward: the sale! Along the way, you'll find advice on the importance of relationship-building and the establishment of trust between you and your prospects and clients.

Whether you're at the beginning of your career or just looking to brush up, you should find some interesting advice to sharpen your approach and keep you in the hunt. Happy sales to you!

JAMES CALLANDER

I was drawn to this project by the perspectives concept. There are always at least two sides to any situation, and selling is no exception. A salesperson who can see things from his or her customer's point of view is more likely to be successful. Your goal must go beyond beating out the competition; you must make it your mission to establish yourself as the person your customer relies on—again and again.

As a salesperson, you should never see yourself as being in a competition with your customer. Taking a predatory or adversarial position with your customer is not productive. Your efforts should be aimed at becoming a valued asset to your customer. In helping facilitate your customer's business, you will be increasing your own. In order to be of help to the customer, you must first gain an understanding of the sales process from your customer's point of view. If your customer is successful, you will be successful.

I hope you will view this book as being like a trip to the grocery store. When you go grocery shopping, you don't put everything you find on the shelves into your cart. You pick and choose the items that suit you. I have tried to take a broad view and write for salespeople in a broad range of businesses and at various stages of their career. Take what you find helpful now. You can always come back and re-examine the answers as your career evolves.

This book is one I wish had been available when I was starting out my career in sales. Now that I am on the other side of the desk, I wish more of the salespeople who call on me would put into practice the ideas we have covered here. The answers in this book were hard-won, and I hope you will benefit from them and maybe avoid some of the mistakes we made.

Ultimately, only you can decide what kind of salesperson you want to be. I hope this book will arm you with the knowledge you need to put that decision into practice. Whether you are just getting started or have been in sales for years, there is always more to be learned and new perspectives from which to view things.

A SPECIAL NOTE FROM SERIES EDITOR, JASON MILETSKY

Since about a week after graduating from Brandeis University in 1994, I've owned my own marketing and advertising agency. I started small, working out of my bedroom for the first few months before upgrading to a one-person office in one of those buildings where 30 or so sole proprietorships share a pool of receptionists and half a dozen conference rooms.

Those weren't easy years. I didn't know much about advertising (I was an Economics major) other than that I had always loved watching television commercials. And I knew even less about computers and graphic design at a time when the industry was shifting from drafting boards to the PC. But I had a daily routine: Get to the office by 8:00 a.m., call every number in the *Yellow Pages* to try to drum up any business I could, head out the door by 4:00 p.m. to wait tables so I could generate some cash until about midnight, head back to the office to teach myself Photoshop and Quark until about 3:00 a.m., and then back home for a few hours of sleep before doing it all again.

That went on for a long time. And all the while, I was selling. During the day, I cold-called anyone and everyone, looking for opportunities to get my foot in the door with any small project a company needed. At night, during my restaurant shifts, I'd let every customer I served know that I was trying to get my own company off the ground. Believe me, I played every card I could; I milked the "ambitious young guy struggling to start his own company" thing for as long as I could. When I finally persuaded someone to let me come in and make a presentation, I had to come up with sound rationale as to why they should let a kid just out of college (who had never even taken a marketing class) with no portfolio and no case studies handle the design of their business cards, much less any portion of the marketing efforts.

It was a pretty slow and arduous process, but I loved every minute of it. Selling was such a rush—I loved the challenge of it! I mean, what could be a bigger mountain to climb than starting with so much of the deck stacked against me and having to figure out a way to succeed? By nature, I believe that overcoming challenges is part of a salesperson's DNA—and the bigger the challenge, the better!

So I kept on selling, and apparently I was pretty good at it. As the years passed, my company started to grow, and I found myself taking up more than my share of the spotlight—at least among family and friends. I had published a few books on how to use Photoshop (all those late-night, self-help lessons paid off), was named by *NJBIZ* magazine as one of the "Top 40 Under 40" business people in New Jersey, and even found myself on the cover of *Entrepreneur* magazine one month. The sales efforts I made had, to a large extent, paid off.

Today, my agency, PFS Marketwyse, is consistently listed as one of the leading agencies in New Jersey, with clients including Hershey's, JVC, SecureHorizons, and others. Like any company, we've had some missteps and struggles along the way, but we've seen phenomenal growth and there's a lot for me to be proud of—especially the approach I've taken to sales and my efforts to bring in new business.

But what sometimes gets lost in all of that is how much of the credit I *don't* deserve. I didn't just wake up one day and discover that I was a good salesman; I grew up learning from an amazing teacher. My dad is without question one of the best salespeople I've ever known. He always has a story about something different he did to get a prospect's attention—a method he took to get an order that most others wouldn't have ever thought of. Most often, these involved something funny, witty—something that maybe even ran the risk of making a prospect or current customer stop dead in their tracks and say, "Are you nuts?"

My dad always finds a way to make it work. He knows when to play hardball in negotiations, when to back off and give a little, and how to get the most out of every sale. I remember going to his office, both as a little kid off from school for a day and as a college student working for his company during winter breaks, and seeing how well-respected he was. The owner of the company, other salespeople, engineers, the guys in the warehouse—hell, even the dude who worked in the sandwich truck parked outside every morning constantly told me what a great guy my dad is. I don't know if I've ever told him this, but it always made me feel proud of him.

Even more importantly, though, was the way he kept everything in perspective and had his priorities in order. Sure, he paid a lot of attention to his job. I often saw him at the kitchen table, working on orders at night after dinner, and business trips sometimes kept him away from home for a few days every month. But I don't remember any nights (other than when he was away on business, of course) when I was very little that he didn't read with me before I went to sleep or sit and play a board game with me when I got a little older. I don't think he ever missed one of my little-league games (it didn't seem to matter that I wasn't very good), high-school track meets, or college rugby matches. He found the right balance. In a profession that has been known to totally consume people and claim their identity, my dad never let it take him away from what was really important.

So much of my own success has come from lessons I've learned watching my dad. In fact, many of my early clients were through connections my dad made for me or companies he convinced to give me a try. Even his own company was an early client of mine. All these years later, my dad still tries to sell for me.

He frequently calls me after business trips to say he talked me up with someone on an airplane who might need some marketing and that I should give the guy a call. Always selling, and always looking out for me.

When I developed the concept for the *Perspectives* series and decided that *Perspectives on Increasing Sales* would be among the first four titles, there was only one person I could think of to write the Sales Expert perspective. It's always been tough for me to say "thank you," to let my dad know that I'm proud of him, and to tell him how much respect I have for him as a salesman and as a father. Hopefully, giving him the chance to share his experiences in this book says it all.

Getting this series launched has been a rough and wild ride, and one of the best parts about it was getting the chance to work with my dad on this title. Great job, Pop! I'm proud of you.

I would of course be remiss if I failed to thank James Callander for being part of this book. His experiences as a purchasing agent (and as a salesperson) have been remarkable, and I believe the contributions he's made to this book will help give truly valuable insight to every reader. Many people don't realize it, but writing a book can be an extraordinarily difficult, time-consuming, and sometimes thankless process, and I appreciate James's commitment to turning in some excellent work in representing the Purchasing Agent perspective.