
FORWARD

I read “Sales Strategy From The Inside Out” and enjoyed it. Then I went back to highlight key parts. When I was done, I realized that I had highlighted the whole book.

At Sundyne Corp. we sell pumps, compressors and other products to the industrial market. Ninety percent of our sales efforts are “complex,” meaning that our field salespeople must call on multiple decision makers at different buying levels at a prospective account. Sometimes the decision makers even work for different organizations, since large companies outsource some of their engineering work to consultants, and we call on the consulting company as well as the end user.

The reason I got so busy with the highlighter is that Duane Sparks has packed his new book with rich insights into the kind of selling we do. Sundyne already uses the *Action Selling* system that works so well for Carrie, Ron, and Darrel, the sellers who speak in these pages. It works extremely well for us, too. But even though I know the system, many insights were fresh to me, or struck with new force.

Perhaps the most fundamental one is this: Regardless of the complexity of the situation, or which decision maker we’re dealing with, the sales process is the same. We can use the same 9 Acts with an engineer or a CEO. Talk about a useful strategic roadmap!

Readers familiar with *Action Selling* will know what I mean by “9 Acts.” (Those who don’t are about to have their eyes opened.) This brings up another point I highlighted: Language matters.

Before Sundyne adopted *Action Selling*, our greatest difficulties in planning effective sales calls came from communication challenges. Now we have a common language to speak with our sales force and channel partners. We used to focus on presenting product features. Now we are focused on “Commitment Objective” and “Asking the Best Questions.” In product knowledge training we now emphasize the needs that the product satisfies and what questions to ask to uncover those needs. We break it down by types of decision makers, so we develop questions that we will ask to decision makers with different levels of authority.

Then there’s the concept that selling must be a team sport. If you want to drive sales results regardless of the economic environment, then management—not just salespeople—must be educated on *Action Selling* and able to speak the language. I love the peer-to-peer phone calls made in this book. In the future, I’m going to have our VP call the VP of prospective companies just to provide assurance that we are very aware of their needs and that we have our best people working on the project.

Several Sundyne salespeople have said that *Action Selling* changed their lives. This is a book that could change yours.

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