Shut Up and Talk!™ Series

Make IT a Big Deal

Diana Ball Cooksey

Make IT a Big Deal

Reader Comments

"They say to change something, you first have to change the way you see it. That is what *Make IT a Big Deal* has done for me. I'm better equipped to understand what the customer wants and what it means for them to achieve it. I would buy from someone who understands what *IT* is—it's a very soulful and genuine approach to sales. I will be reaching for this book often and have already recommended it to others who want to succeed. I now want to add 'Champion of the heart' to my business cards!"

—Jaimie Gonzales, *Professional Salesperson*

"This book can change your life! This author has given the reader new and fresh insights into sales principles as well as personal relationships. I recommend that you . . . buy IT, read IT, and use *IT*. You will be glad you did!"

—Ben Walser, *Director,*
Anna's Egg International Missions

"Awesome, awesome book! As good as I know I am at sales, I needed to read this book. It truly takes me to the highest level of selling and of life. Because I see my job as a matter of life and death, this book breathes life into all that I do."

—Kirk Wilder, *President, FitStop Corporation*

"WOW!! This book hit me like a ton of bricks. It made me realize that life and sales are all about the heart and I learned ways to dig deeper inside myself and my customers to find out what truly matters."

–Melissa Irizarry, *Professional Salesperson*

"I just want to say 'Thank you!' for writing this book. When I started reading it, I couldn't put it down . . . and can't wait to read it again because it has already helped me so much."

–Marcy Rutherford, *Professional Salesperson*

"I loved the book. I just wish I had found *IT* years ago. I gave copies to my family and friends because the book's simple message is useful in life, love and work."

–Kathryn Forney Sargent, *President, Forney Sargent, Inc.*

"Thanks for helping me realize that making *IT* a big deal—really is a big deal! I have been selling from the heart for a long time and believing that I would always be just an ordinary salesperson because I cared about my customers. But you have changed all that for me! I now realize that I am an extraordinary salesperson—a Champion! Can't wait to read the next book in your series *Shut Up and Talk!*"

–Monique Tinsley, *Professional Salesperson*

"This book is easy to pick up but hard to put down—so provoking and motivating! It showed me just how much of a difference I can make in the lives of not only my customers, but in my relationships with others in my life. I will read this book again many times throughout my life, but I want your next one the minute it is available!"

–Nancy Scott, *V.P. Sales and Marketing, Antares Homes*

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Make IT a Big Deal

A Simple Strategy for Increasing Sales in Less Time

Diana Ball Cooksey

Third Chapter Press
3411 Preston Rd., STE C13-182
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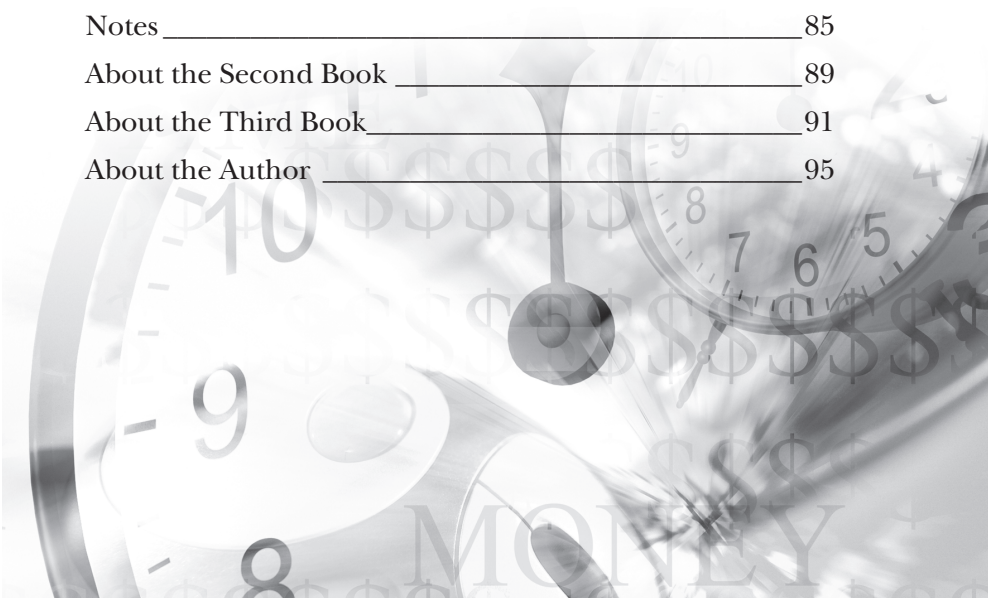
Dedication

To Brad and Carly

Table of Contents

Foreword ____ ix
Acknowledgments ____ xi
About the Series ____ xiii
Preface ____ xv
Introduction ____ xvii
One: ***IT*** ____ 1
Two: The Easy Answer to More Sales ____ 7
Three: ***IT*** Is Not About You ____ 13
Four: Sell What People Buy ____ 19
Five: ***IT*** Defined ____ 25
Six: Where ***IT*** Occurs ____ 31
Seven: The Many Facets of ***IT*** ____ 41
Eight: Get in Step with ***IT*** ____ 47
Nine: ***IT*** Is a Very Big Deal, Indeed ____ 55
Ten: Faith Comes through Doing ____ 71
Eleven: Words Matter ____ 75
Notes ____ 85
About the Second Book ____ 89
About the Third Book ____ 91
About the Author ____ 95



Foreword

The insights and coaching presented in *Make IT a Big Deal* provide the very DNA required to fundamentally alter the relationships between those who sell and those who buy products in any industry.

IT will beguile you with both simple and profound concepts and wisdom on human relations and communication, confront you and encourage you, and, if you choose, *IT* will alter your life in relationship with others, both professionally and personally. You will talk about this book, and undoubtedly recommend it to others. If you can, you will make Diana's teaching an ongoing part of the way you sell your products, manage your business and relationships, and live your life. I invite you to discover *IT*, which lies within.

I've believed for most of my adult life that God in his benevolence is looking over our shoulders, even if His hands are not apparent on the steering wheel of life. I can cite ample proof of this over the course of my own existence—including that introduction to Diana Ball Cooksey more than a dozen years ago by a gentleman who worked for me. I quickly saw that Diana clearly and deeply grasped the nature of selling and the scope of emotional impact on buyers. This awareness, coupled with her true passion for and expertise in facilitating honest and intimate communication between people, has proven an asset that is both loved and lauded by those fortunate enough to be her clients.

Her years of great work, her own personal development, and now her indefatigable commitment to getting the message out through this series of books have resulted in a truly lasting impact on those interested in continuous improvement, not only in business, but in life, as well.

J Mason
Chief Operating Officer
Antares Homes, LTD

Acknowledgments

I cannot possibly acknowledge everyone who has helped me over the past three years to arrive at the place in my life when I finally put my work into words, so I will begin with an apology and a very grateful thank you to those whose names aren't listed.

I am grateful to the countless salespeople and clients over the past thirty years who have demonstrated through their own effort that it is possible to achieve more powerful results in work and at home using the material I teach. Thank you for your desire to become Champions in life that allowed me to learn from you.

I want to thank my very dear friends, Bill Hampton, Dana Toney Hamman, Elisa Hammond, Kandice Jinright, Hunter Dehn, and Kirk Wilder, for coaching me through my fear of writing. Without them this work would not have happened.

I want to thank Kathryn Forney Sargent, Patrick Dempsey, and my parents for undergirding the project with their support and my sister and administrative assistant, Sarah Battle for always making me look more organized than I am.

A big thank you to Chris who provided support, friendship, and many wonderful times away from my daily routine. You have a special way of making life an exciting adventure.

Finally, I want to thank my children, Brad and Carly, for living out what I teach. You have been my greatest teachers and make me look much smarter than I am as a parent.

About the Series

The Shut Up and Talk!™ series was written to help the reader learn *how* to break two bad habits in communication. Until we learn *how* to listen and *how* to talk about the right things, we simply don't. What are the *right things* to talk about? The only thing to talk about is *IT*, and *IT* isn't you, your product or service, features, benefits, or advantages. And the best way to discover *IT* is by listening to the answers to the right questions.

In this multi-book series Diana Ball Cooksey shares what she has learned in working with, listening to, and coaching some of the most dynamic professionals in the sales arena. Her passion is to help people learn the information that will help them achieve powerful results at work and at home.

There are currently three books in the *Shut Up and Talk!* series.

In the first book, *Make IT a Big Deal,* she addresses *IT*, the buyer's motivation about doing something different in his life. In this book the reader will learn a simple strategy for increasing sales in less time—and much more.

In the second book, *What a Difference IT Makes,* the reader will learn how to overcome the obstacles that threaten *IT* and lead his buyer to the goal he had in mind. In this book, Diana Ball Cooksey teaches the reader how to get in step quickly and gain buyer trust through more powerful conversations.

The third book, *IT Is Not Sticks and Bricks,* is the most current and comprehensive handbook on new home sales developed from thirty years experience in the industry.

Preface

My purpose in teaching more sales in less time is two-fold. I *do* want you to learn how to sell more of your product, which will make you more money and is likely the reason you have this book. But, more than that, I want you to experience the benefits of more free time. By learning how to sell more of your product in less time, you are not only gaining money, but also precious, valuable time.

As a commodity, time is of greater value than money. Time affords us choices in life, and anyone who has the choice of where to spend his time is wealthy. Have you ever considered that simply having the time to read a book makes you richer than most people on the planet who must spend most of their day just trying to survive, spending their time getting food, water and shelter for the day? Think about it. Most people don't even have the luxury of time to read a book that could potentially change their lives in a more powerful and positive way. But you do.

So, why am I interested in you gaining *more* free time? It's all about the choices time affords you. People complain most to me about not having the time to do what they really want to do with their lives . . . if they only had *more* time. Would you like to have more money and more time? More choices with what to do with your life?

Reading this book is a first step, but as a teacher, I know that practice is essential if learning is to take place. I want you to practice what you read because simply reading my books won't give you what you need to learn.

The *Shut Up and Talk*!™ series is designed to give you information that will help you achieve more of the positive results you want in less time. The multi-book series follows the format I've used for over twenty years in my four day *Comprehensive Course* and two day *Advanced Course* for professional sales people: Lecture and role play followed by some time for the student to process and then practice the material at work or at home.

When we attempt to learn new skills or change behavior we must be conscious of our actions. I recommend that you spend only 5-7 minutes each day going over the notes from your reading before you begin the busy work at your desk. This will allow you time to consciously choose what you will work on that day. Then, after each encounter where you were able to use the material, spend 59 seconds to document your experience in a notebook or journal.

This discipline of choosing, acting, and documenting results will move you to the next level of your journey. If you will add the date to each note you make, you'll then have a record of your experience as you are working toward an increase of sales in less time.

I can offer to you another recommendation—one that helped me to learn new concepts and techniques. Capture your presentations using a voice activated audio recorder. I was required to record my first 100 presentations after my initial Tom Hopkins' sales training,[1] and it proved invaluable.

I am happy to present my work to you in this first book in the *Shut Up and Talk*!™ series. Because I am always looking for ways to improve my teaching and your learning experience, I welcome your comments or recommendations on the information or format of this book. If you'd like to share your journey, please write to me at Diana@DBCooksey.com, or you may contact me or my company through the website: www.DBCooksey.com.

Introduction

Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.[1]
—James, the Apostle

As you begin to read this book, I would like you to take some time and seriously consider the following questions: What would happen in your life if you thought time was precious and coming to an end? Would you have richer conversations? Would you talk about the news, the weather, or sports; or would you shut up and talk the language of intimacy? If you saw the gift of time as precious, would you be more "present" wherever you happened to be?

Would you let your "Yes" be yes and your "No" be no[2]—start giving your time to people and things that serve your purpose in life and stop giving it to people and things that don't?

Would you look into the eyes of the people you talk to, and would you listen better? Would you be kinder and more generous to others and with yourself?

What would you do differently if you knew you had one week, one month, one year or one decade to live? Would your work be the most important place for you to spend your extra time? Would your focus change from what it is today—the way you spend your time, the way you relate to people?

Would you take more or less risks, be more or less sensitive to others, be more or less politically correct? Would you force yourself to have those "tough" conversations with people you love that you've been avoiding? Would you go to your death with anger, hurt, disappointment, or resentment toward people closest to you, or would you freely forgive them? Even if they

didn't deserve it? Even if they could never repair or re-do whatever they did wrong?

Would you maintain your right to be right, or would you forget who's right so you could embrace the precious moments remaining? If you knew you were dying, would people or things be of more value to you? If you chose to see the world, would you do it alone?

Stephen Covey, in his *7 Habits of Highly Successful People,*[3] suggests an exercise where we fast forward our lives to our funeral. Would we want our customers and our bosses present or would we want our family and closest friends there? It is my greatest hope that I will not be experiencing regrets about what I should have done or what I could have done with my life. I share that hope for you.

Covey's book had a profound impact on my life because he was teaching something foreign to me. He said the most effective people on the planet were people who were focused on the important but not urgent things in life. It meant a lot to me in 1989 as I was achieving great success in work and, at the same time, losing a ten-year marriage to a man who had been my best friend and had not become my enemy.

While I had been giving my best time to making money—something I thought was important—I had become nothing more than a roommate to my husband and nothing more than a mother, in name only, to my son, about five years old at the time. They were both important to me in my heart and in my thoughts, but not with my time. When we are financially successful, it's easy to trade relationships for things that money can buy. When we accumulate things, it's easy for those things to own us. Things have a way of taking on a life of their own, demanding our time, attention, and more money. It can become a vicious cycle. When money becomes the focus of our attention, it's easy to forget the hope we have in the relationships that are important to us.

The end of every month tells the story of our victory or failure. It's called *The Vicious Cycle*. While we are focused on making money to keep the things we have and acquire more things, people who love us leave us. Our children grow up and our parents age, they become strangers and we find ourselves emotionally and oftentimes physically alone.

So what could happen in your life if you had the choice to spend more time with people you love? What would happen in your relationships if you could spend your best time every day with the people who love you?

I was taught that I could only be successful in business if I focused most of my time, energy, and attention on my work. I was taught that if I set money as my goal, was willing to do the work, and gave it enough time, I could attain the money I wanted. I focused on money, gave it my best time, and made more than I expected. Naturally, I believed that strategy to be true. More money means less free time. Believing that lie, the Great Lie, comes at a high cost. The truth is good news, indeed. One doesn't have to sacrifice relationships in order to make more money. One doesn't have to work more in order to sell more.

And, success doesn't have to come at the expense of physical or emotional health, either. I hope that's very good news to you. So, what would happen in your life if you could make more sales in less time? What would you do with more money? More time?

It is important to me that you know that your success doesn't have to cost you time or relationships. My hope is that you will be challenged to be successful in your personal life while maintaining a successful career. My hope is that you will not lose the things that money can never buy. My sincere hope is that you will believe with all your heart that you are dying. (It's true.) You are dying, and your days are numbered. Time is of the essence.

Every moment with people you love and people who love you is precious and should not be wasted. I was taught by the example of my bosses and my peers that I had to work six or seven days a week to reach the company's sales goals. I was taught to put the company first and everything else second. A distant second. That meant my days off weren't sacred. That meant I could come in to work early or stay late, sometimes very late, regardless of what was going on with my family.

Believing that I was doing all that I could and blaming the responsibilities of my job on the position and not my attitude, I became a slave to my purpose in life—making money. I knew nothing more than The Great Lie, and I was caught in The Vicious Cycle.

Growing up on a farm, I watched my parents, along with most of the successful people around me, work the same way—so I didn't give it much thought. When I did think about it, I reasoned that someday I'd be able to cut back. Then I'd play golf and enjoy family vacations. I believed that if you wanted to get ahead and there were things you wanted that only money could buy, you had to work most of the time. Are you living in that same "someday" mentality?

I had earned a position that paid six figures, and I was going to keep it. Even if it killed me. I simply didn't know how to do my life differently, and my ignorance came at a high price, payable with things money can't buy. What's your situation? Believing The Great Lie? Caught in The Vicious Cycle? Or are you on your way to success and simply looking for ways to get there? Whether you are on your way or already there, the purpose of this book is to help you do your life differently than I did mine. If you do, you may have a better chance of keeping those things money can't buy.

The biggest problems in life are related to finances, health, or relationships. We will face these problems whether our focus is on making money or not, but when our focus is primarily on making money, we will have problems with important relationships and, most likely, our health, at some point. Any wealthy

person will tell you that money can't buy good health or quality relationships. Money may change the circumstances of your lifestyle, but it's not magic. It won't guarantee that you will be satisfied or happy. Money won't guarantee a worry-free life, and it won't buy back any time lost with the people who love you. I was 32 years old before I really began to see the possibility of this concept, introduced by Covey. I had to painstakingly learn a new paradigm, a shift in the way I perceived *my perfect life*. On the way, I also learned that I could help salespeople sell more of their product in less time.

And, better still, I learned that the information I teach to sell more in less time will also be of great benefit in building and maintaining healthy relationships. With countless books written on sales, this one isn't offered as a how-to-sell manual. Most people I work with already sell something. Many people I work with are already very successful in their selling. What I will share will help you sell more of your product faster and make higher profits while doing so, thereby giving you the extra time to live your life—hopefully, *your perfect life*.

CHAPTER 1

IT

I was a fraud.

It wasn't my intention to be a fraud. I've always considered myself a professional and I've always wanted to do the right thing, so how did it happen? In just a few years of working with very talented salespeople who expected me to teach them how to make more money, I learned that I didn't know what I was doing. Oh, we got results, and I got the praise, but something was wrong. The things I taught—which were things *I* was taught—sometimes worked and sometimes didn't. And I felt like a fraud.

Have you ever had a similar experience? Have you ever had people trusting you to lead them where they want to go and in your heart you know that you may *or may not* have success?

If I tell you that you will sell more *if* you look successful—like drive an expensive car or wear expensive clothes—*and* what I tell you is true, you won't need to read a book. You just need to go shopping. If I tell you that you will sell more *if* you know your competition as well as they do *and* what I tell you is true, you don't need to ever read another book. You just need to study your competition.

If I tell you that you will sell more *if* you ask more closing questions or demonstrate more features in your presentation *and* what I tell you is true, chances are you will not be very interested in listening to me further. That is if, you are a professional salesperson and you've heard that solution before.

One of my favorite expressions is: *We can't know what we don't*

know that we don't know. I first heard it while attending a seminar about communicating more effectively.[1] Until we learn something we didn't know before, we use what we have learned or we live as I did, doing the best we could with what we had.

Half-truth is not truth. I used to teach what *I* knew to be true—even when I knew it wasn't completely true. I was teaching half-truths as if they were true because that was the best I could offer. Sometimes the way one dressed could be a contributing factor to more sales—but not always. Sometimes knowing the competition best could be a contributing factor—but not always. Sometimes being the best "closer" or having the best presentation could be credited for sales—but not always. And I knew it.

After working with a large sales force with many different personalities, skill levels, attitudes, competencies and as many different buyer personalities in sub-markets, I simply felt like a fraud. I had no idea why one thing worked with one person and not the entire team. Or why something worked one day and not every day. As changes occurred, what I thought were the reasons I had been successful, proved that I didn't really know the truth at all. Scientifically, that meant there was a flaw in my thinking. The things I *believed* made more sales didn't always work. Therefore, what I *believed* wasn't always true. Therefore, what I *believed* wasn't truth. And that was unsettling to me. And the beginning of my journey for truth.

Perception isn't truth.

Do you know the difference between truth and opinion? Truth and theory? Truth and perception? The distinction between opinion, theory, or perception and truth is simple. Truth never fails. Never.

Gravity pulls down, as evidenced by its toll on my sagging body. Given enough heat, water will turn from liquid to gas and never to ice. The sun will be in the east every day at dawn—whether clouds block its view or not. You know what I mean. Truth. Things we can count on. A result that can be guaranteed.

So, here's what I learned:

- Opinion isn't truth
- Given enough time, opinions will fail
- Opinions can't promise success—or peace

IT matters.

When we follow opinion rather than truth, we are playing Russian roulette. We may or may not reach our goal. Following opinion instead of truth is like taking a trip without a map or compass. We may or may not reach our destination and most likely not in the least amount of time.

If what you believe about how you make your sales isn't truth, any change with your market, buyers, or competition may keep you from reaching your goal. At the very least, you'll spend unnecessary time and money trying to get back on track. Not to mention the loss of personal peace.

Truth matters.

If you know the truth and you follow the truth, it won't matter when your market, buyer confidence, or competition changes. When you follow the truth about sales, you'll have a map or compass on your trip.

Know the truth.

You can. In fact, it's been there all along. And it was there every time you made a sale, whether you knew it or not. The good news is that it is very simple to find and to understand. It won't require you to spend more money in order to learn about its power—and increase your sales in less time. Knowing the truth about selling is powerful. And the truth will lead to more sales.

> *Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*[2]
> *—Jesus Christ*

Jesus has always been a controversial personality in history. His words were the catalyst to the powerful transformation of people's lives over 2000 years ago and they still are today. By definition, Jesus was a great salesman. He *influenced* people to take action for something *they* wanted. He helped people to get what their *hearts* hoped for. The way He connected with hearts made him a Champion.

When I first began studying what Jesus taught, I found a correlation to what I was teaching salespeople. As I began to uncover the truth about sales, buried under all the opinions I had read, studied, and practiced, I found a successful path to more sales in less time. Similarly, I began to separate Jesus' words from the religiosity that has managed to bury the very simple truths that lead to a successful life—something we all want. Regardless of your religion, the life principles Jesus taught will work to help you sell more in less time and give you a better possibility for successful relationships in your life. These life principles will work with your boss, co-workers, buyers, and even people at home.

Twenty years of successful outcomes from teaching these principles gave me the courage I needed to write this book—for you.

A good way to study the principles Jesus taught—all of which will work to help you increase more sales in less time—is to read the Gospel of John, found in the New Testament of the Holy Bible. You can find it online and if you don't have a preference, I can recommend the English Standard Version which is written in easy to understand language. If you have a version that highlights Jesus' words in red print, you will be able to read the life principles He spoke without having to read the entire history of His life. In order to be complete, you will also want to read Jesus' spoken words found in the Book of Acts, written by a physician, Luke, another of His disciples.

I've read countless self help and sales books, and I still believe Jesus alone, without religion, teaches the best principles for sales and for life. His body of words—taken to heart—has the power to transform your life, a necessary component to increasing your effectiveness.

Notes

CHAPTER 2

The Easy Answer to More Sales

Find *IT*.

I was forced to find the truth about sales, and my journey took years. What I'm going to share with you in this book has been proven through many of those years of experience. As a sales coach, I've learned that the teaching part is the easy part. Learning, the greater challenge, is up to you, the student.

In order to find the easy answer to more sales, you must first be willing to create the space in your mind to accept something you may not have known you didn't know. You may have to give up something you *believed* to be truth, which may have been nothing more than a perception or opinion. What I'm asking you to do occurs within yourself.

Are you willing to let go and hear the truth about increasing sales?

What you won't have to do:

- Lower the sales price of your product
- Add features to your product

That's not to say you don't need to do one or both of these obvious, possible, yet not guaranteed solutions to more sales in less time. Maybe you do. Maybe you think your "baby" is more precious than the rest of us do, and maybe you don't think your baby is ugly without the added features. And maybe you think denial (de·ni·al) starts with a capital D and is just the name of that very long river in Africa.

Lowering your sales price does not guarantee more sales; neither does adding features to your product. That's the truth. My watch is a good example of this. I didn't buy it because it was the lowest price or because it had the most features. In fact, I paid about a thousand bucks extra for each feature I *didn't* get, compared to my son's super-duper one that has almost every feature imaginable.

Because consumers are divided on what they are willing to pay, the market has determined that the same products can be sold at a low price by some businesses and at a higher price by others. That's just the way it works.

If lowering the price was the easy answer, I'd have no clients who already sell their product at the lowest price. The lowest price salespeople have the same challenges as the ones who sell at the highest price. After all, someone has to be low, someone has to be high because the market is divided on what it wants to own.

Just fix the problem?

Some may say the easy answer to increasing sales is to find out what's wrong and simply fix it. Some people look to the product. Does your company need to improve your product? Maybe. Maybe not. Marketing needs to attract more of your *real* buyers? Maybe so and maybe not.

The quality of a product sometimes becomes a function of price, so simply improving the product isn't the easy answer. And while it does take *warm bodies* to make any sales, having a room full of buyers isn't the answer either. Sometimes salespeople complain they have too many people to talk to and *that's* their reason they can't increase sales. Ever notice high sales one month followed by flat sales the next? It could be said there's too many people to work through.

Remember, truth never fails. And the easy answer isn't found in anything you perceive is wrong with your product, price or location. So, what's the easy answer?

IT's simple but not necessarily easy.

And what is *IT*? If it's not the price and it's not the product, is it something within your control? But, what if you've been thoroughly trained on your product, and you know you have a viable product the marketplace wants to own—if only you could sell more of it?

Could it be your presentation? If you had a better *spiel* or maybe better closing techniques, would that work? I can't argue that a good presentation and closing techniques help to make sales, but that alone won't help a professional sell *more*.

There will always be problems with your product and your price. And listen carefully. There will always be problems with your *spiel*. Sales forces are full of last year's shining superstars who are this year's fallen stars. Your market changes constantly and you can never be certain that you are selling all you are able to sell if you rely on yesterday's product, price, spiel or closing techniques to sell more today.

So, what's the simple but not necessarily easy answer to increasing sales?

Stop selling it and start selling *IT*.

That's right. Just stop selling it. Are you selling cars? Then it's easy. Just stop selling cars. Are you selling houses? Then stop it. Are you selling insurance, phone systems, hotel rooms, clothing, lawnmowers, vacuum cleaners, perfume or vacations? Let's just make this easy. Whatever it is that you're selling, write it here:

_____

_____

_____

Okay, now we're on the same page. Whatever it is, just stop selling it.

So, if you take my advice, what in the world are you going to do with yourself and how will you get paid? Doesn't your company *need* you? Of course they do. And they know it. And that's why they pay you the big bucks for moving their product or service. And if you stop selling your product, what will you sell?

Let me begin with what I'm not talking about.