

Richard Gee

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Sent: 31 October 2006 19:19
To: richard@richardgeewiz.com
Subject: Jeffrey Gitomer's Sales Caffeine Issue 260

**Issue 260**

October 31, 2006
 publisher:
[Jeffrey Gitomer](#)
 editor:
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Becoming referable is a matter of earning, not asking.

A good friend gave me a book about building your business through referrals. The author believes, "The best marketing strategy is to be referable." He is correct. He writes, "Referability means that your very best clients and customers are continually cloning themselves -- continually introducing you to those like themselves or better than themselves."

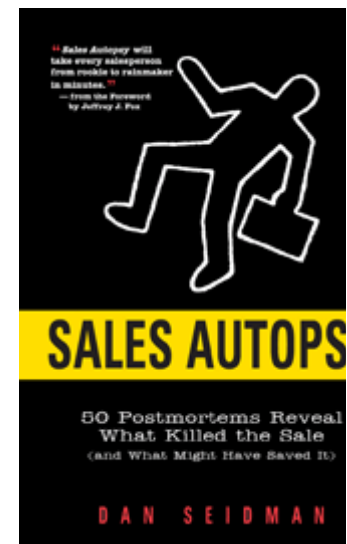
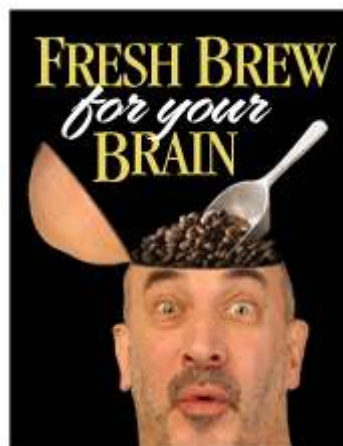
According to the author, your referability depends upon four habits:

1. Show up on time.
2. Do what you say.
3. Finish what you start.
4. Say please and thank you.

Could being referable be that simple? The author asserts that these four habits convey respect and appreciation toward the customer. He says, if you're arrogant or erratic, you won't be referred, no matter how talented or charming you are. He says if you're not getting enough referrals, cultivate the four habits. He is partially right. Very partially.

I say his four elements don't create referability - his four elements are a GIVEN in any business relationship. To be referable, you have to go WAY BEYOND showing up on time and delivering what you promise.

Those habits may have worked in 1955, when "Happy Days" was in full swing, but becoming referable and earning referrals in today's times (unhappy days) are far more complex.



**"Sales don't die. You kill them!
 BUT sales can be revived
 you have to do is buy this
 and administer the lesson
 yourself!"**

-- Jeffrey Gi

In my experience, I have found that a referral is earned, not asked for. When you ask for one, you immediately put your relationship in an awkward position, especially if the customer is reluctant to give you one, and you keep pestering him or her.

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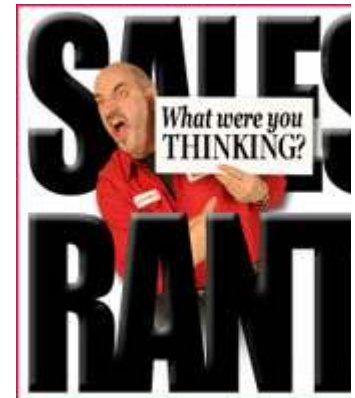
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 when there is a problem or is
 with price, delivery, quality, c
 service."

Jeffrey Gitomer, from his newest l
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Jeffrey,
I am the owner/president of a small seed company. Not only that, I am the sales manager as well. I try to keep everything running smoothly, but increasing sales has been difficult. What book do you offer that would help me be a better coach and get my district sales managers more motivated and self starting? I have one in particular who just seems to maintain his district, and the volume is really just at or below cost. How do you motivate someone like that?

Your Success Story

I am in the service industry of staffing. Many times we are considered the "same as ever else." If you don't find a differential, it only forces you the lowest price. I went with an area sales consultant to help rather than a large prospect. We did need analysis for discovery. It went extremely well. We found the prospect's pains and asked impact questions so he felt comfortable relinquishing confidential info, including the current supplier's pricing. He agreed to a return visit for a solution and proposal presentation. I knew I could out service the competition but I also knew I didn't want lower margins and make a complete bidding issue. Plus, I needed to show my area sales consultant how we can overcome pricing objections. On the return call, I decided to start the conversation by asking him to again explain why they are a selection for their customers compared to the competition. He explained that they were unique in the delivery and flexibility of custom packages so customers could fit their exact niches and a few other differences. I followed with, "Is it safe to say that your pricing structure would warrant a higher price than your competition?" He sat back with a wide grin and replied, "Of course I said, "That's great. Now let's talk about our solution and pricing. It completely took price off the table from the start and provided a solution based on his exact business model. It worked, and we have a wonderful relationship. This has also allowed us to receive a reference letter that speaks to the issue of lowest price is not always the best value.

-- Joel

Each week, we feature a salesperson's success story. If you send your stories to megan@gitomer.com. If your story is published, we'll send you a

Mike

Mike,

The book you need to buy is one entitled *Hire a Sales Manager and Stop Trying to Do Everything Yourself*. It hasn't been written yet, but I think you get the idea. Make certain that the person you hire is compatible with the rest of your team. Let every person who works for you talk to the potential candidate. As far as coaching is concerned, there's a book by Brad Sugars called [The Business Coach](#). Buy it as fast as you can.

**Best regards,
Jeffrey**

Jeffrey,

When selling my product to a retail chain store, I have to sell myself and my product to the buyer. We then sit down and estimate how many units the retail stores will be able to sell. This is all based upon product mix, merchandising method, etc. After we come up with a buy plan, I always dread the next question. "Jay, are you willing to support a 50% markdown program if we don't achieve an 80% sell through?" If I tell them no, I get the impression they feel like I don't think my products will sell or that they are buying too many of them. If I agree to the markdown program, there is the possibility that my products don't meet their 80% s/t quota and that it will eat into my profits, which you know is where we get paid. Can you possibly shed some light on how to handle this situation?

Jay

Jay,

You cannot be responsible for a department store's inability to merchandise and sell your product. This is typical buyer pressure that they try to exert on every small business person. I faced the same situation myself when I was selling garments. I universally refused every one of them. I lost some orders, but I never lost any profit. My recommendation is to build an additional 15% into your product and, at the negotiation table, offer a discount in advance in exchange for the markdown. This will give the buyer a feeling that he or she won without you having to make an actual compromise. Hopefully, they don't subscribe to this e-zine.

**Best regards,
Jeffrey**



**an excerpt from *Sales Autopsy*
guest column by Dan Seidman**

Dan Seidman has collected over 600 hilarious selling blunders. In this story some reps turn into



Sales Caffeine
mug with Gitomer
Brew!



**Do you work with dingbats?
by Brian Parsley**

When managers tell me they "dingbats" working in their of am surprised because they ar ones that hired the dingbats I begin with.

When hiring, many managers someone for an interview and they know the person based a few minutes together. They n major decision to hire after o one interview. (Would you m someone after the first date? some do. But most would agr not a great idea). Remember, anyone can appear normal du an interview. You're asked sil questions, a pulse is checked bingo! You're hired. After the day on the job, passion quick fades to everyday stress and need to perform.

Here are the five clues that determine whether or not you with a dingbat:

1. They always have an excu not work. They are always try new way to avoid the work th affects them throughout each

[Read the rest of this article.](#)

reprobates, as they drive outside the law...

Cold Wind, Cops & a Car

"Welcome to winter," John thought as he stood inside the Quebec Airport terminal. Outside the snow was sideways from a furious wind.

John and his partner had flown in for a sales call from the sunny south, Alabama, USA. The French gal at the Hertz counter pegged them immediately and began speaking in beautifully accented English.

John gestured over his shoulder to the weather. "Do we have to walk to the shuttle, walk to the Hertz lot, then walk outside again to our car?"

She smiled and shook her head. "Sir, we will deliver your auto right outside that door. It's a blue Ford Cr! own Victoria."

Five minutes later, a big blue Ford pulled up and a man jumped out and ran into the terminal. The two men looked at him and the guy nodded as he walked by. John glanced at his partner who said, "Let's go!" and they dashed into the snow.

Thank goodness the car was running and warm. They drove out of the airport and John told his colleague to pull the map out of the glove compartment where the counter woman had said it awaited them.

The door was popped open. Paper trash and other garbage spilled onto his lap.

"This car is a dump!" John couldn't believe Hertz would give them a vehicle without cleaning it first. And then that little light went off overhead. They looked at each other and said together, "It's not our car."

! A glance into the rearview mirror and the men realized that someone else had come to the same conclusion. Another light was going off -- a flashing light from a Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) vehicle.

John and his partner had taken that poor guy's car who nodded to them, thinking he was giving the "Go ahead and get in" signal while he rushed in from the cold.

The RCMP were very professional throughout, doing their best to suppress their grins at their stupid mistake. And Hertz apologized for the confusion, telling the two of them that they wouldn't be charged for driving the car that Hertz intended they use -- once they finally got it.

John's lesson: Impatience can have lots of unexpected consequences.

POSTMORTEM: John, a wanted man north of the border! He's right, though. Life is getting too ! fast. You're always in a hurry. You cram cell phone conversations into your down time during the day. You can't even relax and enjoy television commercials anymore. Your clients and prospects want you to get quickly to the point as well. You rush to sell and that is when mistakes happen. BUT, if you learn to slow down and calm down -- it will increase your energy when you need it most. Be wise about managing your time, take time for yourself. You body, your mind and most importantly, your family will love you for those times you choose to SLOW DOWN!

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--Todd Crosswhite

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