

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom

**Proven Sales Warfare Strategies, Secrets of Persuasion,
and Common-Sense Tips for Success**

**by
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Introduction

Strategy, Persuasion, and Common Sense--the Three Parts of Sales Wisdom

"Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever."
Napoleon Bonaparte

All salespeople must play three completely different roles to succeed. First, they must be generals who create a strategy to win their wars long before the first battle begins. The successful military leader painstakingly plans how and where he will attack in accordance with the troops and weapons at his disposal. When the fighting starts, the victorious commander achieves his objective through battlefield maneuvers to gain the advantage and countertactics to neutralize his enemy's advance.

Second, all salespeople must be professional persuaders. In essence, salespeople are paid to persuade. They must gain the willing obedience of others and convince complete strangers to follow their advice. However, the most product-knowledgeable salesperson is not necessarily the most persuasive one. Persuasive salespeople naturally connect with customers, instill customer confidence, and establish trust.

Finally, successful salespeople must be oracles who predict their chances of winning based upon their common-sense judgment. As common sense accumulates over the years through interactions with customers, it becomes a salesperson's lifesaving device. It prevents salespeople from repeating past mistakes and guides their intuition to maximize their most precious resource: time.

When a salesperson has mastered these three roles--strategist, persuader, and common-sense sage--he has attained sales wisdom and become a Heavy Hitter. Heavy Hitters are truly great salespeople who have acquired prominence through their accomplishments, expertise, and judgment. They continually exceed quotas, close big deals, and enjoy themselves in the process.

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom takes the concept of becoming a Heavy Hitter to the next level. This book has been written for senior salespeople, those who have been in the field for five, ten, and fifteen years or more. While it will expose the novice salesperson to entirely new aspects of selling, the ultimate goal of *Heavy*

Hitter Sales Wisdom is to help experienced salespeople expand their influence within their local office, region, sales organization, and company. This requires not only winning more business but also having a methodology to explain to others how and why you win.

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom is also in an entirely different category of sales book. Almost all of the many books about selling that are available today can be classified into one of two categories. The first category oversimplifies the complexity of selling. These books present sales in a very basic and simple way, seemingly aimed at those just beginning a career in sales. One common critique of these lightweight books is that they present common knowledge and fundamental concepts that almost everyone in sales already knows. They don't offer any innovative tactics or advanced sales techniques for old pros.

The second category takes a textbook-type approach to sales. These books concentrate on the logical and procedural aspects of the sales cycle. They focus on prospecting and qualifying, and they include formulaic concepts that the salesperson commits to memory. They don't take into account the human nature of sales and how people and politics determine account strategy. While these books offer detailed information, they are laborious to read. The reader must sift through the entire book to gain a morsel of enlightenment.

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom does not fall into either of these categories. This book is intended to educate and enlighten experienced professionals on state-of-the-art sales strategies and entirely new philosophies about persuasion in an exciting and entertaining way. Equally important, *Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom* provides models of salesperson and customer behavior that seasoned salespeople can use to explain what they do naturally to others within their company: colleagues, sales management, and other interested parties throughout the organization (such as marketing, engineering, and the CEO).

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom is best suited for salespeople who sell complex enterprise products and solutions. In these deals, salespeople must penetrate large organizations, influence key decision makers, and dovetail their products' benefits to customers' internal politics. In order to win, they must build relationships with sophisticated buyers in different departments all across a company. They have to persuade people to believe in their solution at all levels of the organization, from the nine-to-fiver to midlevel management and the executive staff. Finally, they compete against wily competitors who are equipped with similar products and equal sales acumen.

Senior salespeople know that sales cannot be taught; it must be learned. The rookie learns how to sell by riding along on sales calls with a more experienced representative. The junior salesperson adds to his repertoire by emulating a veteran. Meanwhile, the veteran hones his skills by watching a senior deal maker, most likely from the ranks of management. Regardless of experience, all

salespeople need mentors to improve their skills and become Heavy Hitters because learning from a successful practitioner is the best way to learn anything new.

While the term “heavy hitter” originated in the sport of boxing, where it literally meant “hitting hard,” it has been transferred to people across all walks of life everywhere around the world. Today, accomplished sports heroes, politicians, entertainers, lawyers, doctors, and businesspeople are known as Heavy Hitters.

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom is based upon the study of prominent Heavy Hitters throughout the ages. The Heavy Hitters included in this book are people of great influence who had a tremendous impact on our world. We will seek to understand how they rose to prominence, won their battles, and persuaded people to follow them. We want to learn from their successes and failures in order to become wiser ourselves.

While this book includes comments from a diverse group of history’s greatest Heavy Hitters, we will study six leaders in greater detail to understand the skills they used to change the course of human history. What can salespeople learn from Sun Tzu, Napoleon Bonaparte, and George Patton? Why would studying the words of Buddha, Jesus Christ, and Ronald Reagan be important? Since learning by example is the most effective way to learn, we want to study role models that provide the best examples of strategy, persuasion, and common sense.

In the first part of the book we will study a fascinating subject with many parallels to sales: war. Strategies to win wars and close deals share many similar characteristics. Therefore, the first step in our pursuit of sales wisdom is to study the grand strategy of war. We will review different battlefield scenarios and examine the philosophies of three of the greatest war strategists of all time: Sun Tzu, Napoleon Bonaparte, and George Patton.

More than twenty-five hundred years ago, Chinese general Sun Tzu wrote *The Art of War*, the most important book on war philosophy ever published. The premise of *The Art of War* is that successful warfare is based upon having better information than the enemy by using spies, possessing the knowledge of when to fight, and attacking the enemy where he is weakest and least expects it. Each of these mantras is equally applicable to sales.

Both U.S. Army General George C. Patton and former emperor of France Napoleon Bonaparte were lifelong students of war. Both were devotees of the psychology of warfare. Each was a voracious reader of military history and had an encyclopedic knowledge of warfare. At the age of sixteen, Napoleon commanded a French army artillery garrison. By the age of twenty-seven he commanded an entire army, and a few years later he had conquered Europe.

Nearly 125 years after Napoleon's death, General Patton would fight his way across France during World War II. Patton was described by Russian leader Joseph Stalin as the United States' best general. When a German senior officer was captured, he said, "General Patton is the most feared general on all fronts. The tactics of the general are daring and unpredictable. General Patton is always the main topic of conversation. Where is he? When will he attack? Where? How? With what?"

I'd like to forewarn you that the sales strategy section includes detailed analysis of battles from a cross section of mankind's worst wars. These battlefield descriptions are more than just interesting anecdotes about military history. It's important to review the specific circumstances--who had the advantage, how the attack was planned, and when and where they fought--in order to understand who won and why. As you read them, pay particular attention to who was the underdog, why they were at a disadvantage, and how the momentum of the battle was changed because all of the facets of warfare that determine the victor and vanquished are directly applicable to salespeople who must invade new accounts or fend off competitors' attacks.

Unlike in a real war, salespeople fight with words, and in part II we will study three of the world's most persuasive people of all time: Buddha, Ronald Reagan, and Jesus Christ. At the age of twenty-nine in 594 BC, Siddhartha Gautama gave up his life of luxury to become a monk known as Buddha. He would spend the rest of his life learning the path to enlightenment by understanding the nature of reality and the importance of mental orientation through liberating one's spirit. Buddha's teachings were passed down from generation to generation in over five thousand volumes. Today, these teachings influence the daily lives of more than half a billion practicing Buddhists.

Another prominent persuader who impacted the world as we know it today was Ronald Reagan. In 2004, Ronald Reagan was named by an independent pollster as the third greatest American president of all time, behind Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy. It's not surprising that he was ranked behind these two national heroes. However, what made this president truly unique was his ability to communicate and persuade. In fact, Reagan is known in the annals of history as "the Great Communicator." Not only was he able to convince ordinary Americans that he was one of them, but equally important, the eloquent orator was able to influence adversarial lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

The fact that one-third of the six billion people on the planet follow the teachings of Jesus Christ is profound proof of the impact of his words. Obviously, his legacy continues to affect people all around the world daily. In addition, six billion copies of the Bible have been printed, making it the best-selling book of all time.

Since the premise of this book is modeling the most influential people of all time, we want mentors who have experienced a wide range of communication

challenges, dealt with very skeptical audiences, and changed people's opinions under the most difficult circumstances. Jesus Christ clearly fits these requirements.

The communication methods of Buddha, Reagan, and Christ are well worth studying today by those who must speak for a living and persuade others to believe in them. While thousands of books have been written from a theological and political perspective about these men, we are more interested in how and why they said something, rather than what they actually said. Therefore, we want to study and understand the purpose, content, and structure of their language to help us learn how to become more persuasive.

In the book's final part we will review the common sense of selling. We need common sense to reach the destination of success. This part is organized differently from the others. It is composed primarily of "metaphors"--stories, parables, and analogies that communicate ideas by using examples that people can relate to and identify with. Metaphors enable complex concepts and theories to be explained in a simple and understandable manner. Most interestingly, a metaphor is a single story that can convey many meanings.

The stories in part III cover a broad range of sales-related topics and come from a surprising array of sources, ranging from scientific journals to classified ads. These stories are grouped into lessons about sales and the life of a salesperson. They are much like the tales salespeople recount to each other at their favorite watering hole. Much can be learned from these stories, and they provide valuable common-sense wisdom.

Most people have misconceptions about what wisdom is. They think of wisdom as a serene, passive intelligence shaped by a lifetime of experiences. They believe wisdom is a natural part of aging. They associate wisdom with the old hermit who sequesters himself on a mountaintop. That's not my idea of wisdom. Wisdom is gained through your experiences in dealing with other people. Your wisdom increases daily as you navigate the path of life, regardless of your age. Wisdom can also be used proactively to shape the events that surround you.

While *Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom* is the name of this book, it is also a very particular type of wisdom. All salespeople accumulate sales wisdom through interactions with customers, competitors, colleagues, and managers. Whenever salespeople risk defeat, they grow wiser. Heavy Hitter sales wisdom grows anytime salespeople are challenged in a trial by fire. Wherever salespeople beat the odds and win, they gain Heavy Hitter sales wisdom.

While the dictionary definition of "wisdom" is "to follow the soundest course of action based upon knowledge," Heavy Hitter sales wisdom is best described as "the knowledge that enables you to defeat your enemy by winning over the customer." Three equal parts form Heavy Hitter sales wisdom: sales strategy,

persuasion, and common sense. We apply these three sales essentials together in a proactive, aggressive manner in order to win over customers, defeat our competitors, and progress our careers to the next level.

Sales is much more than a career. It is a lifestyle and a way of thinking. Selling is a mental, emotional, and spiritual profession that becomes a core part of the person who chooses it. While most of the world's professions have many gray areas, sales is a black-or-white profession. In sales, you either win or lose; there is nothing in-between. Salespeople want to know the truth about their performance and, for that matter, themselves. Regardless if they have been selling for years or decades, they are in perpetual pursuit of personal validation.

Long-term salespeople also know they need an occasional shot of sales adrenaline to renew their sense of excitement. An underlying goal of *Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom* is to uplift your spirits. Therefore, refer to it when you need mental refreshment or after a tough run of luck when you need to reanchor yourself to success. And while the wisdom in this book is aimed at making you a better salesperson, it will also make you a better person.

Heavy Hitter Sales Wisdom tells an adventure story about sales strategies, persuasion, and the common sense of selling by studying some of the most interesting and important people in history. Prepare yourself to relive your own wins and losses, learn something new, and be inspired by studying some of the world's all-time Heavy Hitters--because history can teach us many important lessons if we choose to listen.