



## Psychology Sells Itself in Business: STOP Selling, Drink Coffee

### STOP selling, drink coffee

A strange mantra from a company offering marketing consultancy and training for professional service firms, but the proof of the latte is in the drinking.

Selling is not always what you believe your job entails. Accountancy, surveying, engineering or law, you might have thought your profession took you away from the selling arena. That was until the need for a "client portfolio" was mentioned. You need to protect the clients you have from hungry competition and win new business in a difficult trading environment.

The bottom line is that businesses succeed due to what they sell. So if the advice was to "stop selling, drink **coffee**, and you will still succeed" would you follow it?

I believe selling is not difficult if you understand the psychology. I recognise a changing breed of client. Never have we jumped ship more readily to get a better deal. We want a service provider who will engage with us to meet our desires and offer solutions to problems. We are increasingly promiscuous in our buying habits and less loyal to existing providers if we feel we are not being adequately looked after and can get more value from another supplier.

From economists to politicians, the importance of psychology in relation to decision-making and policy is on the rise. Understanding human decision-making and behaviour is a logical place to try to fathom what makes the consumer tick.

It is through this methodology that we arrive at the psychology of selling, and once there the selling deconstructs itself. Successful businesses in the B2B environment simply don't sell. What they do do very well is ensure that they are very visible to their targets and stay front of mind by adding value. Perhaps they add value through sharing market intelligence or facilitating introductions. The result is that when the client has a need they immediately think of you. People like buying but don't like being overtly sold to. Coffee is the secret ingredient.

In building inner confidence and stepping back from the idea of "trying to sell something", a placebo effect emerges. Understanding and focusing upon the relationship you build with your client and determining how your service is different and more relevant to them is crucial. Listening in order that you understand their behaviour and gain insight into their self-concept will in turn instigate the causes to affect the sale. And doesn't everyone want a cup of **coffee** nowadays?





By using coffee as your binding agent here is a recipe for some key ingredients to create the perfect environment for your contacts to buy from you.

1. Emotion first; logic second. People will assume that you are technically good at your profession. When they consider buying from you they are first attracted to people that they like.
2. Confidence. People are attracted to confident people. If you don't really believe in yourself why will others?
3. Timing. Build your touch points with contacts to ensure that when the time is right you are front of mind. Don't rely on the 'golf day;' fitting neatly with contacts buying cycles.
4. Listen and be interested. You need to create an empathetic relationship where respect, trust and understanding are felt by both parties.
5. Put yourself in their boots. Plan ahead of meetings and ask yourself, 'what will they want?'; 'what will their concerns be?'; 'what is their vision?'
6. Have clear messages. You need to have different and clear messages for different audiences. What is your clients' paradigm?
7. Focus on what you will leave behind. People are less interested in your methodology and more interested in the results of the intervention.
8. Be goal orientated. Being SMART will enable you to convey Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound goals so your contacts know what success looks like.
9. Your coffee system. How many coffees do you need to drink to achieve your sales targets? Smart fee earners focus on lead generation, not sales.
10. Plan and review. It is essential to create a communications strategy and review regularly in order to stay close to key relationships.

10 ½ Do them a favour. Understand the law of reciprocity and create a sense of indebtedness.

Bernard Savage is founding director of Size 10½ Boots, a marketing consultancy specialising in delivering growth objectives to smarter professional service firms. The business works with both national and regional firms of law firms; accountants; architects; and financial institutions to grow practices. The approach is to identify more savvy ways to win new business and create more value from existing relationships.

For a free boot fitting call him on 0115 924 7106 or visit [www.tenandahalf.co.uk](http://www.tenandahalf.co.uk).

