



SELLING WITH
Style

Leverage The Platinum Rule® for Communication Style Selling Success

BY

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Don Hutson, Dr. Tony Alessandra and Scott Michael Zimmerman

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ISBN: 0-000000-00-0 (Hardcover)

ISBN: 978-0-9819371-3-7 (Paperback)

ISBN: 0-000000-00-0 (Audio)

ISBN: 0-000000-00-0 (eBook)

Published by:

 **PLATINUM RULE PRESS**

Platinum Rule Group, LLC.

600 31st Street SW

Barberton, Ohio 44203

1-330-848-0444

www.PlatinumRule.com

Cover & Interior Design by:

Glenn Griffiths

www.TheCyranoGroup.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to all of the psychologists, sociologists, visionaries, philosophers, coaches, consultants, trainers, speakers and authors who directly and indirectly influenced our work, documented their findings and who built foundations of evidence upon which we could build. Just a sampling of these include: Michael J. O'Connor, Katherine Briggs, Jim Cathcart, Roger Dawson, John Geier, Paul Green, Phil Hunsaker, Carl Jung, Florence Littauer, Russ Watson, William Moulton Marston, David McClelland, David Merrill, Roger Reid, Larry Wilson, Bill Schwarz, Isabel Briggs Myers, Don Lowry, Janice Van Dyke and Don Thoren.

We wish to thank our clients for providing us with encouragement, financial support, opportunities to fail forward (and grow in the process) and for challenging our thinking.

We want to say a special thanks to Glenn Griffiths of The Cyrano Group for the wonderful graphic design he provided for this book and for his continuing contributions to our companies' marketing successes.

what others have said about

SELLING WITH STYLE

“There is NO ONE on the planet who knows this material like this team of authors. They are funny, articulate and wise. If you want better relationships with your family, friends, customers, or significant other, buy Selling With Style now.”

– **Rick Barrera**, CEO – Overpromise, Inc.

Author of *Overpromise and Overdeliver: How to Design and Deliver
Extraordinary Customer Experiences*
Wall Street Journal and Business Week Best Seller

“This book is more than a ‘must read.’ It is a ‘must do!’ Don’t just study the lessons; apply them. And when you do, regardless of where you are in your sales career, be prepared for even greater success.”

– **Shep Hyken**, Author of the USA Today Best Seller,
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“Two giants in the business combine their best ideas in this substantive book. Read it. Study it. Apply its content for maximum achievement. Highly recommended.”

– **Dr. Nido Qubein**, President, High Point University &
Chairman, Great Harvest Bread Co.

DEDICATIONS

It is with heartfelt gratitude that I dedicate this book to my wife, my partner, my soul mate, Terri Murphy Hutson. Terri, thank you for helping me be better, look better, and do better in every aspect of my life. I hope I can return all the kindnesses. I love and admire you! – **DON HUTSON**

I dedicate this book to Bill Schwarz, of The CEO Alliance in Atlanta, Georgia. Bill was the first person to introduce me to the concept of Communication Styles, and this became the impetus and direction for my career.

– **TONY ALESSANDRA**

Sweet P: my one and only, I love you eternally. To Charlie “Tremendous” Jones for writing the words that changed my life: “You are the same in five years as you are today, except for two things: The books you read and the people you meet.” Charlie, spending time with you showed me that Jesus’ spirit shines brightly through people. Don, thank you for including my thoughts in this book. Tony, I can never thank you enough for continually re-focusing this “recovering Expressive”!

– **SCOTT ZIMMERMAN**

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INTRODUCTION

THELMA, DEREK AND ROGER HAD BEEN SEATED FOR fifteen minutes when Suzie burst into the restaurant.

While chatting into her cell phone, Suzie looked around, spotted her associates, smiled and waved as she bounced over to the table.

Even though she was late, the other three silently forgave her the moment she sat down. It was nearly impossible to stay mad at Suzie; she was truly likeable and oozed charm.

Suzie snapped her cell phone shut and offered a half-hearted apology. “I’m so sorry about the time, but I just left the most exciting brainstorming session... ever!” she gushed. Suddenly, she noticed a server silently waiting for her to pick up the menu; the rest of the group had long since placed their order. After some friendly banter with the waitress, she ordered. Then, she turned back and asked, “What was I just talking about?”

Roger helped her out by saying, “You were talking about the great meeting you just left.”

Derek quickly interjected, “Suzie, I know you’re about to regale us with another epic tale, but we really need to get down to business. I need to make my final decision about which marketing firm we are

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going to hire. I have a two-fifteen appointment, and because of Suzie's tardiness, we're already twenty minutes late. You have all interviewed the representatives from four competing marketing firms; give me your recommendations and reasoning for the firm you each think I should hire."

Roger offered Suzie a sympathetic glance as if to apologize for Derek's remark. Suzie smiled as if to say, "No sweat, I'm over it already."

"I saved the original requirements we agreed upon before we began the interviewing process, and I made a point to bring a copy for everyone," Thelma added.

After Derek quickly glanced over Thelma's spreadsheet, he commented, "I'll start. From my brief interviews with the candidates, Michael seemed to grasp the big picture the quickest. He shared with me specific results he expects to get, and I liked his confidence in his ability to help us grow sales and increase client retention. The other candidates lacked focus, seemed indecisive or flat-out wasted my time with details that aren't relevant to my goals. Plus, I think it would take them too long to get up to speed about how I like things done around here. So, unless there are any reasons not to hire Michael, I'm ready to make a decision and move forward. Anyone disagree?"

Suzie jumped in on the conversation, "I'm glad you think that Michael is our guy, Derek. I found him to be very quick on his feet; he and I hit it off right away. I shared with him a couple of my ideas for growing sales and he gave examples about how some of them worked with his other clients. He also added some of his own visions that were in alignment with my ideas. He said he would help me list and prioritize my ideas, so we could initially concentrate on the top one or two that would make the greatest impact. Besides, have you seen the companies Michael is working with? Talk about heavy hitters! I have some friends at some of those firms and called them to find if they liked working with Michael's team. They all praised him and highly recommended his company. I'm sold."

During the brief moment of silence, Roger collected his thoughts

and then quietly added, “I’m so glad that he suggested that we prioritize your ideas before blindly plunging forward. Our staff is still adjusting to the changes our last consultant recommended. In fact, I’m still not sure if some of those changes were even necessary. From all the candidates I met, Michael seemed the most sincere about helping me support the team and putting together a win-win agreement. I can tell that he truly wants to help us achieve our goals.”

Roger continued, “I drove over to their offices, and I was able to meet his team. Michael recommended that I talk to his staff members individually; I wanted to obtain a better impression of how we might work together, how each supports their team, and how their team helps companies like ours. His staff seemed very dedicated and they obviously respected and trusted Michael. Oh, and another thing that really impressed me about Michael was his listening skills. He continually reassured me that any changes we would make would be well thought through and that he would help me justify all the reasons to our team, just so that everyone will feel comfortable with them. So, I guess what I’m trying to say is that my gut feeling tells me that Michael is the best candidate. Although a couple of the other candidates did have some great qualities, I felt Michael was the best. Before I make my final recommendation though, I’m curious about Thelma’s thoughts.”

Roger shifted his gaze from Derek to Thelma. “What do you think about Michael? Didn’t you mention he had some technology that could help us follow-up new leads as well as improve customer communications? What did you think about that?”

Derek quickly looked at his watch and interrupted, “Thelma, make it quick. I have that appointment with a new prospect, and I can’t be late. This could be another big project for us. First, just answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’... do we hire Michael?”

Thelma began to respond, “Well, I took it upon myself to do an analysis of all the candidates and their strengths and weaknesses...” Thelma peeked up from her spreadsheet at Derek, noticed his impatience and caught herself, “and uh, I guess to answer your question,

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Derek, yes, I think that Michael's firm is our best option. I discovered from my research that Michael has a system; a proven process and timesaving technology that facilitate predictable sales growth. He never once mentioned any creative concepts like the prototypical 'ad man.' Michael was very logical and clearly explained each component of his process. He began our second meeting by showing me how traditional marketing and lead acquisition strategies were losing effectiveness in today's information age. He then demonstrated how target marketing, behavior adaptability training and delivering need-specific, timely and customized marketing messages would be more effective than 'shotgun' advertising strategies."

Thelma noticed Derek squirming in his seat and sped up. "Michael stayed focused on what we wanted to accomplish; the others either spun stories or tried to 'hard sell' me. He explained in detail how his methods would lead us, step-by-step, to our goals..."

Derek interrupted once again, "Well it looks like everyone is in agreement. Michael is our man. Time is money; I've gotta run. You all can stay if you like and discuss it further. But for me, I heard all I need to hear."

Roger, wanting to reduce the tension from Derek's interruption, said, "Derek, I can understand that you are in a hurry... it sounds like you have an important meeting. Do you think it might be wise to postpone this decision until Thelma can tell you about the new technology Michael showed her?"

Derek replied, "No, that's not that important to me. If the cost of the technology is too much, I'm sure I can get him to come down in price to fit our budget, or we'll shelve that part until next year. If this next meeting goes the way I expect, the money won't be an issue, anyways. You can stay here if you want to keep hashing this out, but I have to go. Suzie, give Michael a call today and let him know that he is hired. Oh, and have him call Thelma to work through the details of his proposal. Roger, once the details are handled, you can introduce him around to the rest of our staff and make him feel at home... you're good at that

‘warm and fuzzy’ stuff. I’m going to be out of town for a couple of days, so tell Michael I want to meet when I get back. Lunch is on me; enjoy!”

With that, Derek, plopped down the company credit card and told Thelma to handle the check, add a tip and put the receipt in his in-box. With that, Derek was gone.

Roger asked, “Am I the only one to notice something?”

“What’s that?” Thelma asked.

“We’ve all worked for Derek for at least five years, and this is the first time that we’ve all been in complete agreement about the same decision.”

“Not only did I notice,” Suzie said, “but, I can’t wait to learn to sell like Michael does. I wanted to hire him within the first five minutes of our first meeting. I don’t know what he did, but it sure worked.”

“Nothing gets past me,” said Thelma. “Just from our lunch conversation, I gleaned several new pieces of information. Michael sold Derek on getting results and gaining an edge over our competitors. Suzie sold herself on the fact that he would help turn her ideas into reality. Michael sensed that Roger needed a feeling of security in the relationship, so he introduced him to his whole team. Finally, he showed me logical thinking and a turnkey process, including technology and training. He never tried to push me into any decision; he gave me information and allowed me to arrive at my own conclusions. I find it amazing that he could determine our ‘hot buttons’ and match benefits of his services to our specific interests. In essence, he figured out how each of us was going to buy and presented his solutions to each of us in a different manner.”

“From my point of view,” Thelma continued, “Michael lead each of us down a different path and pointed out different sights along the way, and yet each one of us arrived at the same destination... a decision to do business with his company. However, I know that I made the right decision to hire him, and I never once felt like I was ‘being sold.’”

“I totally agree, Thelma.” Roger nodded earnestly as he spoke, “You

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know how I cannot stand high-pressure salespeople. Michael never once asked me about awarding the contract to his firm; I felt like I was buying; not being asked to buy. It may not sound like much, but it is a huge difference from my perspective. He was completely focused on our needs and goals, not what he wanted. I wanted to give him our business, and I was relieved when Derek had arrived at the same conclusion that I had.”

Suzie looked up sheepishly and said, “Don’t ever tell Derek this, but if we had gone with another firm, I was going to enroll in Michael’s sales training classes on my own. I’ve dealt with dozens of salespeople in my day, but this guy had charisma in spades. I would love to learn more about how he ‘connected’ with each one of us to make this sale!”

“Beats me,” Roger mused. “If you stop and think about it, the four of us couldn’t be more different from one another. We make a great team, but we really are diverse in our opinions and our approaches to ideas and changes. How in the world did Michael get all four of us to agree on something this important?”

The answer is that Michael identified the behavioral style of each of the four decision influencers. He then shifted the speed of his selling process and the focus of the conversation to match the different buying styles of Derek, Suzie, Roger and Thelma.

This book will not only give you a clear indication of your natural selling style, but also teach you the four behavioral styles, how to identify them, and how you naturally connect with each. . Just as importantly, you will learn how to adapt your selling style to connect with the other three styles (the ones that you may have been losing as customers).

When you learn to adapt your selling style to each prospect’s buying style, people will be more inclined to like you, buy from you and refer others to you.

Platinum Rule Communication Style Selling is a matching process: matching the right product or service to the corresponding set of customer needs, matching the sales pace to the customer’s buying pace, and matching your selling style to the buying style of every customer.

The ability to adapt your style to your customers' styles helps you build rapport and develop strong relationships.

Your internal voice may be whispering to you, "Isn't it being manipulative when a sales professional adjusts his or her style to match a prospect's?"

Our answer is an emphatic, "No!" To understand why this isn't manipulation, let's stop and consider a wise piece of advice that has been passed along many generations:

*"Do unto others as **you** would have **them** do unto **you**."*

You may remember this as "The Golden Rule," and it is a great rule to live by. We believe in it 110%, especially when it comes to honesty, values, ethics and having consideration for the needs of others.

However, when it comes to interpersonal communication, it can backfire because others may not wish to be treated the same way you like to being treated.

When Tony Alessandra was a young man, he learned this lesson first-hand when he moved from New York to San Diego. He practiced The Golden Rule verbatim by treating the people in San Diego the way he liked to be treated... as a New Yorker. He came on too strong; he was too assertive and just "too fast" for most of the laid-back people on the West Coast. He rubbed many people the wrong way, which prompted them to "dig in their heels" and few responded positively to his requests.

Fortunately, he soon realized that people are diverse and each needs to be treated differently. As he became more self-aware, he coined the phrase, "The Platinum Rule," which states:

*"Do unto others as **they** would have **you** do unto **them**."*

The Platinum Rule is a more sensitive version of the ancient axiom. That is, learn to understand the behaviors of others and interact with

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them in a style that is best for them, not just for you. You need to adapt so that, while retaining your own identity, you can lead others in the way they like to follow, speak to them the way they are comfortable listening and sell to them the way they prefer to buy.

When you understand your own style and how it differs from the styles of others, you can adapt your approach to stay “on the same wavelength” with them. Your ideas do not have to change, but you can change the way you present your ideas. We call this adaptability.

Adaptable people realize there is a difference between their inner self (who they are) and their external behavior (how they choose to act). Adaptability is simply changing your behavior, not your personality, values or beliefs. Adaptable people consciously decide to modify their behaviors to a particular person, a situation, or an event. Less adaptable people, on the other hand, respond in a more habitual manner, regardless of whether the response is likely to be appropriate or effective.

When you treat people the way they want to be treated, you are paying attention to their needs, wants and expectations. You are trying to walk in their shoes, to understand their feelings, see their point of view and identify their purchasing requirements. That builds trust, friendship and respect ... three requirements for any strong relationship.

Getting along with others is the universal key to success. In fact, studies have shown that the ability to build rapport with others was the one thing all highly successful people have in common. Mastery of the Platinum Rule is the key to opening the door to successful relationships in all areas of your life... beyond a successful career in sales.

To apply the Platinum Rule, you need to understand how people want to be treated; this requires a basic understanding of personal style and behavior. Throughout the ages, philosophers and psychologists have developed various models to explain these key differences. The guide presented here will give you a powerful tool to help you build rapport with your prospects, customers, colleagues and referral partners. We have based our model on years of research and validation; yet it is simple, practical, and easy to use and remember. We make it easy to

identify the preferred style of your customers, associates, friends and family members.

*Note: One of the strengths of **The Platinum Rule** is that we have taken a very complex behavioral and psychological concept and made it relatively easy to understand. However, we also know that “understanding” and “application” are two different outcomes. Therefore, we have purposely mixed spaced repetition with a variety of stories, examples and exercises to reinforce critical points throughout this book. You may experience occasional thoughts of, “Didn’t they already tell me that?” as you read, but we encourage you to stop reading during those moments and really give meaningful thought to each concept you want to “own and apply.”*

Section I describes the four general behavioral styles of your customers, and it helps you understand your own behavior style and know what type of sales position best matches your natural behaviors. We also identify specific customer buying patterns and the preferences for each style.

If you have never taken an accurate test to help you understand your behavioral style, you should visit www.PlatinumRule.com/assessment to help you identify and understand your own behavioral style. Understanding your own strengths and weaknesses is the first step toward increased self-awareness. Heightened self-awareness of your behaviors, and how they relate to others, will forever change your approach to selling.

Section II describes the two basic behavioral dimensions and provides a simple process of elimination to help you identify yours and your customers’ behavioral styles. It will also show you how to observe your customer’s environment and behaviors to locate other clues that help you determine their behavioral style.

Section III describes how to reduce “relationship tension” to help you establish and maintain rapport with customers. This requires behavioral adaptability on your part, so you can easily connect with those who have styles that are different from your own. You will not learn ways to manipulate others; you will learn skills that anyone working in sales

should possess in order to identify and satisfy other's needs to help them grow their business... and yours.

Section IV teaches you about the basic selling steps; how to build on each step to help each buyer reach a successful conclusion. The six steps to sales success are:

1. Targeting: Knowing what an ideal prospect looks like, where to focus your energies and how to implement systems for profiling, prospecting and leveraging leads is critical to ensuring that you are in more—and more qualified—selling opportunities.

2. Connecting: This is the critical first step that begins the process of building a customer relationship. When the prospect learns that the salesperson sincerely has his interests at heart, the rest of the sales process continues without obstacles. Once prospects begin to trust you, they will feel more comfortable about sharing their business goals and challenges. When rapport (based on trust and respect) is established, you can begin a process of exploring ways to help them grow and prosper.

3. Exploring: For a salesperson well on their way to mastery of **The Platinum Rule**, discovering the needs and wants of the prospect is a top priority. They explore the prospect's situation for needs, opportunities and ideas about how to help move them toward achieving goals or solving problems.

4. Collaborating: The Platinum Rule salesperson gets his customers involved in the process of determining the best product or service solution. They collaborate to find a custom-tailored solution to the meet prospect's needs.

5. Confirming: For the most effective salespeople, gaining a firm commitment from a customer or prospect is often just a formality. When the process of exploring for the right solution has been a joint effort,

gaining a commitment is a natural outcome. Still, this stage is a critical part of cementing the customer-salesperson partnership; *both* parties need to **confirm** specific commitments each are making to the sale and the delivery of the products and/or services.

6. Assuring: Assuring customer satisfaction is the last phase of the sales process, and it is the secret to long-term, extraordinary success in selling. Although many salespeople stop after getting the sales commitment, **Platinum Practitioners** ensure each customer receives the service, training, installation and maintenance that exceed their expectations.

Section IV will also help you understand how to use each step to advance customer relationships. By thoroughly understanding your customer's style and the six basic selling steps, you will build stronger relationships and turn the sales process into a natural flow... culminating in a "win-win" solution.

The Platinum Rule for Communication Style Selling is different from any other methodology used by salespeople today. The Platinum Rule for Communication Style Selling is not relationship or personal selling, where the goal is to personalize the relationship between seller and buyer in order for the sales person to uncover the needs of the customer then offer products and services to satisfy those needs. We are challenging you to master one of the most reliable methods for identifying the Behavioral Style of your customers, and how to sell to them the way they would like to be sold... **not** the way you want to sell them (which is based on your own natural style).

Consider this: there are four behavioral styles and you have one of them. If you sell to all your customers based on the way you like to buy then you are only connecting with those who share your style. What this suggests is that you are not connecting with the three other styles; greatly limiting your sales potential. We believe that if you read this book, do the activities, and learn to adapt the way you sell to the way

each customer buys, you will become more successful. Additionally, if you carry your new way of thinking into other aspects of your life, you will become a better boss, coworker, spouse, parent, friend, etc...

The Platinum Rule for Communication Style Selling is not only a better way to sell... *it's a better way to live!*

SECTION I

the four communication styles

For some of you, the “4 styles” model of human behavior is a new concept. However, many of you have probably run across this concept on more than one occasion. “Behavioral styles,” “personality types” and “temperament types” are not new, and they all have validity.

People have been fascinated with studying behavioral styles for thousands of years. Starting with the early astrologers, theorists have sought to identify these behavioral styles. In ancient Greece, for example, the physician Hippocrates outlined four temperaments: Sanguine, Phlegmatic, Melancholic, and Choleric... in 400 BC. In 1921, famed psychologist Carl Jung (the first to study personal styles scientifically) labeled people as Intuitors, Thinkers, Feelers, and Sensors. Since then, psychologists have produced more than a dozen models of behavioral differences, some with sixteen or more possible behavioral blends. Sometimes the styles have been given abstract behavioral-science names. In addition, some teachers have drawn metaphors (as teaching aids) to birds, animals, or even colors. This four style model has enabled superbly skilled communicators to respect the dignity of others and adapt successfully to them and their needs for win-win outcomes for

centuries.

Many of the concepts discussed in Section I of this book are based upon the proven concepts described in Don Hutson’s book, “The Sale”, Dr. Alessandra’s and Dr. O’Connor’s books, “*PeopleSmart*” and “*The Platinum Rule*®.” In the original Platinum Rule series, Alessandra and O’Connor used the terms: Directors, Relaters, Thinkers and Socializers. However, in the broadest sense, **The Platinum Rule** embraces any and all methods of treating others the way they wish to be treated! Whether you learn The Platinum Rule, Communication Styles, DISC, MBTI, the Enneagram or any other way of increasing your self-knowledge and identifying another person’s modality is just fine by us. In fact, learn as many methods as possible to increase your depth of understanding!

We will now introduce you to the four *behavioral* styles that are used throughout this book: the Driver, Expressive, Analytical and Amiable. As you read the description of each style, try to visualize previous or current customers who possess each style. Also ask yourself whether you would have been a more successful salesperson (or a co-worker, parent, spouse, or neighbor) had you adapted your behavior to match the style of past customers... regardless of whether they bought from you or not.



Note: *The Platinum Rule* is based upon observable behaviors, NOT “personalities” or “temperaments.” This distinction is critical because human beings may change their behavior in the middle of a conversation. When you learn to adapt to the behavior that you are witnessing, you will stay in rapport with that person. People’s personalities are deeply ingrained and slow to change, but behaviors can change in the blink of an eye. The way a person is acting at each moment in time will dictate how you should be selling to them.

1

drivers ... ***the great initiators***



Drivers initiate change, momentum and growth. They focus on attaining their goals, and their key need is to achieve their bottom-line results. The driving need for results, combined with their motto of “Lead, follow, or get out of the way,” explains their no-nonsense, direct approach to getting things accomplished.

Drivers are driven by an inner need to be in personal control. They want to take charge of situations so they can be sure of attaining their goals. They typically have a short attention span and a need for action now.

DRIVERS NEED ACHIEVEMENT AND CONTROL

Drivers want to win, so they may naturally challenge people or practices in the process. They accept challenges, take authority and plunge headfirst into solving problems. They tend to focus on administrative and operational controls and can work quickly and impressively by themselves.

Drivers are naturals at being in control. They tend to be independent, strong-willed, precise, goal-oriented, and competitive with others... especially in a business environment. They try to shape their environment

in order to overcome obstacles en route to their accomplishments. They demand freedom to manage themselves and others, and use their drive to be on top to become winners.

Drivers like to get things done and make things happen. They start, juggle and maintain many projects concurrently. They may continue to add projects to their juggling routine until they are overloaded and then drop everything. They call this a “re-evaluation of their priorities.” After reducing their workload, and stress levels, they often immediately start the whole process over again. Their motivation pattern contributes to a Driver’s tendency to be a “workaholic.”

Their primary skills are their ability to get things done, lead others and make decisions. Drivers have the ability to focus on one task... at the exclusion of everything else. They can block out doorbells, sirens, or other people while channeling all their energies into the specific job at hand.

ON THE OTHER HAND...

With each of the four behavioral styles, negative traits may accompany many of the positive attributes. Any characteristic, when taken to an extreme, has a shadow side.

For the Driver, some negative traits may include stubbornness, impatience and an appearance of toughness. Drivers tend to take control of other people and can have a low tolerance for the feelings, attitudes and shortcomings among co-workers and subordinates. Drivers may annoy others because their constant need to come out on top can be offensive. With the Driver, there are not “nine ways to skin a cat,” there is only *one way*... the one preferred by the Driver!

Drivers like to move at a fast pace and tend to become impatient with delays. It is not unusual for a Driver to call someone and launch into a conversation without saying “Hello.” Oftentimes, Drivers tend to view others who move at a slower speed as less competent.

Their weaknesses tend to include impatience, intolerance, poor listening habits and insensitivity to the needs of others. Their complete

focus on their own goals and immediate tasks may make them appear aloof and uncaring.

One other thing to remember about Drivers is that they will hold you to the terms and agreement of the sale. However, the same rules may not apply to them, because if the terms and agreement of the sale become inconvenient to them, they will lobby hard for you to bend the rules to accommodate their needs. If this happens, offer concessions sparingly (giving in will be seen as weakness) and be prepared to defend your decision to stick to the original agreement. Whenever you give a concession to a Driver, get one in return – concession for concession. You might offer to negotiate new terms and agreements on future sales. Earning respect with Drivers is critical to a long-term relationship.

DRIVERS ARE DECISIVE

Drivers embrace challenges, take authority, make decisions quickly, and expect others to do the same. They prefer to work with people who are decisive, efficient, receptive, competent and intelligent.

You may often find Drivers in top management positions, and their personal strengths often contribute to their success in jobs such as a hard-driving reporter, a stockbroker, an independent consultant ... or a drill sergeant! Under pressure, Drivers often get rid of their anger by ranting, raving or challenging others. While relieving their own inner tensions, they often create stress and tension within others.

“WINNING ISN’T EVERYTHING...”

The competitive nature of the Driver is captured by Vince Lombardi’s now-famous statement that, “Winning isn’t everything... it’s the only thing!” Drivers can be so single-minded that they forget to take the time to “stop and smell the roses.” If they do remember, they may return and comment, “I smelled twelve roses today ... how many did you smell?”

THE SOCIAL SCENE WITH DRIVERS

Drivers tend to take charge in social settings... sometimes inappropriately. Their relationships would improve if they would demonstrate their respect for other people's rights and opinions, allowing others to take charge... while "letting go." Drivers have trouble having fun for fun's sake and usually have a specific purpose in mind. The competitive Driver has a tendency to try to win even in relaxed social settings. He is always conscious of his standing in the "biggest and best" games. "Who has the biggest house?" "Who gives the best parties?" "Who plays the best golf?"

Drivers often intertwine business and friendships. They like to mix their own business interests with pleasure, so they often pick friends from their work pool. Friendships often hinge on how much the friend agrees with the Driver and helps him achieve his goals. Potential friendships are like an experiment with the Driver: If it works, fine. If not, goodbye!

Driver humor can be biting, often directed at others. Drivers tend to take themselves too seriously and could benefit from learning to relax, laugh more and enjoying the lighter side of their own – and others' – actions.

TYPICAL SOCIAL BEHAVIORS OF THE DRIVER MAY INCLUDE:

- Competing actively in almost everything
- Participating in games or contests to win
- Wanting to know the purpose of a function
- Talking shop at gatherings
- Choosing friends by experimentation

PREFERRED SOCIAL SITUATIONS FOR A DRIVER:

- Having many options from which to choose, for example: either jogging, attending an event, dining out, or playing cards
- Paying more attention to tactile things; less to emotions

- Doing only what they prefer to do
- Occasions that favor Direct humor with an opportunity to demonstrate their talents
- Having a group subject to their control
- Being in charge of something at social events and activities: judging, giving directions, chairing a fund-raiser

THE DRIVER STYLE AT WORK

The Driver can be an excellent problem solver and leader. Higher power positions and/or career areas motivate them (situations where they can take charge).

You will often find Drivers in the following types of positions:

- President, CEO, or the formally recognized leader
- Politician
- Law enforcement officer
- Military officer
- Executive
- Manager
- Entrepreneur
- General contractor
- Coach

A typical Driver sees himself as a solutions-oriented manager who enjoys a challenge just “because it’s there.” He likes the opportunity to complete tasks in a creative manner. He is generally viewed as having a high level of confidence, even when it isn’t actually the case. The Driver is often the first person to arrive in the morning and the last person to leave in the evening. At the extreme, their high results orientation can lead to an overextended work pattern and result in neglect for their personal and social lives.

Drivers are often the first person at work to have a new efficiency

“toy.” They were the first to have a computer, a fax, mobile phone and (of course) a PDA. Saving time is always a priority for Drivers so they can accomplish more.

Drivers gain energy by taking risks. They do not feel as bound by conventional restrictions as other types and often feel free to bend rules that get in the way of results. They seek opportunities for change (or they create them!) just to satisfy their need for results. They may even gravitate toward high-risk situations because the excitement of the challenge fuels their drive to exert control in new areas or ways.

Drivers realize that results can be gained through teamwork (and may actually develop a management approach that demands and supports teamwork), but it requires adaptability. The nature of the Driver is to focus on his own individual actions and accomplishments. In his biography, Lee Iacocca, former CEO of Chrysler Corporation (a “Driver legend”), discusses how he learned to merge his temperament with other styles as he finally arrived at the following management philosophy: “In the end, all business operations can be reduced to three words: people, products, profits. People come first. Unless you have a good team, you can’t do much with the other two.” Iacocca knew that good people were the means to an end.

Driver business characteristics include:

- Prefers controlled timeframes
- Seeks personal control
- Gets to the point quickly
- Strives to feel important and be noteworthy in their jobs
- Demonstrates persistence and single-mindedness in reaching goals
- Expresses high ego need
- Prefers to downplay feelings and relationships
- Focuses on tasks that lead to achieving tangible outcomes
- Implements changes in the workplace
- Tends to freely delegate duties, enabling them to take on more tasks and pursue more goals

The preferred business situations for Drivers:

- Calling the shots and telling others what to do
- Challenging workloads to fuel their energy levels
- Personally overseeing, or at least knowing about, their employees' or co-workers' business activities
- Saying what's on their minds without being concerned about hurting anybody's feelings
- Taking risks and being involved in facilitating changes
- Interpreting the rules and answering to themselves alone
- Interested in the answers to "what" questions
- Seeing a logical road toward advancement of achieving goals

THE DRIVER SALESPERSON

If you are (or know someone who is) a Driver salesperson, the natural tendency is to launch rather quickly into a sales presentation. You get right to the point by telling your prospect the bottom-line benefit of using your product to provide a solution. Your natural tendency is to spend little time on chitchat or getting to know your prospects... unless it's required to get the sale! Drivers move quickly, and if a prospect does not see the benefit of your proposal, you move on to the next prospect.

Drivers have a fast, efficient manner and total focus on goals that make them more comfortable than most people with cold calling. They are able to tolerate negatives as a necessary part of the sales process. Their bottom-line orientation fits their focus on products or services, which adds efficiency to their customer acquisition processes. Drivers tend to sell by painting a convincing picture of the benefits of their product or service.

Their best "fit" is with standard products or services where a match can be determined. Products or services requiring lengthy tailoring, customization and/or development (such as complex computer, communication or consultation systems) try their patience. Drivers prefer sales processes where quick decisions can be made based on

rational, concrete, reality-based data. Drivers often like working with products that fill a recognized need rather than in areas where expectations and opportunities have to be developed in conjunction with each customer.

Driver salespeople are very careful about time... especially their own! They tend to make specific time appointments and arrive punctually. They are clear about their desired results from customer contacts and quickly present the features and benefits offered by their product or service.

One caution with the Driver salesperson: If he/she launches into product benefits and an assertive sales approach without performing (a sometimes time-consuming) needs-analysis, prospective buyers may be turned off and feel like they are hearing a “sales pitch” instead of a needs-based, tailored presentation.

THE DRIVER CUSTOMER

The Driver customer will make decisions relatively quickly when presented with factual information. He wants to see the bottom-line impact of the product (or service) solution and wants you to provide enough detail (but not too much!) so that he judges you as competent to handle his business. Drivers generally are businesslike, straightforward and to-the-point; they prefer others to be the same. They expect people to take their goals and concerns seriously and offer them solutions. They respect salespeople who look and act in a professional manner. Also, they expect the salesperson to deliver the results they promised.

What this customer wants to know is how your product or service will solve his problems most effectively right now. The Driver is not a natural listener, so details and lengthy explanations are likely to be lost on him. The salesperson is expected to provide immediately useful information and recommendations that will move the Driver toward his goals. Driver customers will often ask detailed questions more as a test of the salesperson’s credibility than because he wants to know the answers. If it is necessary to provide detailed information to a Driver, it

should be done in writing, and not too voluminous, so the Driver can efficiently review it later.

Driver customers look for product solutions that will help them achieve their goals. They maintain control of the sales process and prefer salespeople who provide the information and data necessary to make a sound decision. They are competitive and respond well to products or services that are “the best.”

Drivers expect results now and are impatient with waiting. They expect salespeople to respond to impossible deadlines even if it means sacrificing personal time. They aren't especially interested in developing relationships with the salesperson, but it is important for them to believe that the salesperson can help them get their results. They like being recognized for their achievements, and respond well to awards banquets, “special customer” celebrations and other recognitions of their involvement with the buying/owning process.

Time is an important factor for the goal-oriented Driver. He does not tolerate having salespeople waste his time and he does not want to waste theirs. This includes time spent on “unimportant” chitchat. Drivers are more comfortable as team leaders than as team players. Because of this, they tend to make decisions themselves rather than getting others involved.

Drivers like to have choices. They like to have options and exercise their decision-making power. Each possibility should be a reasonable choice backed by evidence supporting its probability of success. This type of buyer has clear objectives to achieve and responds to those who can demonstrate that their product or service can efficiently achieve results.

Drivers at a Glance:

- Need to be in charge; dislike inaction
- Act quickly and decisively
- Think practically... not theoretically or hypothetically
- Want highlighted facts

- Strive for results
- Need personal freedom to manage self and others
- Like changes and new opportunities
- Prefer to delegate details
- Cool, independent and competitive
- Have a low tolerance for feelings, attitudes or advice of others
- Work quickly and impressively by themselves
- Want to be recognized for their accomplishments
- Easily stimulated to engage in arguments and conflict
- Interested in administrative controls