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Isn't there a magic pill for that?

We see it on television, in the newspaper, magazines, billboards and in our spam box. I am convinced there is a magic pill for everything in life. For anything that ails us there is a pill we can take that will fix it.

Lose weight....take a pill.

Don't feel good....take a pill.

Want more hair....take a pill.

Feeling old....take a pill.

We are an instant gratification nation. We don't want to wait, invest a lot of time (and certainly a lot of effort) or deal with any pain. We want to be rich right now and have all the goodies the marketplace can deliver. Don't have the cash? No problem; put it on plastic and worry about paying for it later.

So where am I going with this? If I could pick one question that I hear on a weekly, sometimes daily basis it is this: 'What can we do to get more traffic?'

No matter how much I preach about lead sources (see [Waiting for Walk-in Traffic 4-16-07](#)) the bottom line is salespeople want to wait for the buyer to come to them. Yes, we are still hung over from the last seller's market!



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Tom Hopkins has a great line about this profession we call sales. He says, “Sales is the highest paid hard work and the lowest paid easy work.” To reiterate, waiting for walk in buyers is pretty darn easy!

Accept it. There is no magic pill

I hate to burst any bubbles but it’s true. If we abuse our bodies for years it takes years to fix the damage and sometimes, there is no fix. After years of buyers coming out of the woodwork and with little or no attention paid to our sales and marketing efforts, we can’t expect to fix what’s wrong in a few months or weeks. Accept it. We got lazy. We forgot what it was like to market and definitely forgot what it was like to sell. Creating urgency was as easy as saying, ‘Mr. Buyer, if you don’t want it I have two others that do.’

At a sales management seminar last year I heard one former salesperson tell a story of writing 29 purchase agreements at once. He put 29 couples in a conference room and walked them all through the paperwork. How was that selling? I know some of you are saying ‘we never saw anything like that.’ I didn’t either. But I do accept that the majority of my success between 1999 and 2003 was market driven, not because I went out and educated myself to become the best sales manager and salesperson I could be. The question now is do you also accept this? If you don’t, you have a long road ahead of you. If you do, read on!



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Another way to increase sales besides traffic

For every 10 buyers we come into contact with, the breakdown used to go something like this:

25% are very easy to sell

25% are very difficult to sell

50% fall somewhere in the middle

With the help of the current media, I believe these ratios have adjusted to the following:

10% are very easy to sell

40% are very difficult to sell

50% fall somewhere in the middle.

What I'm suggesting is that we have less buyers **walking** into our models and when they do, only about 1 in 10 is easy to sell. The other 9 are very guarded and know how to make an average salesperson believe they are just looking. Here's my next question to you, why be average when you could be great?



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Great salespeople are made, not born

It has been a long time since I have seen what a difference a great salesperson can make in today's marketplace. I subscribe to the theory that many of us have the characteristics that make up great salespeople but very few of us put in the effort to fully exploit those characteristics. The only difference between average and great is a decision to become great. Anyone reading this can decide at any time to become great.

Great salespeople take the leads they have and convert more of them to buyers. They know their conversion ratios and understand they first need leads, then appointments, then reservations and then sales. They follow a process and convert a high percentage of the buyers they have to work with. If an average salesperson will convert 1 or 2 out of 10, a great salesperson will convert 5 out of 10. In my book that is another way to dramatically increase sales without bleeding the marketing budget dry.

How to become great

1. **Accept that it will take years to really get it.** Look at it this way. If you feel that is too long, *the time will pass anyway.* The sooner you start, the sooner you will get there.
2. **Look for the little things.** I often tell my builder clients that there is no one thing I can bring to the table that will improve your business 10 or 20%. I can, however, give you a lot of things that will improve it 1%.



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On this journey, try to make a 1% improvement every week. After a year, guess what, you have increased your sales 50%.

3. **Educate yourself.** How can you work smarter if you don't educate yourself? Set aside one hour a day for personal development by reading sales books. You may do this in 15 minute increments but it all adds up.
4. **Repetition is the mother of all learning.** I continually re-read books and attend the same seminars year after year. Why? Each time I go back I am at a different educational level and will pick up on things I missed or didn't understand the first time.
5. **Ask for help.** Don't be afraid to ask questions to those that know more. Most educators love to share their knowledge. Bill Gates says, "Power does not come from knowledge kept but knowledge shared." Ask those in the know for book and seminar recommendations.
6. **Invest in yourself.** I made a resolution last year not to attend another "free" seminar. In fact, I routinely will invest \$2,000 and more for a two or three day seminar. I'm not saying you need to run out and do this tomorrow but do look for quality programs where you will invest \$200 to \$400. When it comes to seminars, the old adage 'you get what you pay for' really rings true.

I challenge all of you to write down some things you can improve at and go out and become absolutely excellent doing them. We are only as good as our weakest area of our sales process. Start with that area first, move to the next and continue to do this over and over. It takes 21 days to make a new habit



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but the consequences of that habit will start paying off immediately. Finally,
remember the only way you will fail is by quitting. No matter how many
setbacks, as long as you don't quit you cannot fail.

Happy Selling!