

THE FOUNDATIONS OF HOW TO MASTER THE SALES GAME

MASTER THE BASICS

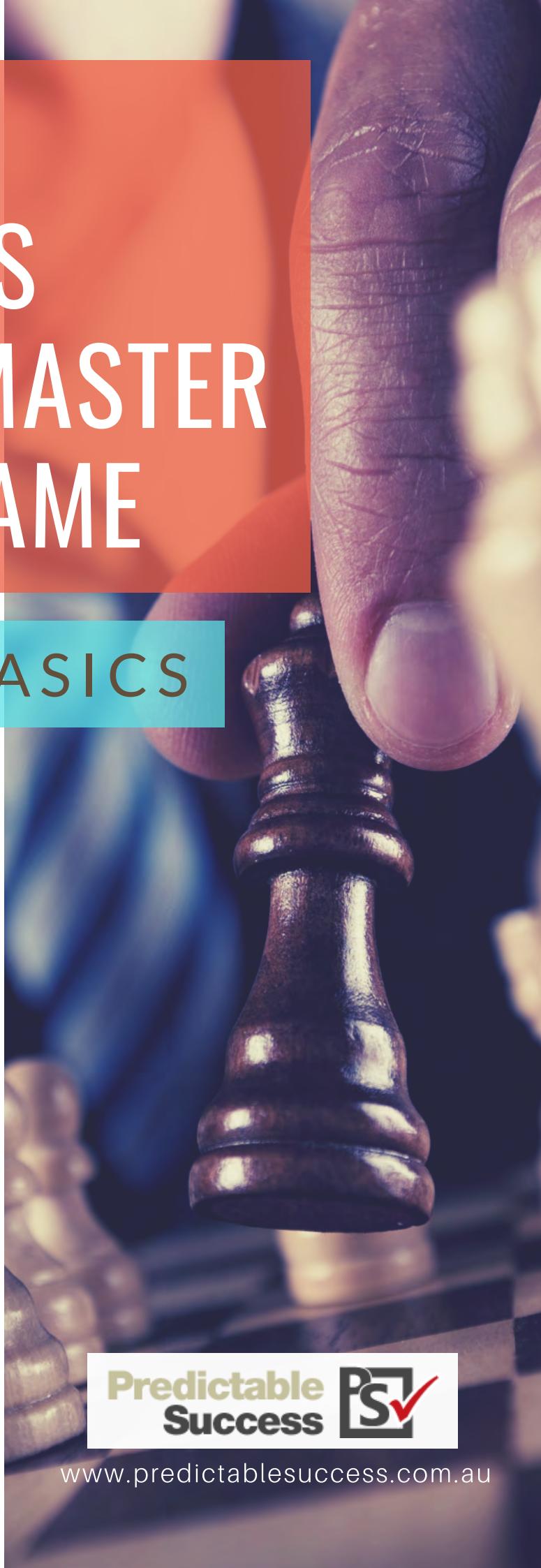
There's so much information flying around the world of sales training these days, particularly when it comes to the basics.

When I say the basics, I'm not talking about obvious sales training ideas everyone should already know, such as, "Look prospects in the eye and shake their hand." I'm talking about real hardcore sales training basics.

I'm going to assume you already know how to make eye contact and shake hands. But what are the basics behind how to get in front of your ideal prospects?

And once you're actually in front of them, what do you do to maximize the likelihood of closing the sale?

It's so important to get these foundational sales training basics right





1ST FOUNDATIONAL STEP

WHAT YOU'VE BEEN TOLD IS WRONG.

I promise you that this is the case: Whatever sales training advice someone has given you in the past, I guarantee some—if not all—of it is wrong.

Unless you're getting sales training from a badass sales manager or top-performing salesperson who knows everything about selling, most sales training out there is misleading or just plain ineffective.

There are so many old-school selling ideas in rotation today that it's impossible to avoid them all. In fact, if you just do the opposite of what most people tell you, you're probably going to be way better off.

Of course, the best approach is to figure out what strategies actually do work in sales, and commit to implementing those techniques instead. Read on to learn exactly what those strategies are.

2ND FOUNDATIONAL STEP

BE THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT YOU THINK A SALESPERSON IS.

As I said before, the average sales training advice out there is wrong. What the media tells us about salespeople is also wrong. And in most cases, what salespeople themselves think they should act like is wrong.

Most salespeople strive to be that gregarious, funny, outgoing archetypal salesperson they see portrayed in TV shows and movies. But in today's world, this couldn't be further from ideal.

An effective salesperson today is someone who can read people, dig deep to understand them, and then follow a process to engage them in a real conversation using a systematic approach..

Be the complete opposite of what you think a salesperson is and you'll be well on your way.





3RD FOUNDATIONAL STEP **TALK IS CHEAP.**

A lot of sales training focuses on what the salesperson should say. It's no wonder that most salespeople think the gift of gab is the most important talent when it comes to selling.

In reality, prospects don't want to hear salespeople talk. They don't care about you. They don't care about your product. They don't care about your company, and they certainly don't care about whatever you have to say about it.

Prospects only care about solving the challenges they're dealing with right now. Talking at them is just a waste of time. Instead, focus on engaging prospects in a true two-way conversation, where you're providing real value and sharing insights into what they care about most.

4TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP **HAVE A SYSTEM.**

If you're a relatively new salesperson, the best sales training advice I can give you is to put a real selling system in place. And follow it.

If you're just making up your selling approach as you go, you're effectively shooting yourself in the foot. Follow a systematic approach to selling—whether it's my approach or someone else's that you trust.

Obviously, you just want to make sure your selling system has been proven to work in today's world. Then follow that system religiously.



5TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP **DO YOUR HOMEWORK.**

Use personalization to show your prospects that you've done your research and you understand who they are.

There's no need to go overboard and do 25 minutes of research before every phone call. At my agency, we have a team of people do our research for us, so it's ready to go. But if you don't have that resource, just hop on LinkedIn for a few minutes to learn the basics about the prospect: their job background, their past employers, what topics they seem to be interested in, where they went to school, where they're located, etc.

Ideally, use LinkedIn Navigator, which can give you much more valuable information and insight into prospects.



6TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP **ASK QUESTIONS.**

Not all questions are created equal.

The key is to ask questions that truly engage your prospects and get them to do the talking. Remember, if you're doing all the talking in a selling situation, you're in trouble.

The data shows that top-performing salespeople ask more questions to determine whether prospects are a fit early on in the sales process. So ask more questions.



8TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP **BE A PEER, NOT A SERVANT.**

I see salespeople all the time who feel the need to put their prospects up on a pedestal. What they're actually doing is putting themselves below their prospects, showing up as servants rather than true peers.

We need to be in a position where we see ourselves as true peers to our prospects. Don't treat your prospects like gods. Instead, talk to them as an equal.

Of course, you don't want to be overly casual with prospects, but you do want to make an effort to interact with them as you would any other normal person in your day-to-day life.

When you behave like a peer to your prospects, it's disarming—and it makes them feel more comfortable with you.



7TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP **DON'T BE AFRAID TO LOSE SALES.**

Many salespeople are absolutely terrified of losing a sale. You know what? It happens. It's not a big deal. I lose sales. Every top-performing salesperson loses sales sometimes. It's not the end of the world.

Quite frankly, living in fear of losing a sale will make you a far less effective salesperson. You need to be completely unafraid of losing a sale. When you're actually unafraid of losing a sale, prospects immediately sense it—and they respect you more.



9TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP

STOP PERSUADING.

Your prospects don't need to be persuaded to do business with you. What they need is a professional salesperson to determine whether there's a fit—period.

Your prospects either need what you're selling, or they don't. There's no reason to persuade someone who doesn't need your product to buy it. That's stupid. It doesn't make sense.

So stop trying to persuade prospects to do business with you. Instead, engage them in a conversation. Ask them powerful, useful, systematic questions to determine what's going on in their world. What are their challenges? What concerns are they having? What goals are most important to them? Doing business with you should just be a natural extension of solving their problems. Stop persuading.



10TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP

ALWAYS BE LEARNING.

Learning is a lifelong journey. If you stop learning, you're in trouble.

In sales, so much changes so fast that the second we stop learning, we start failing. At my company, we're always reading new books, learning new strategies, and implementing new ideas.

It's essential to always be learning new approaches, especially if you're relatively new in sales. You need to really master selling. If selling is something you're committed to doing over the long term, you must always be learning. Read new books on selling. Read new books on business. Take courses. Educate yourself on your craft.

If you were a lawyer, you would've gone to law school, and then you'd have to get continuing education credits throughout the course of your career. In sales, there's no such thing. So, it's on us to continually learn and improve. Always be learning.

11TH FOUNDATIONAL STEP

NEVER GET COMFORTABLE, EVER.

When salespeople get comfortable, they start to slip. I see it all the time. A salesperson will start out with tons of energy and commitment right out the gate. They'll start to make some money and feel great about themselves. At this point, they get comfortable.

So what do they do? They stop doing whatever it was that got them there in the first place.

We never want to get to the point where we're super comfortable in sales. We always want to be a little uncomfortable, a little nervous. We always want to be looking over our shoulder thinking, "If I stop doing what I'm doing, this is all going to fall apart."

Now, I don't mean that you should be paranoid or stressed out. But you should also never feel completely comfortable. Constantly push, strive, and stretch outside your comfort zone to try things you haven't tried before. The second we get comfortable is the second that we start to get worse.