



## CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Deepen your understanding of establishing, securing, and maintaining a long-term relationship
- ✓ Develop methods and tactics to earn trust with people
- ✓ Identify opportunities to relate to others and find commonalities with people
- ✓ Understand and appreciate the importance of credibility in the marketplace
- ✓ Deploy preparation as a discipline before every meeting

### *Teachers Note*

Potential Exercise  
at beginning of  
chapter: write down  
five reasons you trust  
your best friend.

### *Professional Selling*

the art of establish-  
ing a basic level of  
relatability and trust  
as a means to selling  
a service or a prod-  
uct to a customer.

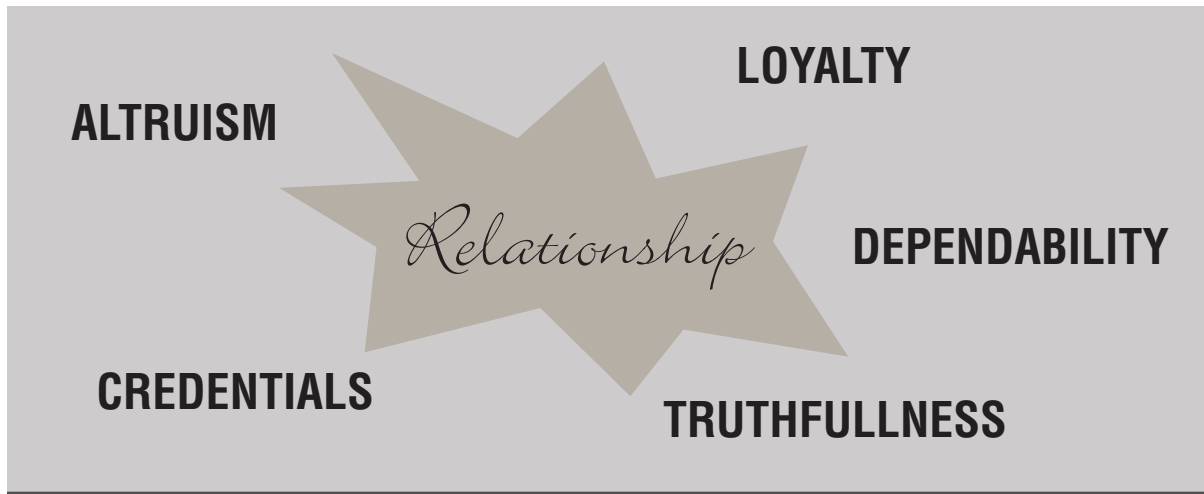
### *Trust*

the foundation in a  
relationship—business  
or personal—that  
enables the relation-  
ship to grow and  
develop.

**W**hen the authors of this book first sat down and discussed the art of professional selling, they quickly concluded that there is not one silver bullet or one particular behavior that sums up the making of a successful sales professional. The making of a successful sales professional is a combination of many things, executed over a long period of time, that are performed well! Approaching a client, partner, or any relationship (business or personal) may take an average of seven different ways, seven different times. For example, landing a \$4 million account with a hospital will likely not happen in a single phone call. Earning a signed contract with a hospital may take one to two years, with a dozen meetings (some by phone, others in person), countless questions and details to be sorted out, and all managed by a professional sales representative who has earned the liking and trust of the hospital's doctors and administration. We will discuss more about positioning for a long-term relationship and the sales process in Chapter 8, but for now your ability to relate to people and build trust with the clients are the gateway to **professional selling** in the twenty-first century.

## TRUST

Your ability to relate to another human being and earn trust is the foundation of any relationship—business or personal. You can be the smartest and most skilled car sales professional in the world, but if I don't trust you or don't like you . . . I am not buying a car from you. Let's take a closer look at **trust**.



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### Five Ways to Earn Trust in a Relationship

You could have a ten-year relationship with a customer, but if the trust between the two of you is violated, that relationship can be destroyed within seconds. And in your personal lives, whether it is a boyfriend, a friend, or a marriage, trust is the foundation that allows that relationship to grow.

So you may ask, “I’m a quiet person. I do not deal with people a whole lot. It’s hard for me to build trust with people who I do not know.” Whether you are, quiet, introverted, extroverted, a perfectionist, there are many ways you can help build trust with people, especially people you do not know that well. We have identified five ways for you to immediately begin practicing building trust in ANY relationship: business or personal.

**Truthfulness** is perhaps the easiest, most natural way of earning someone’s trust. However, of the five ways to build trust discussed in this chapter, we have identified truthfulness as perhaps the most glaring disappointment in today’s society.

As future leaders in our society it is important to note that the words you use should be aligned with your actions. A September 2016 Gallup poll asked the question: how much trust and confidence do you have in our federal government in Washington when it comes to handling national and international problems. Fifty percent of those polled said “not very much,” or “none at all.” That means that half of the country does not trust their elected leaders to get things done and improve the lives of everyday Americans. One of the most significant reasons for this distrust is that politicians do not always follow through with their promises and therefore appear to be untruthful.

#### *Truthfulness*

telling or expressing the truth in a candid manner that enables the recipient to make an honest, objective assessment of the situation.

One of the best things you can do when you make a mistake—in business or personal relationships—is to admit you made a mistake, and that you recognize other people have been impacted by the mistake. People tend to empathize with truthfulness, honesty, candor, and straightforwardness. Let us consider two very similar, yet distinct scenarios:

**SCENARIO 1:** “Dad, I got a 70 percent on my test. It’s my fault, I did not study and watched too much sports last weekend. I need to hit the books this week and pull that grade up.”



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**SCENARIO 2:** “Dad, I got a 70 percent on my test. I’m so frustrated with this teacher. She is so mean to everybody, and she doesn’t take time to explain things.”

While either scenario is possible, the student in scenario one has an admirable honesty about himself/herself, and will likely have a father who is more understanding and more empathetic than in the second scenario. But notice how the student in scenario one did not just admit the shortfall, but also expressed how he/she would make the situation right? There is merit in turning a wrong into a right! If you dropped the ball, just tell people that . . . and

then fix it. Most of us can empathize with mistakes because we have made similar missteps. But if you are not truthful when a mistake happens, the receiving party will respect you less, and trust will be impacted.

People do not tell the truth for many reasons: fear, posturing, manipulation, whatever the reason, people fail to see that telling the truth is an opportunity to demonstrate your character. Let’s apply truth to a business situation found in the following ethical dilemma.

## ETHICAL



Bob and Jeff have been friends for fifteen years. Both have had very successful careers, and have put some money aside. They have decided to open a family-friendly restaurant together. Prior to opening the restaurant they had a frank discussion on how they would treat very close friends and family when they come into the restaurant. Both had very good ideas on how to handle friends and family, but they agreed that giving free food and free drinks away are not in the best interest of a new business. Therefore, they agreed that all family and friends who come into the restaurant will have

to pay their respective bill, although they will receive a VIP discount of 15 percent off their meal.

After the first three weeks of the business opening, Bob was working alone when his golf buddies came in for drinks after a long day on the golf course. After about an hour the friends stood up and signaled they were leaving. One friend said, “Bob, great seeing you. Do me a favor: I forgot my wallet. Take care of this bill for me, and the next time I see you I will pay you back! So sorry, but I promise I’ll take care of it.” The bill was only \$65, but Bob knew he would probably not see these friends again for another month. And by then, it may be awkward asking for the \$65 back. Bob then realized he did not have his wallet either, and therefore could NOT pay for his friends at this time. Bob recalled the deal he made with his business partner, Jeff: that all friends and family members must pay their bill. Small discount, but nothing for free!

Bob started to factor in that they only drank draft beer, and no inventory would be noticeably missing (such as beer bottles, which are easier for a business to track). The real loss to the business was approximately \$12–\$14 in actual costs to the business (the rest was mark-up, or “profit”). Since they were partners, half of that \$12–\$14 was Bob’s anyway, so Jeff would only stand to personally lose \$6–\$7. And the reality was that Jeff would never find out. Bob also recalled that Jeff’s son came in the other day to say hello, and he noticed that Jeff gave his son a free fountain soda while the son hung out. Bob never said anything to Jeff because fountain soda is only \$0.99, and the real cost (or profit) to the business was maybe \$0.12.

What should Bob do?

- A. Go ahead and comp the bill, move on. These situations are rare, and Jeff would never find out. It’s not like Jeff pulled out \$1 to pay for his son’s soda.
- B. Put \$14 in the register tomorrow. This way, the business did not lose money. Bob shouldn’t have to pay the “profits” back to Jeff for customers who walked out without paying. This way, nobody loses.
- C. Tell Jeff the truth. Pay the \$65 tomorrow. But also ask Jeff to put \$1 back into the register for his son’s soda.
- D. Pay the bill, but not bring up the \$1 soda.
- E. None of the above. How would you handle it?

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Another way to earn trust is to be **dependable**. A big component of being dependable is to be consistent in your behavior. By developing a consistency in your behavior your business partners, customers, family members,

### *Dependability*

consistency in a behavior, job duty, or personal responsibility that enables the receiving party to develop their trust with you.

and friends will eventually trust that aspect about you. If a working father comes home every day at 5:30 p.m. from work, the spouse and children will depend on this routine and plan some of their day around the consistent behavior. Dinner is easier to plan for the family, and helping the kids with homework and attending sporting events are behaviors the family will depend upon. On the other hand, if a working father is known for working late or stopping off with a few friends to play cards, the unpredictable behavior makes it more difficult for the family to plan family activities, dinner, sports activities, and even homework.

Same concept applies in business. If you tell a customer you will provide them an update on their loan every week, then make sure you call every week with that update (even if the update is: “I just wanted to let you know there has not been an update this week on your loan, but I will call you again next week with a loan status to see if anything changed.”). It is acceptable to say that there is “nothing new.” However, just because there is no action on the loan does not justify breaking your promise to the customer that you would call every week with an update. People who are dependable are consistent, and this is one way you can build trust with people.

### *Role Play*

You are the boss of two employees. They have worked for you for five years. You are receiving a promotion and have been asked to pick your replacement:

- ✓ Employee A shows up every day on time, always has his/her work duties complete to perfection. However, he/she has a dull personality, rarely has anything to say to anybody, and can make it difficult



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to have fun at work because coworkers are not sure if he/she is offended by the extroverts at the office.

- ✓ Employee B is an employee you like a lot. They make the office a fun place to work, but admittedly all of the allotted sick days get used up every year, including a few unpaid days of absence. In fact, employee A is the one who makes up that extra work.

Discuss amongst the class what attributes are more important to the business, the local office, and the customers.

**Loyalty** is another means of developing trust with a business professional or personal relationship. Loyalty enables you to give the benefit of the doubt to another person. The person receiving this loyalty will appreciate the fact that you will stand by them in the good times and the bad. Trust will grow because they know they can count on you for support. Think about it like this: you have banked at ABC bank for three years, and for the first time you accidentally bounced a check. In most banks, you likely will have incurred a significant fee. However, if the bank views you as a loyal customer who has not bounced a check in three years, they will likely give you the benefit of the doubt and waive the fee. The opportunity for the banker here is to tell the customer: “You can bank anywhere you want, but you have stayed with us for three years. I am certain this was just a mistake, and we will not charge a loyal customer like you a fee.”

Same goes for your friends. They may come to you and confide that they are in a personal jam, and need your help. Depending on the significance of the situation, you have a moment here to express your loyalty to that friend—without judging if they deserve this mess or not. Loyalty is an excellent way to build trust.

A well-known law firm that has experienced attorneys with admirable **credentials** can project a sense of trust immediately between a client and an attorney. We all know some extremely smart people, but if they do not have their Medical Doctorate (MD), we do not want them operating on us.

This is a challenge for the professional selling community (at large), because many professional sales agents are not required to have a professional designation. The mortgage crisis of 2008–2010 exposed a glaring problem in the banking community. While the vast majority of mortgage professionals were honorable and ethical people, the lack of professional credentials, ethics training, and oversight allowed far too many unscrupulous lenders into the lending business. It was not until recently that mortgage originators must register with the financial industry and receive mandatory minimal levels of training and secure professional credentials.

### *Loyalty*

extending the benefit of the doubt to your business associates or personal relationships.

### *Credentials*

having the proper education, experience, and/or expertise that demonstrate your relevant qualifications.

Obtaining the proper and requisite credentials is one way you build trust in a relationship.

## *Altruism*

### *Altruism*

putting the needs  
and interest of others  
before our own.

We have all heard the term “servant leader.” When I think of a fireman, or a police officer, or paramedic, the word “unselfish” comes immediately to mind. The scene of a fireman running into a burning building has a deeply profound meaning in our society: these professionals are running TO the problem! In business, mistakes will happen, and there will be days your customers will be extremely mad or frustrated. Developing a sense of empathy or unselfishness will help you run to the problem and save the day. It’s human nature to want to point the finger, blame someone else, or avoid responsibility. But it’s also selfish to put yourself first before the customer. For example, if you are a professional sales representative with customers buying from your website, do not blame the delivery truck for failing to deliver the package. The customer believed YOU when they paid money and the package was shipped. Take responsibility for the package not arriving. Make the delivery truck failure YOUR problem—not the customer’s—and run to the problem. If you take responsibility, empathize with the customer’s frustration, and fix the problem, you will earn trust!

Many undergraduate students or young professionals find themselves working in restaurants or retail (amongst other industries). In these situations you may find that you took the customer’s food order in a restaurant, but the kitchen made a mistake and cooked the wrong food. Too often we see waiters blame the kitchen or the busy staff. And too often the customer doesn’t feel you completely understand or empathize with their frustration. Let’s look at two possible responses to the customer:

1. “I am so sorry that we brought you the wrong food. The manager is aware of it, and we are recooking the meal right now. Your meal will be out in approximately eleven minutes, and this time it will be excellent. May I bring you a salad, new drink, or something to hold you over?”
2. “I am so sorry, the kitchen screwed up the order. We are just slammed tonight, and we will get it out to you as soon as we can.”

Which of these two professionals ran to the fire? Better yet, if you OWNED the restaurant, which employee would you want handling the situation? In scenario A the professional put the customer’s interest BEFORE their own, taking complete responsibility (and offered a specific solution to the problem).

- ✓ The message sent to the customer? “You are MY customer, and I take full responsibility for what happened. No excuses. Here’s



exactly how we will make it right. Here's what you can expect. And in the meantime here is what we will do to make your experience a better one."

In scenario B notice how the professional put his/her own interest BEFORE the customer's interest (and offered a vague solution to the problem).

- ✓ The message sent to the customer? "Not my fault. Someone else's fault. Your food will eventually get out to you."

What kind of professional are you? How do you want to be perceived by your customers, or your boss, or . . . your family? Do you make excuses? Or do you empathize and put the needs of others before your own? Being unselfish is another method you can incorporate when building trust.

As undergraduate students getting ready to begin your corporate careers, there is no better time than right now to practice these trust builders. Many of you already are very trustworthy people and execute these principles well.

Practice these five trust builders with your friends, your teachers, and your customers. You will see a noticeable uptick in how much they respect you . . . and trust you! The world needs trustworthiness now more than ever before.

## LEVELS OF TRUST

We deal with many, many people in our lifetime. For purposes of this book we would like to focus on the people/entities that are the most critical: your family, your career, and your network (business friends or personal friends).

The two levels of trust that we will focus on are: transactional/moderate and going deep.

### *Transactional Level of Trust*

The **transactional level of trust** is the basic level of a relationship that we come to expect between our neighbors, friends, business colleagues, and network. At this level, minimal expectations of honesty, dependability, loyalty, credentials, and altruism are needed in order to have a healthy relationship. For example, having a good relationship with your neighbor is important, and it is a relationship that you



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### *Transactional Level of Trust*

a lower level of trust that typically requires a reactive approach to the relationship; a minimal level of effort to earn and maintain. The repercussions of losing trust at the transactional level are less severe.

may depend on for various reasons (i.e., being a good neighbor, we may need their help on occasion). In these relationships you tend to react to each other: for example, you do not talk to the neighbors a whole lot, but they may need a favor from you every once in awhile. As a good neighbor you are happy to provide that favor. Minimal effort is required to establish a general level of trust, relatability, and even help each other on occasion. In most situations you may be “neighborly” for many years, but the relationship never evolves into you being the best of friends. That’s OK, and very normal! In life not all of your neighbors will be your “best of friends.”

Perhaps your neighbors ask you to take out their garbage while they are on vacation in California. You are reacting by saying yes. And they are “depending” on you to get this done. Such a situation requires a minimal level of relationship building or trust. However, if you forget to take out the garbage on Wednesday as you promised, they will likely be disappointed. But since the relationship is at the transactional level they may not make a big deal out of your omission. Since these relationships are generally transactional in nature, the neighbors will likely brush it off and tell you not to worry about it. You do not put much into the relationship, but you do not get a lot out of the relationship either.

Transactional relationships are reactive in nature, and require minimal effort to maintain. But let us now shift to more serious and deeper relationships: family and business.

## *Going Deep*

### *Going Deep Level of Trust*

the highest level of trust that is required in a proactive approach to the relationship; requires maximum effort and time to earn, maintain, and grow. The repercussions of losing trust at the Going Deep level is severe.

Your family and career are not just important to your livelihood, they are critical! These are relationships you must protect, and they require maximum effort to earn, maintain, and grow. They call for proactive fundamentals of trust building. In business if a professional sales representative would like to deepen the relationship with his/her client, a proactive effort should be deployed.

Consider these two scenarios:

**SCENARIO 1:** Bob calls his bank and asks for new checks to be ordered and sent to his house. The banker reacts and takes care of the customer’s check order. Five days later the new checks arrive at the customer’s house. The customer is “content” but really ANY bank could have responded to these needs.

Now let’s consider scenario 2, in which a banker wants to go deeper with his/her customers, and wants “customers for life!” The banker decides to make a proactive effort at the relationship in an effort to go above and beyond.

**SCENARIO 2:** The banker calls Bob a week later and says, “Hello Bob! It’s JT down at the bank. I just wanted to check in and make sure you received those checks in the mail as promised. And, I wanted to see if there is ANYTHING else we could do for you Bob . . . ”

Bob would appreciate the proactive call, especially if the checks never arrived as promised! But let’s assume the checks DID arrive on time as promised. Bob might say, “Yes JT, I got the checks. And no, I do not need anything else. Thank you! But while I have you on the phone . . . do you happen to know the home loan rates these days?”

The banker’s proactive behavior and efforts at growing the relationship will lead to customers for life.

One last distinction to make: when you reach a “deep” relationship with a customer, you are likely to maintain that customer if you made an honest mistake. For example, let’s assume you called Bob to ensure he received his checks, but learned the checks never arrived. By taking a proactive approach and going deep with Bob, you have the ability to apologize, cancel the old checks, and order new checks immediately. However, by taking a transactional approach to Bob, you may never have learned that his checks got lost or stolen. The customer may lose trust in your bank, switch to a competing bank, and you may never know it!

## EXERCISE

### TRANSACTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND GOING DEEP

Next time you have a paper due, send the paper in a few days early and ask the professor “I know this is not due until Friday, but would you be comfortable taking a look to see if it hits the mark, and if you have any suggestions for me to improve it?”

You will notice that this proactive behavior will **LIKELY** increase your chances at getting a much better grade on the paper. If the professor says it hits the mark and makes a few suggestions to improve it (and let’s assume you incorporate those suggested edits), you have just made it very difficult for them to give you a C on the paper. The professor will **LIKELY** appreciate your people skills and proactive approach to the course. It’s another way to deepen the relationship with your professors and to develop trust with key faculty.

### *Teachers Note*

Suggested guest speaker on trust: a working sales professional who can touch on these five trust builders: truthfulness, dependability, loyalty, credentials, and altruism. Have them discuss the art of putting these into practice, and express the importance of giving actual examples of when they have experienced when these specific trust builders were **NOT** acted upon. It is acceptable and encouraged for the speaker to add his or her own recommended trust builders.

“Your customers aren’t customers anymore. Your vendors aren’t vendors anymore. They’re either your teammates or someone else’s teammates. If you’re not on their team, they’ll find someone who is.”

—John Ellis

## INTRODUCTION ON RELATABILITY

Being relatable is what sets the stage for trust. Put simply, your ability to sell—professional or personal—could be greatly diminished without the skill set to relate to someone and ultimately earn their trust. You may trust your spouse, but if you cannot relate to each other and find commonalities, the path may prove to be a difficult one. On the flipside, you can get along wonderfully, have much in common, and have the best time together. But if trust is violated, the path may prove to be a difficult one.

Therefore, as authors we concluded that trust and relatability would serve as the foundation of this textbook, and the launching pad into all of the other professional selling skills outlined in this textbook. Let us be clear, all of us are selling *something* in our personal and professional journeys. The same skills that enable us to (a) locate a customer, (b) make a sale to that customer, (c) maintain the relationship with that customer, and (d) make them customers for a lifetime are the SAME skills that we apply to our teammates, fraternities, sororities, clubs, friends, families, neighbors, and significant others. Each and every day we find ourselves selling something. And whether you are someone I want to work with at the office, a friend down the hallway whom I want to join a sorority with, or a person who I want to go out to dinner with (personal or professional), the art of selling and the skills required are intimately part of the process.

### *Relatability*

the commonalities of two persons or more that enable immediate rapport and relationship building.

In relationships, trust and **relatability** are keys to achieving your long-term “common” goals. Therefore, for the purpose of this textbook, trust and relatability are considered mutually exclusive and foundational cornerstones for any team, any sport, or any business deal. Is it possible for a talented sports team to be successful if they did not trust one another, or lacked the basic ability to get along and relate to one other? It is possible, but no coach, no business manager, and no teammate welcomes such a situation. The potential for failure significantly escalates when teammates cannot relate to each other, or when there is mistrust.

## WAYS TO BECOME RELATABLE AND LIKEABLE

So how do we become relatable? Some may think “I’m too quiet, I do not relate to people all that well.” Others may say, “I am an extravert, but I can sometimes come across as disingenuous.” And then there are people in the middle who may say, “I don’t care about anything except this team succeeding.” Each of these personalities—and EVERY type of personality—has the capability of being relatable! Quiet, loud, perfectionist, funny, hard worker, diplomat, compassionate, conservative, risky, nerd, C-student . . . regardless of which one of these attributes reflects your style—YOU can turn ANY of these into an advantage for yourself and actually use it to be “relatable.”

## CASE DISCUSSION

One week before rush week, freshman Steve Johnson is considering joining ABC fraternity. The ABC’s are one of the largest and most respected fraternities on campus. Steve is a quiet guy, keeps to himself, and is not one to be flashy. Furthermore, he has a dry sense of humor and can often appear to be bored and not having a good time. But he’s also a huge college football fan and has developed advanced graphics design skills. He has an amazing knack for creative artwork and website design. He was also the captain of his high school track team.

Later on that day, Steve attends his lab class and realizes that he is sitting next to Johnny Batton, President of ABC Fraternity. Johnny leans over and introduces himself, and says, “This is such an awesome week. We will be



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recruiting new pledges into our fraternity. But we don't want any deadbeats! We want new brothers who will help this fraternity remain great—long after I am gone. Yes, we know how to have a good time. But we also are very competitive in sports and do a lot of good charity around campus. I am proud of our brothers and what we accomplish as a fraternity.”

Steve couldn't believe he was sitting next to the President. This was a club he really wanted to be associated with. So he just smiled and listened, not sure exactly how to respond to Johnny's enthusiasm or charisma. He also became privately discouraged after hearing “We don't want any deadbeats.”

1. Does Steve have an opportunity to be relatable? Or does his quiet nature preclude him from trying?
2. What “specific” professional selling advice would you recommend to Steve in this moment?
3. Should Steve leave it alone and wait for rush week to officially begin? Or is now an opportune time?

Students find themselves in similar situations like this all of the time. Whether it is a fraternity rush week or a career fair, the selling opportunity is the exact same. Both entities are looking for men and women who will make profound contributions and add immediate value. In the case above, although Steve is quiet by nature he has many skills and talents to offer the ABC fraternity.

The difference between a professional sales representative and an ordinary person (such as Steve) is that a professional sales representative recognizes the opportunity and immediately calibrates his relatability factor. A professional sales representative has a symbolic toolbox filled with relatability tools. Each of us has a lifelong set of experiences and talents that we can draw upon. For example, if the potential client likes football, then talk football when you meet! If the potential buyer is more information driven, then keep the conversation factual and to the point.

In the fraternity case above, Steve has the opportunity to be relatable, but it is incumbent upon him to spot the opportunity and connect the dots with the fraternity president. Here are a couple ways Steve can be relatable:

1. “Johnny, I have been eying your fraternity for the past two weeks. Are you guys looking for new brothers who are graphics designers and who develop websites?”
2. “That's awesome, Johnny. You guys sound like you have the full package. Is there room in your fraternity for athletes who ran track in high school and love football?”

3. “My name is Steve, and one of the things that attracts me to your fraternity is your charitable arm and desire to improve lives around campus. I have talents and skills that could advance your fraternity’s charitable arm and really make a difference on campus.”

Steve may be quiet. However, being relatable in this moment does not require a ton of effort, but rather an awareness of your strengths and what you bring to the relationship. When you know your target audience (business or personal) each one of us has SOMETHING we can relate to the receiving party.

Sales professionals are rarely caught off guard because they know their target audience. They do their homework. They know their audience. They actively seek opportunities to relate and build trust. When they are engaging a customer, they look for an opening in the conversation to offer value and connect the dots. They are prepared to have a relevant conversation on a moment’s notice. In the case of Steve and Johnny above, all Steve had to do was list what he is good at, and then wait for the opportunity to speak with the fraternity. You do not need to be an extravert to do this. Preparation is all that is needed.

## STUDENT EXERCISE

It is now time to discuss the semester long project that will include many of the concepts discussed in the coming chapters. Your teacher will refer to the assignment found at the back of Chapter 11 and begin breaking the class into groups of 4–10 (depending on class size). Once the teams are formed, one student should serve as the team captain/leader. The project is a semester long and the instructor will work with the class to allot a sufficient amount of time for preparation, discussion, and ultimately an excellent final product. Please see Chapter 11 Homework for details! Good luck.

## *Teachers Note*

We just discussed several ways to be relatable as a means to fit in, join a team, earn trust, and contribute.

The purpose of this ensuing exercise is to encourage the students to locate various ways for individuals to be relatable to a team or cause. Some students are quiet, but excellent at research. Others are extroverts, and will be a great addition to the final PowerPoint presentation.

## HOW TO PREPARE

We just discussed various ways to be relatable and connect with others. But what happens when you are seeking a job, or going blindly to an interview, or randomly have a customer show up in your office? Sometimes being relatable warrants more specified preparation and due diligence. There are a couple of recommended methods of approaching complex meetings.

First, know the situation you are walking into. Whether it is a job interview or a customer who has unique needs, a good habit to develop is to review in advance the job requirements or business expectations of your customer. Then pencil down your strengths that compliment those business needs. For example, perhaps the job description is seeking candidates who possess:

- ✓ strong presentation skills,
- ✓ excellent communication tactics, and
- ✓ demonstrable interdepartmental collaboration.

For your job interview, it is strongly recommended to be aware of what they expect and how you can meet those expectations. As an undergraduate student or young sales professional, your career may be limited but your transferrable skills are not. Sports teams, waiting tables, fraternities and sororities, and university clubs are all opportunities to develop skills and relate to business needs. Let's consider a student who has previously waited tables and would like to articulate how their skills as a waiter match the skills needed for a customer service representative position.

**SCENARIO 1** (in a job interview): “I waited tables and this was great experience. My duties included taking orders, collaborating with the kitchen, and providing excellent customer service, and managing money.”

**SCENARIO 2** (in a job interview): “My job as a waiter provided an excellent opportunity to develop my presentation and communication skills. I had to approach people from all walks of life, listen to their needs, and work with other departments to ensure the customers had an excellent experience.”

In scenario 1 the student truly misses an opportunity to connect the dots and convince the hiring manager that waiting tables was an excellent foundation for customer service. However, notice how in scenario 2 the student is articulating transferrable skills that match the needs of—for example—a customer service representative position. Scenario 2 demonstrates reliability, listening, and enhancing the customer experience.

Additionally, if you were in a fraternity or sorority, write down exactly how coordination between members of your club and the Interfraternity Council (IFC) required professional presentation skills, clear communication, and the ability to work in cohesion with various organizations on campus. If you are on a sports team, write down exactly how working with others, putting the team first, executing strategy, and working with various coaches enhanced your communication and interdepartmental skill sets. By knowing the situation and expectations of your audience, you have the opportunity to be relatable to the interviewer and his/her company.



Second, know the person you are scheduled to meet. Many times you have the opportunity to know in advance who you are about to meet. In the days of social media and the World Wide Web, there are many ways to find out information about the person you are meeting. LinkedIn is a terrific method of finding out someone's title, experience, education, clubs they affiliate with, career path, hometown, awards, and much more. Basic preparation on the person you are meeting will dramatically increase your ability to build rapport, get the conversation started, and allow you to relate!

## STUDENT EXERCISE

You have been told that the authors of this textbook—John Dietrich and Cary Nichols—would like to meet with you this afternoon. You have two minutes to research either of these authors.

1. Locate five important things found on the Internet about the author you chose.
2. Choose one thing from your findings that will allow you to relate to the author when you meet him later today.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The foundation of professional selling is being relatable and earning trust. These are inextricable and critical to earning, developing, and maintaining a relationship. If I like you, but do not trust you . . . the relationship will likely struggle. If I trust you, but do not like you . . . the relationship will likely struggle. We cannot relate and build trust with every human being in the world, but we can take proactive steps to increase our chances with each person. There are many ways to earn trust. Truthfulness, dependability, loyalty, credentials, and altruism are five ways you can actually start using today, if you have not already! Your ability to relate to another person is not limited. Being quiet, slow, loud, annoying, introverted, are not good excuses to avoid career fairs, social clubs, or asking someone out on a date. Awareness of your strengths and preparation for your meetings are a powerful antidote for quiet or shy! Each of us can be relatable!

## REFERENCES

Gallup Poll. <http://news.gallup.com/poll/5392/trust-government.aspx>



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class Days and Time \_\_\_\_\_

# 1

## HOMework

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Ben was ecstatic. He just sold eight new ultrasound machines to the local hospital. Such a sale signified he would likely place in the President's Top 10 list for the quarter, and he would receive a very handsome commission check to reward his sale. The following month Ben received a phone call from the hospital's Vice President of Procurement, and here is how the conversation went:

**VP PROCUREMENT:** "Ben. Good morning. Do you have fifteen minutes to talk?"

**BEN:** "Jack! Thanks for the call. Yes, of course I have time. How can I help you?"

**VP PROCUREMENT:** "Well, the eight ultrasound machines we purchased were supposed to arrive yesterday. Instead, three arrived yesterday, two showed up today. We are missing three ultrasound machines. Additionally, I am a little frustrated. I was hesitant to place this order with you because we had the same problems five years ago with the last representative from your company. You promised that you would be here with me as these machines arrived yesterday. Not only did you not show up to assist myself and our doctors with questions they had about the new machines, but the order is incomplete! I need my other three machines, and I need you here helping our doctors get acclimated with the machines."

Ben completely forgot about his promise to show up at the hospital yesterday. But still, in his mind there was no reason for all eight ultrasound machines to not show up. At least if the machines showed up as promised, his only fault would be failing to be present. Receiving five machines was unacceptable. To make matters worse, it was 11 a.m. on Thursday and he already took paid time off for the balance of the weekend to rent a pontoon with his five best friends who were in town visiting him.

**QUESTION 1:** There are three other reps from Ben's company who perform similar sales. Is it acceptable for Ben to guarantee the remaining three machines get delivered today, but for one of his colleagues to fill in for him at the hospital to answer questions from the doctors? What additional risks does Ben have by sending one of his colleagues to the hospital to answer questions?

**QUESTION 2:** Is there merit in Ben's reasoning that him failing to show up was not as significant as the missing three ultrasound machines?