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FOREWORD

Professor John Dietrich and Mr. Cary Nichols truly get it. And the “it” is professional selling! The students coming out of Arizona State University’s professional sales program (many of them students in John’s courses) are among the finest and most influential found on any college campus in the country. They have gone on to sell services, technology, chemicals, private jets, medical devices, consulting engagements, and pharmaceuticals—just to name a few. I have gotten to know many of these sales professionals, and some work directly with me at my company! The behaviors and skills that they are developing as they go through the sales program and take this class are the perfect recipe for entry into the twenty-first century sales force. These students are succeeding at an exponential rate in the business world because they are learning the foundation of professional sales, applying practical knowledge that can be used immediately, and experience that transcends most professions.

I have had the opportunity to not only review the contents of this textbook as the material was being developed, but to also speak and engage directly with the students coming out of their sales program. I can say—enthusiastically—that the chapters you are about to read and discuss in the classroom are the perfect foundation for a career in professional selling. With each turn of the page you will be taken on a journey from the “great body of experience” that John and Cary amassed during many successful years as high level professional executives. These stories are clearly written, highly engaging, and ultra-practical. You will likely begin deploying many of these sales tactics and techniques immediately.

Like John and Cary, I have a great passion for teaching young people the skills necessary to succeed in business. At Paycom we pride ourselves on hiring the very best sales professionals! To have had some helpful level of influence and effect on the life of an emerging executive is a great joy. Dietrich and Nichols carry that exact same passion, and with every turn of the page you will feel it, too. The authors have an innate ability to touch people’s lives by teaching that professional selling is more than a career choice; it is an absolute necessity for anyone looking to succeed greatly in business and in their personal life.

Good Selling!

Jeff York
Chief Sales Officer, Paycom
<http://www.paycom.com>

PREFACE

BACKGROUND AND PHILOSOPHY

When the authors of this textbook first investigated the possibility of writing a “Professional Sales” book aimed at the undergraduate audience, they found two glaring opportunities: First, there is a great deal of text that offered theoretical concepts, but few that offered students the practical “how to put the concepts into practice.” Second, just about every collegiate book they investigated focused solely on the concept of sales with respect to products or services, but almost always omits how sales (and selling principles) applies to ALL of our personal and professional lives as well. That’s right—whether you are aware of this fact or not—every one of us is in the business of selling! We are ALL selling something regardless of the job description. **That means that every student taking this course has something to gain by engaging in these selling principles.**

Let us take these two observations one step further.

Most sales and marketing textbooks—particularly on the undergraduate level—will provide students an excellent understanding of what it means to build trust, prospecting, close the deal, and networking. In *7 Ways 7 Times* the authors not only take the time to discuss the concepts, they also take the time to show every student taking the course “how” to put these behaviors and concepts into everyday practice. For example, building trust is the core foundation of any relationship—business or personal. If you are not sure exactly how to build trust with others, one way that you can start building trust with a customer—right now—is to commit to the principle of returning every phone call and every e-mail in the same business day that you received it. This is not a behavior that all who take this course will do. But it is one thing we all CAN do . . . if we choose to! When you return the e-mail or the phone call in the same business day that you received it you are demonstrating that you are reliable and trustworthy. Believe it or not, it’s more common than you might think that sales representatives do not always return a customer call. In each chapter you will not only discuss the concepts, but you will see a variety of ways to practice the behaviors right now—today!

The second observation has to do with selling principles and how they apply to our personal lives. The term “sales” tends to have a negative connotation. So when most students hear “sales course” they naturally (but incorrectly) assume that this is not a course worth taking. But think about it: every job you ever apply for requires you to sell yourself to the hiring manager. Every boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, club you join, or team you try out for requires that you put your best skills and behaviors forward. Here is a specific example that the authors highlight in the textbook on how to apply selling skills in your personal lives: joining a fraternity or sorority or club may seem intimidating at first. But what if you found out the club needed a graphics designer, or a person with events planning expertise, or excellent verbal

and written skills? Assuming you have specific skills, you could leverage these skills and qualities in your application process. Instead of selling your popularity skills, consider asking the club President if they are seeking candidates who have specific qualities, skills, behaviors that will advance the mission of the club. Again, this is one way you could leverage selling skills in your personal lives.

And that is where the authors conceived the textbook's name: *7 Ways 7 Times*. In the authors' forty-plus years of combined selling experience, they have found that the path to success in sales cannot be boiled down to any one skill, behavior, or concept. There are a variety of ways and means to successfully market yourself. What works for you may not work for me, and so on!

This textbook is intended for students who seek to improve personally or professionally:

- ✓ Trustworthiness and Relatability
- ✓ Networking and Prospecting
- ✓ Effective Communication and Listening
- ✓ Understanding Buyers and Overcoming Objections
- ✓ Closing the Deal and Clients for Life

ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXTBOOK

To help instructors organize their course and roll out the concepts in a logical order, the textbook will be organized into three major categories:

Part One: Fundamentals of Building Relationships (Chapters 1–3)

Part One provides an overview of how relatability and trustworthiness are the foundations of successful selling and relationship building. For example, in Chapter 1 we discuss how a sales professional could be the smartest software sales rep in the country, but if I do not like you or trust you . . . I will not buy something from you. Therefore, we discuss the importance of established likeability, relatability, trustworthiness, and basic etiquette before “selling.” These first three chapters provide a framework for the students to put fundamentals first and sales techniques second.

Part Two: Targeting Your Audience and Positioning (Chapters 4–6)

In Part Two students are exposed to real-world methods and processes for targeting a client, understanding how the client fits their business model, and then a variety of ways to publicly associate with the people we want to do business with. Students will learn clear distinctions between targeting the entire market versus targeting the top 20 prospects/customers they desire. A critical strategy in professional selling is to actively associate and engage with the people you want to do business with. The authors very specifically show students HOW to network, strategic ways to get involved in a business community, and how to communicate effectively once they are with clients.

Part Three: Closing the Deal (Chapters 7–11)

In Part Three the time has come to ask for the business—or—close the deal. We discuss a variety of ways that students can practice asking a client for their business. One of the most significant components of this section is learning to anticipate and deal with objections. The authors walk the students through a variety of techniques—particularly effective questioning methods—in dealing with customer objections. Students will then be exposed to the concept and behaviors associated with earning clients for life, and how profits and ROI actually increase as we keep customers in our portfolio.

Cases and/or Weekly Homework

At the end of every chapter is a case study for robust class discussion or homework assignment designed to isolate core concepts and challenge the students to take a position. Many of these cases do not have a particular right or wrong answer, nor are they designed that way. Each case and homework will require the students to call on their own set of sales capabilities and skill sets to solve the particular problem. While one student may suggest a conference call to gather information, another student may suggest a face-to-face meeting to drive home the concept of personal communication. In the real world, either of these approaches to business can work . . . and either of these approaches to business can fail. The students are required to take a position and defend their position with specific reasoning, intellect, and problem-solving skills.

Instructional Enhancements

The authors have placed an assignment at the very end of Chapter 11. The students will learn new ideas and techniques each week/chapter, and so the theory is that this final assignment will test their learning skills and abilities to absorb the collective concepts taught in this textbook. It is recommended that the instructors consider introducing this assignment at the very onset of the course and work with the students on a weekly basis to develop the curriculum and help the students bring it to fruition by the end of the course.

Lastly, more than seventy colleges from a variety of countries now compete with each other in role-play competitions. The two most notable role-play competitions are the National Collegiate Sales Competition (NCSC) and the International Collegiate Sales Competition (ICSC). These two sales competitions bring together the top collegiate sales programs in the United States and other countries to demonstrate their students' professional role-play and sales skills. Therefore, the authors of this textbook have decided to dedicate a portion of this textbook toward preparing students for these local, regional, national, and international sales competitions. Author John Dietrich led his sales team to fourth place at the 2015 ICSC sales competition. He also led his sales team to first place at the 2016 Liberty Mutual sales competition hosted by the University of Houston. His experience and insights on preparing and competing are shared in this textbook!