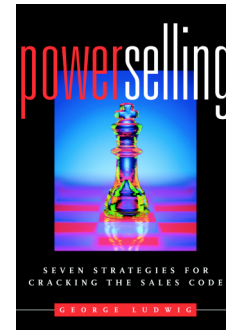


For Immediate Release

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Supercharge Your Selling: The Science of Breaking through Your Fear and Thinking Your Way to Sales Success

Sales success begins in your brain. Sales training expert George Ludwig explains how to master your emotions and enter the “supercharged selling state.”

Chicago, IL (January 2005)—Selling is scary. If you doubt it, you’ve never stood before a dour-faced prospect, stomach churning and palms sweating, images from recent rejections swirling in your mind like some tornado of self-loathing. When you feel that way it’s easy to forget why you went into sales in the first place. In fact, it’s easy to conclude that you’re just not cut out for this job and start answering “help wanted” ads. Don’t. According to George Ludwig, the fear is all in your mind—and that’s where the remedy resides, too.

“Selling is a psychological exercise,” asserts Ludwig, author of *Power Selling: Seven Strategies for Cracking the Sales Code* (Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2004, ISBN: 0-7931-8571-8, \$19.95). “It’s a game that’s won or lost in your mind. Think about it this way: if people can empower themselves to break boards with their bare hands and walk across a bed of glowing 1,200 degree coals, you can certainly find the courage to face a prospect who needs a product that you believe in.”

The aforementioned board-breakers and coal-walkers have achieved a “peak performance state,” the ultimate positive state of mind. In sales terminology, says Ludwig, it’s called the *supercharged selling state*. In this emotional state, you’re more creative, confident, resourceful, competent, certain, and passionate about selling and serving your buyer. As a result, you make more sales. And the positive energy from your success leads to even more sales.

You're probably thinking, *Well, that's great for some people. Too bad I can't snap my fingers or push a button and enter the supercharged selling state.* Actually, says Ludwig, it's not rocket science. Happy, successful, peak performing salespeople think and behave in very specific ways. So do mediocre and unfulfilled salespeople. The key is to stop doing what the latter do and start emulating the former.

Ludwig's book delves deeply into the psychology of sales success. The author also offers workshops that provide specific strategies for mastering your emotions and placing yourself in the supercharged selling state every time you face a customer. Here are just a few of his "tricks of the trade."

- **Make sure you are selling from a sense of purpose.** You must have passion for what you're doing or you will not succeed. You can't fake passion. That means there must be a connection between your sales career and a well-defined life purpose. Hint: that purpose *shouldn't* be "to make a lot of money." Dig deeper. In *Power Selling*, Ludwig tells the story of Carol R., an advertising salesperson who claimed to be driven by money. When pressed to explain why, she said that money represented freedom for her and more time to spend with her children and her philanthropic efforts at church. Upon further reflection, she realized that her real purpose was "to make a difference in everyone's life," including the buyers she called upon every day. This discovery allows Carol to spend every sales day focusing her mental thoughts on making a difference in people's lives. Having found her psychological power base, she is now her company's top producer.

- **If a belief is holding you back, displace it.** Revisit our sweaty-palmed salesperson from our opening paragraph. If you've been there—and most of us have—try to recall the basis of your fear. Maybe you found yourself believing that because a sales call went poorly yesterday, the one today will go poorly as well. Or you heard from a colleague that this particular client is difficult and you believed it. Or you've never successfully sold to anyone in this industry so you believe you'll fail this time, too. See the connection? *Belief*. Crippling beliefs spawn negative results. Enabling beliefs foster positive results. Here are some beliefs of the selling elite that you should adopt:

- ✓ Past sales do not equal future sales.
- ✓ There is no sales failure; there is only feedback to perform better.
- ✓ There is always a way to turn sales around, if I'm committed.
- ✓ There is a solution to every problem I encounter.
- ✓ For sales to get better, I must get better.

Turn these beliefs into positive affirmations aimed at meeting the specific goals you set. Repeat them fifty to a hundred times a day. Once you've met a goal, set a new one. Create an affirmation for it. And so on. Finally, visualize a successful outcome each and every time you go into a sales meeting. Your new, positive beliefs will build up your psychological foundation and give you easier access to the supercharged selling state.

• **Build a shield of optimism.** What is optimism? It's the fundamental conviction that somehow, sooner or later, things will work out and you will reach sales success. It's the belief that the adversity you face in selling, and in life, is merely a temporary setback with a hidden potential benefit. Optimism is a critical component to the supercharged selling state. It doesn't just "happen," by the way. Like any other lifestyle choice, it requires making a conscious decision and maintenance. "To build your shield of optimism, you must constantly dispel cynical, pessimistic thoughts," says Ludwig. "Steep yourself in positive influences. Attend seminars by reputable professionals. Read books or listen to tapes that teach positive thinking techniques. Connect with your spirituality and faith. Exercise regularly so you'll feel good about yourself and just plain feel good. Finally, reach out for support from friends and family."

• **Master the ABCDs of resiliency.** Of course, despite your best intentions, you will experience "optimism breakdowns." Things don't always go the way we would like, and those are the times we have to stop negative thoughts and redirect them before they become a self-defeating pattern. Ludwig says he teaches his clients a modified version of a resiliency model created by E.P. Seligman, Ph.D., former president of the American Psychological Association. Ludwig's model follows an ABCD acronym:

A: Adversity. Identify any negative situation with which you deal.

B: Beliefs. The thoughts you have in reaction to a negative event (cold calling or rejection, for example) usually congeal into beliefs when that situation occurs regularly.

C: Catch yourself. The crux of becoming more optimistic is to catch yourself falling into a negative pattern of thoughts (beliefs) in reaction to an event, particularly with those that are habitual. After an adverse event, conduct a self-inventory of your response and your state.

D: Dispute and re-Direct. Once you discover that you're running negative thoughts in your mind, you must dispute the evidence and/or redirect your thoughts by asking yourself better questions. In this way, you change your reaction from dejection and giving up to activity and success.

Ultimately, says Ludwig, your ability to enter the supercharged sales state depends entirely on the result of the decisions that you make every day.

"I like to tell my clients that sales is not the 'big easy,'" says Ludwig. "And it isn't. It's hard work and it comes with challenges, many of them intense. But even though you cannot control the events that happen to you—whether you win the sale or lose it, whether a customer treats you with courtesy or rudeness—you *can* control what those events mean to you. You *can* decide what kind of spin to put on them. You *can* decide what to do next. That's the essence of the supercharged selling state. Take control of your mind and you'll take control of your career."

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About the Author:

George Ludwig has more than twenty-five years of sales, sales management, and sales training experience, including five years of presenting his sales success seminar all over the country. As a nationally known keynote speaker, sales trainer, coach, and corporate consultant, Ludwig trains over 10,000 people per year from various corporations and associations, including Sprint, Southwest Airlines, Mazda North America, Century 21, Purdue University, Johnson & Johnson, and many others. He is a popular contributor to trade publications and newspapers, including *Selling Power*, *Sales and Marketing Management*, *Entrepreneur*, *Investors Business Daily*, *Time*, and *The New York Times*.

About the Book:

Power Selling: Seven Strategies for Cracking the Sales Code (Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2004, ISBN: 0-7931-8571-8, \$19.95) is available at neighborhood and online booksellers or by calling (800) 245-2665.

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