

YOU CAN MAKE A GREAT LIVING SELLING

By Gene Fresco

Nothing happens until a salesperson sells something.

One of the reasons our economy is faltering is the lack of salesmanship.

You go into a store today and you have to wait on yourself. There is no one to tell you what product to buy to solve your problem.

People buy emotionally and justify the purchase logically. Unfortunately, without a salesman to suggest the right product, the customer ends up buying the wrong thing.

If you go into popular hardware chain stores, you will see they have a very active return department because they know the customer is going to buy the wrong item, rather than what he or she needs.

What's that all about?

Now do you understand how important a salesperson can be?

Salespeople have taken a bum rap forever. They are the butts of comedians' jokes. They are shown as the villains in movies, like "Tin Men" and many others.

They are depicted as greedy, money grabbing and dishonest.

A good salesperson is honest, considerate and truly feels as though he is helping a customer to do the right thing and can help the customer buy the right product to solve the customer's problem.

How many times have you had to search the store to find a salesperson? They just seem to disappear when you need them.

That is because they are untrained and don't understand what their role is as salespeople.

Their role is to be trained and knowledgeable in the products they sell and persuasive in showing the customer that the product they suggest will solve the customer's problem.

Part of the problem is the customer who thinks he or she knows the solution to his or her problem and doesn't want help in solving it.

What happens when a sales clerk asks, "May I help you?"



The customer will say, "I'm just looking."

That is because our culture, media and entertainment has stamped a BEWARE sign on all salespeople's foreheads.

It is a shame because that stigma is hurting our economy and we have branded salespeople as the bad guys.

Companies would not exist without them. They can fill thousands of warehouses with the goods they manufacture, but, if a salesperson doesn't tell their story and doesn't relate the benefits their products have to solve customers' problems, they would have to build more warehouses to store their products.

"Nothing happens, until a salesperson sells something."

If you are a professional salesperson, you must understand this adage. You must realize how important you are to our national economy and that, without you, there would be goods rotting on warehouse shelves. Salespeople, per capita, represent the second-highest-paid profession in the world, second only to doctors.

I have been a professional salesman for more than 40 years and I wouldn't want to be anyone else.

It is gratifying to know I played a part in telling the stories of manufacturers, and the benefits of their products, to retailers

who, in turn, related them to their customers. That makes for a thriving economy.

If you choose to be a professional salesperson, then learn all you can to be one.

Our economy and the company

for which you work depend on you to keep them going. Realize what your job represents. Every salesperson is keeping 27 people working. That is what a recent survey has discovered.

Salespeople create jobs for craftsmen, truck drivers, accountants and all support people, even CEOs.

I hope, if you are a salesperson, that these words make you realize how important you are and how you must do the best job you can do.

Your company is counting on you, but, more importantly, your country is counting on you.

I like the motto the U.S. Army uses: "Be all you can be."

Do you want to be in the second-highest-paid profession? There are lots of things you will have to do to be a professional salesperson. A doctor goes to school for 18 years to learn his profession and spends thousands of dollars for his schooling.

Lawyers do the same. What have you done to be a professional salesperson?

There is an old, funny adage about how salespeople learn their trade: "I never sold nuthin' and now I are a salzman."

Don't be that guy.

Pay the price. Maybe you are just starting in the career of "sales". Maybe you aren't making a lot of money right now. Neither

was I when I started out, but I wanted to be a professional salesman, and I studied and attended seminars on learning sales techniques. I read every book I could read about selling. You have to want it.

If you want it and you get it, you will have a satisfying and financially rewarding career.

When I give sales seminars, I can tell who the people are who want it. I can see their lights go on and I feel I have created another professional salesperson.

Being a professional salesperson is not a job; it is a career. Every company needs sales. Without them, they have no reason to exist. There are many great products on the market, but they don't just sell themselves.

It took Thomas J. Watson of IBM 20 years of selling to convince retailers that they needed to own a cash register to keep their daily receipts. Sounds unbelievable now, but, sadly, it is true. Today, there are no stores without cash registers of some type or another.


Inventors throughout the centuries have created many great products, but, without salespeople to tell their story and show the benefits of their inventions, they might have never been.

They say, "Build a better mouse trap and the world will beat a path to your door."

They are wrong.

They should say, "Build a better mouse trap, hire a professional sales force to tell your story and the world will beat a path to your door."

Want it!

I wish you good selling. 

Have a comment or question for Gene? E-mail dferrisi@testa.com and we will forward correspondence to him.