

## 5 Keys to Relationship Selling

By  
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What is the difference between Relationship Selling and traditional selling?

Relationship selling begins with changing the old model of *"Gotta sell to meet quota no matter what"* to *"Approach prospects as potential new friends."*

The problem most people face is they make the sales process too complicated. By so doing, they place barriers between themselves and their prospects. The prospective buyer can almost see dollar signs floating out of the business person's eyes. Once this is sensed, the sale dies.

However, once you make the sales attitude switch, the rest is relatively easy. It actually becomes fun to meet new people, exchange ideas and have a lively conversation to find if there is a potential match to do business.

Let's take a step-by-step look at how we make friends and translate the strategy to selling:

1. Take an active interest in the other person.

When we initially meet people, we like to know their background, if they are single or married; if married, how many years. We ask what type of work they are in, how they got there, how long they have been in that position. We may ask them what it's like to work at their company.

If the other person works out of their home, we will ask how long they lived in their home, where they lived previously, and if they have a family. If they have children, we will ask their ages, where the child's interests lie, and possibly where they might go to college.

There is absolutely no difference when you approach your prospects. Use the exact same process! You will be amazed how well your new prospect takes to you. You will have set yourself apart from your competition, and people will begin to describe you as a breath of fresh air.

Once you take an active interest in your new friends or prospects, they will reciprocate with a keen interest in you. The likelihood of conducting business will increase dramatically.

2. Pursue the relationship.

Once we believe we like the new person that we have just met, we invite them to coffee, a walk, or possibly a movie. In other words, we set the next step for getting to know the other a little bit better.

Likewise, the first business appointment is to learn about each other to see if you want to pursue doing business together. You will have asked each other questions to gain information. Usually in this phase, requests are made of one another to gain insight as to how the other operates and further determine if you are indeed a good match. The next appointment is set to pursue the relationship.

3. Follow-up promptly to keep your new friends.

You may say to your new friend, *"I'll call you on Saturday."* If you don't call, your new friend will begin to question whether or not you are trustworthy. The exact same thing is true of business relationships.

This is the step where most businesspeople fall down. They feel it's not worth their time. Contrary to this belief, follow-up is the most critical element for making or breaking a sale.

Follow-up is where you establish credibility and trust with your prospect, and sets in motion the process for doing business. Continual follow-up will help you reap repeat business, referrals and testimonials.

4. Lend a helping hand to your friends.

Readily providing a helping hand will make you a trusted friend and strengthen the bond between you.

In business, help comes in many forms. Becoming an expert in your field to support your clients, and readily sharing your network of experts will also bring you an abundance of business.

5. Show your new-found friend appreciation.

The easiest and most appreciated step in relationship building is to say *"Thank you"*. Everyone appreciates a word of thanks. Take every opportunity you have to say *"Thank you"* to your prospects and clients

By showing your appreciation at every turn, you will again increase the likelihood of gaining business, larger sales, repeat business, referrals and testimonials. You will be building a dynamic business and have conquered the 5 keys to relationship selling.

In my experience, the ultimate relationship selling experience is when your prospect asks permission to purchase from you. This comes about when your prospect has come to trust you and enjoy your friendship. As my experience has evolved, I have come to enjoy this type of Smooth Sale and it is a joyous one.

Additional Ideas to Build Business:

Routinely provide excellent follow-up, outstanding service, keep your sense of humor, give service with a smile, and ask if anything else is required. Your clientele will love you for it and reward you with much business.

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**Elinor Stutz**, CEO of Smooth Sale, LLC and Author, transformed her highly successful sales career into training entrepreneurs, network marketers and beginning salespeople. *"We help you turn stormy sales cycles into a Smooth Sale"*.

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*“Nice Girls DO Get The Sale: Relationship Building That Gets Results”*, published by Sourcebooks, “The Sales Toolkit”, “Smooth Sale audio training seminar” and Entrepreneur kit – “How to GROW Your Business: mindset, strategy and implementation. Visit [www.smoothsale.net/products.shtml](http://www.smoothsale.net/products.shtml)

*“Nice Girls DO Get The Sale”* was featured in TIME Magazine, translated into multiple languages and is selling worldwide. Elinor writes a column for Bay Area BusinessWoman News and contributes articles to Diversity Edge Magazine. Visit her blog at [www.smoothsale.net/blog/](http://www.smoothsale.net/blog/)

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