

To Sell Is Human: The Surprising Truth About Moving Others (Pink, Daniel H.

“Dishonest dealings tend to drive honest dealings out of the market,” Akerlof wrote. “The presence of people who wish to pawn bad wares as good wares tends to drive out the legitimate business

Of course, individuals and institutions have devised ways to make Akerlof’s commercial landscape less forbidding. Sellers offer warranties on their goods. Brand names provide some assurance of quality. Legislatures pass “lemon laws” to protect consumers. But most important, prospective purchasers are on notice. When sellers know more than buyers, buyers must beware.

Darvish says the qualities she looks for most are persistence—and something for which a word never appeared in either of the word clouds: empathy.

the low road is now harder to pass and the high road—honesty, directness, and transparency—has become the better, more pragmatic, long-term route.

“Taking the perspective of one’s opponent produced both greater joint gains and more profitable individual outcomes. . . . Perspective takers achieved the highest level of economic efficiency, without sacrificing their own material gains,”

But Bob’s self-talk is neither positive nor declarative. Instead, to move himself and his team, he asks a question: Can we fix it?

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The reasons are twofold. First, the interrogative, by its very form, elicits answers—and within those answers are strategies for actually carrying out the task.

Mere affirmation feels good and that helps. But it doesn't prompt you to summon the resources and strategies to actually accomplish the task.

Declarative self-talk risks bypassing one's motivations.

Questioning self-talk elicits the reasons for doing something and reminds people that many of those reasons come from within.*

"Positive emotions do the opposite: They broaden people's ideas about possible actions, opening our awareness to a wider range of thoughts and . . . making us more receptive and more creative," she writes.⁹

Negative emotions offer us feedback on our performance, information on what's working and what's not, and hints about how to do better.

In other words, the salespeople with an optimistic explanatory style—who saw rejections as temporary rather than permanent, specific rather than universal, and external rather than personal—sold more insurance and survived in their jobs much longer. What's more, explanatory style predicted performance with about the same accuracy as the most widely used insurance industry assessment for hiring agents.

Ask yourself: "Can I move these people?"

As social scientists have discovered, interrogative self-talk is often more valuable than the declarative kind. But don't simply leave the question hanging in the air like a lost balloon. Answer it—directly and in writing. List five specific reasons why the answer to your question is yes. These reasons will remind you of the strategies that you'll need to be effective on the task, providing a sturdier and more substantive grounding than mere affirmation. In other words, ask and you shall receive.

One way to remain buoyant is to acquire a more realistic sense of what can actually sink you.

Negativity and negative emotions are crucial for our survival. They prevent unproductive behaviors from cementing into habits. They deliver useful information on our efforts. They alert us to when we're on the wrong path.

For instance, suppose you fail to convince a client to sign on for another year. If part of the reason was that some of your work this year wasn't up to your typical standards, get a little angry with yourself. You screwed up this time. Then use that negative emotion as the impetus to improve

Today, both sales and non-sales selling depend more on the creative, heuristic, problem-finding skills of artists than on the reductive, algorithmic, problem-solving skills of technicians.

Several researchers have shown that people derive much greater satisfaction from purchasing experiences than they do from purchasing goods. When Leaf Van Boven of the University

As a result, framing a sale in experiential terms is more likely to lead to satisfied customers and repeat business. So

That is, instead of focusing resolutely on the decision, they're proceeding with a little less effort—perhaps because they're busy or distracted. Second, the negative information must follow the positive information, not the reverse. Once again, the comparison creates clarity. "The core logic is that when individuals encounter weak negative information after already having received positive information, the weak negative information ironically highlights or increases the salience of the positive information."¹⁸

What we really should do, they say, is emphasize our potential. For

People often find potential more interesting than accomplishment because it's more uncertain, the researchers argue. That uncertainty can lead people to think more deeply about the person they're evaluating—and the more intensive processing that requires can lead to generating more and better reasons why the person is a good choice.

To

don't fixate only on what you achieved yesterday. Also emphasize the promise of what you could accomplish tomorrow.

Twenty-five percent of students deemed least likely to contribute actually made a contribution when they received the letter with a concrete appeal, a map, and a location for donating. What moved them wasn't only the request itself, but that the requesters had provided them an off-ramp for getting to their destination.

The lesson: Clarity on how to think without clarity on how to act can leave people unmoved.

Influence: Science and Practice by Robert Cialdini.

Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die by Chip Heath and Dan Heath.

Switch by Chip Heath and Dan Heath.

Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think by Brian Wansink.