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UNSTOPPABLE WOMEN IN BUSINESS

OH

SH*T

I'M IN SALES?

AN ENTREPRENEUR'S GUIDE TO
MAKING SALES YOUR BFF

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

CHAPTER 1: MAKING SALES YOUR BFF

Relationship building 101

It always starts with you

Relationship reality check

Don't make it harder than it has to be

CHAPTER 2: HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The forming of gray matter

The classic sales experience

Forming your sales blueprint

The trickier part of the blueprint

It's an inside job

CHAPTER 3: FORMING A NEW FRIENDSHIP

Digging up old wounds

Situation: Networking event

Situation: Making an offer on a sales consult

Situation: Asking for a meeting

Retrain your brain

Resetting your sales blueprint

Awareness and understanding

Watching your blueprint in action

Choosing a different response

Practice and create new neural pathways

CHAPTER 4: STARTING TO MAKE THE SHIFT

Good news / bad news / good news

The star of the show, the Mindset Reset Process

STEP 1: Getting clear on the real SITUATION

Activity

STEP 2: Become aware of the STORIES you tell yourself

Activity

CHAPTER 5: THE SECRET BEHIND THE SECRET

STEP 3: Tune into your STATE OF BEING

Activity

STEP 4: Notice what you SAY, DO, or DON'T DO

Activity

STEP 5: Creating predictable SALES RESULTS

Activity

What's all the hype about?

CHAPTER 6: PREDICTABLE RESULTS COME FROM INTENTIONAL THINKING

Creating an unstoppable mindset practice

Okay now, what am I actually doing?

Advanced MRP work, start with the end in mind

The tipping point in resetting your sales blueprint

CHAPTER 7: FINDING THE COURAGE TO CHANGE YOUR SALES BLUEPRINT

The reset practice in action

Meet Barbara and Sandy—the Networking Ninjas

Meet Marguerite—the Budding Course Creator

Meet Linda—the Queen of Pricing Drama
Summary

CHAPTER 8: RUN YOUR BUSINESS LIKE IBM

Where your attention goes...

Both quality and quantity influence your business success

A hard lesson to learn

Spending your time wisely based on results you want to create

CHAPTER 9: LET'S PUT A BOW ON THIS

Making sales your new BFF will take a few things

APPENDIX:

Resources Page Link

CHAPTER 1

MAKING SALES YOUR BFF

One night, a casual acquaintance of mine, someone who I knew from a women's group I was a member of, called and asked if I was interested in coming to a wine tasting in her home that upcoming Friday night. Because I had no life at the time, I hesitated for about a tenth of a second and said, "Sure!! What time?" I'm not someone you would think of as a wallflower so it didn't bother me to think about the fact that I wouldn't really know anyone there. I can generally talk to anyone and especially if it was about one of my favorite subjects—wine!

Little did I know that this was the beginning of an amazing relationship with a group of eight women that has lasted for more than 20 years. As we mixed and mingled with each other that first night and were treated to a guided wine tasting experience that the hostess put together, it was almost like seeing the individual stars in the sky start swirling into a pattern and becoming the cosmos. By the end of the night, we all decided that we had so much fun, that we wanted to do it again. We decided to meet monthly and rotate the hosting responsibilities. This meant that each month someone would organize the wine tasting: naming the varietal that everyone would bring to sample, then act as "master of ceremonies" as each person presented their bottle. Of course, there was food involved. Lots of food and, man, can these Southern women cook!!

We called ourselves the "Winey Women" and decided to meet on the first Friday of every month—no excuses—to learn more about wine and each other. We took this commitment to each other seriously. If someone said they couldn't make it to one of our gatherings because of another commitment, we would say collectively, "What part of 'First Friday' do you not understand?"

In the beginning, we were very serious about following wine tasting protocols, changing glasses between the reds and whites, reading the wine notes, and scoring the wines on the bouquet, legs, and mouth feel of each wine we tasted. But it didn't take too long before we were enjoying each other's company as much as, or more than, the actual wine itself.

We went deep in our conversations, getting to know one another at a soul-enriching level. As the years went by, we got to know what made each one of us tick. We laughed and cried together and would do anything to help one another out. We even started to meet outside of our First Friday gatherings. We traveled places, went on vacations to Napa and other destinations, and generally had a ball in what we called "doing life" together. The best part is that because we got to know one another at such a deep level, we felt safe and had a craving to spend more time in one another's company. Because... that's what BFF's do, right?

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING 101

So by this point in my story you may be saying, "Ummmm, Susan... what does your Winey Women group have to do with this book?"

Oh, girl! There is a connection!

It's all about what it takes to build a relationship. Follow me here for just one minute and it will all begin to be very clear to you. When it comes down to it, relationships are formed in your mind. Here is an example of how that works. Have you ever met someone and taken an immediate dislike to them? You know what I mean, your initial thought. I call this your "Spidey-sense." It might have been that they just weren't your cup of tea. Then, after spending a little time together, you find that they are different from you first imagined and you slowly begin to change your opinion, and before you know it, you find that you really enjoy hanging out with them.

Am I the only one?? I think not! This happens to people all the time. But the question is, what changed? The person hasn't changed. You haven't

changed. What has changed is all in your head! Your thoughts about them have changed. As you start thinking about who you think they are, quite often you start feeling more connected and open to becoming friends. Again, I have to reiterate, nothing really changes except your thoughts about them. Hence, evidence for my statement that relationships reside in your brain.

And that brings us to your relationship with sales. When I say it that way, you almost imagine a tall, dark, handsome man standing in front of you named “Sales.”

But no! Your relationship with sales is an INTERNAL relationship!! It’s a relationship that resides within the part of you that has sales responsibilities. It’s your thoughts about WHO YOU ARE in relationship to selling. It’s the most intimate relationship you can have because it is *within* yourself. But it can be a relationship filled with animosity and loathing. It’s really BIZARRE!

IT ALWAYS STARTS WITH YOU

There are so many facets of you as a person. You might be a mom, you are definitely a businessperson, you may be someone’s friend or maybe their partner, you can be a daughter, and maybe even someone’s sister. You play so many roles in your life. And the interesting thing is that you have very specific thoughts about yourself in each and every one of those roles.

The part of you that is responsible for generating revenue, in other words selling, is just one of the many facets of you.

So here is the bottom line. When you are at war with selling for your business, you are at war with yourself! And, woman, that does not feel good at all! Not only does it feel horrible rejecting an essential part of you that has important responsibilities, but the ramifications are also debilitating to your business.

Small businesses are notorious for falling like dominos within the first five years of opening their proverbial doors. Why? Lack of sufficient cash flow. The money coming in doesn't cover the overhead and salary needed to keep the business going. We've all seen this scenario play out. Someone tells us about their new business idea. They are flush with excitement and enthusiasm, getting everything set up: the website, the branding, their programs or products. So much fun! But within a couple of years, they are worn out and beaten down and the next thing you hear, they've gone back into corporate to get a j.o.b. There can be a lot of reasons that a business goes under. But more often than not, if it is because of a cash-flow issue, the underlying culprit usually is that Mama didn't learn how to make friends with sales. Most likely, she ignored the most important activities in her business—sales—swept them under the rug, put them at the bottom of her to-do list day after day. Oh, she thinks she “tried.” She bought lots of courses, maybe she even worked with a coach to help her learn HOW TO SELL, but at the end of the day, she just wasn't comfortable selling. She stayed on that proverbial first path on the sales road... the one that kept her in a place where she stayed in fear, dread, and avoidance of sales.

When I sense that a client is deeply dug into this path, I worry for them. I have to work with them to understand that they have no choice but to make a U-turn, and get back to that fork in the road, choose the path that takes them toward making friends with sales. And I help them get there using the tools you will read about in this book. I am always so grateful that they were courageous enough to do the work in time to save their business and themselves from a lot of heartache.

The way I think about it is this: Most women business owners' relationship with sales is more like a “frenemy” than a BFF. Remember my story about how I became BFFs with all of my Winey Women? We spent time together, did things we enjoyed, took time to get to know each other well, stood up for each other because we cared and respected each other.

That, my friend, is the key to making sales your BFF. The first thing you will want to do is perform a complete attitude adjustment on the way you

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