



This is “The Power to Get What You Want in Life”, chapter 1 from the book [Powerful Selling \(index.html\)](#) (v. 1.0).

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Chapter 1

The Power to Get What You Want in Life

Welcome to *The Power of Selling* Video Ride-Alongs

Do you want to be successful in sales and in life? You'll have a chance to meet the pros, the people who have achieved success in their careers in sales. At the beginning of each chapter you'll have the opportunity to go on a **video ride-along**¹, a chance to hear from sales professionals and learn firsthand what it's like to be in sales. You'll go on video **ride-alongs**² with some of the best in the business and hear about their personal selling experiences and tips of the trade.

Meet Lisa Peskin, sales trainer at Business Development University. Lisa has spent over twenty years in sales with sales and sales management positions at companies such as Automated Data Processing (ADP), Bayview Financial, and Interbay Funding. She is currently a sales trainer at Business Development University and works with sales forces across the country to become more effective. Lisa is an experienced and passionate seller who will share her insights and tips for success with you throughout the book.

Ride along with Lisa as she shares her thoughts on the power of selling in everyday life.

[\(click to see video\)](#)

1. Watching a video featuring a sales professional who is sharing on-the-job experiences.

2. Going on sales calls with a sales rep or other selling professional to learn firsthand how to be successful in sales.

1.1 Get What You Want Every Day

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Understand the role of selling in everyday life.

What does success look like to you?

For most people, to achieve personal success entails more than just making a lot of money. Many would claim that to be successful in a career means to have fulfilled an ongoing goal—one that has been carefully planned according to their interests and passions. Is it your vision to run your own business? Or would you rather pursue a profession in a service organization? Do you want to excel in the technology field or, perhaps, work in the arts? Can you see yourself as a senior executive? Imagine yourself in the role that defines success for you. Undoubtedly, to assume this role requires more than just an initial desire; those who are most successful take many necessary steps over time to become sufficiently qualified for the job presented to them. Think about your goal: what it will take to get there?

Figure 1.1



Selling can help you realize your dreams.

© 2010 Jupiterimages Corporation

With a good plan and the right information, you can achieve whatever you set out to do. It may seem like a distant dream at the moment, but it can be a reality sooner than you think. Think about successful people who do what you want to do. What do they all have in common? Of course, they have all worked hard to get to their current position, and they all have a passion for their job. There is, additionally, a subtler key ingredient for success that they all share; all successful people effectively engage in **personal selling**³, the process of interacting one-on-one with someone to provide information that will influence a purchase or action. Michael Levens, *Marketing: Defined, Explained, Applied* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2010), 181.

3. Communication between a customer and a salesperson with the intention of providing information for the customer to make a buying decision.

Congratulations, You're in Sales!

If you think personal selling is only for salespeople, think again. Everyone in every walk of life uses personal selling (some more effectively than others!). Selling is what makes people successful. We all have to sell our ideas, our points of view, and ourselves every day to all sorts of people—and not just those related to our jobs. For example, when you work on a team project, you have to sell your ideas about how your team should approach the project (or, sometimes more delicately, you will have to persuade others as to what you should do about a lazy team member). When you are with your friends, you have to sell your point of view about which movie you want to see or where you want to go to eat. When you pitch in for a friend's gift, you have to sell your ideas about what gift to give. You are selling every day whether you realize it or not.

Think about the products and services that you buy (and concepts and causes that you believe in) and how selling plays a role in your purchase decision. If you rented an apartment or bought a car, someone sold you on the one you chose. If you read a product review for a new computer online then went into the store to buy it, someone reinforced your decision and sold you the brand and model you bought. If you ran in a 5K race to raise money for a charity, someone sold you on why you should invest your time and your money in that particular cause. A professor, an advisor, or another student may have even sold you on taking this course!

This video highlights how your life depends on selling.

Video Clip

[\(click to see video\)](#)

Source: Grant Cardone

“I Sell Stories”

Selling is vital in all aspects of business, just as it is in daily life. Consider Ike Richman, the vice president of public relations for Comcast-Spectacor, who is responsible for the public relations for all NBA and NHL games and hundreds of concerts and events held at the company's Wachovia Center in Philadelphia. When you ask Ike to describe his job, he replies, “I sell stories.” What he means is that he has to “pitch”—or advertise—his stories (about the games or concerts) to convince the press to cover the events that he is promoting. So, even though he is not in the sales department, his job involves selling. Gary Kopervas, similarly, is the chief creative strategist at Backe Digital Brand Communications. He works in the creative

department in an advertising agency, yet he describes his job as “selling ideas,” not creating ads. Connie Pearson-Bernard, the president and founder of Seamless Events, Inc., an event planning company, says she sells experiences. For many of her clients, she also sells time because she and her team execute all the required details to create the perfect event. As you notice, all these people are engaged in selling, even though “sales” may not be included in their respective job descriptions. Clearly, whether you pursue a career in sales or in another discipline, selling is an important component of every job...and everyday life.

Power Player: Lessons in Selling from Successful Salespeople

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

Imagine being a nineteen-year-old college dropout with a child on the way.

That described Tom Hopkins in 1976. He worked in construction to pay the bills. He realized there had to be a better way to make a living, so he took a job in real estate sales, but had no success. In fact, after his first six months, he had only sold one house and made an average of just \$42 a month to support his family.

One day, he met someone who suggested that he go to a sales training seminar. Tom was inspired by the concepts in the seminar and put them to work. Before he was thirty, Tom was a millionaire selling real estate. Tom is now a legend in the selling arena with his “Training for Champions” and “Sales Boot Camp” programs. He is a successful author, speaker, columnist, and sales coach at Tom Hopkins International, which provides sales training for companies such as Best Buy, State Farm Insurance, Aflac, U.S. Army Recruiters, and more. Tom Hopkins International, “Tom Hopkins Bio,” http://www.tomhopkins.com/tomhopkins_bio.html (accessed June 7, 2009).

Experience the power of Tom Hopkins in action.

http://www.tomhopkins.com/video_demo.html

Source: Tomhopkins.com

The New World of Selling

There are some people who might think of selling as a high-pressure encounter between a salesperson and a customer. Years ago, that may have been the case in some situations. But in today's world, successful selling is not something you do "to" a customer, it is something you do "with" a customer. The customer has a voice and is involved in most selling situations. In fact, Internet-based tools such as forums, social networks like Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, along with Web sites, live chat, and other interactive features allow customers to participate in the process no matter what they are buying. Listen to consumer behavior expert and author Dr. Michael Solomon discuss the process of selling in today's world.

Video Clip

Dr. Michael Solomon Interview

[\(click to see video\)](#)

The partnership of selling.

Brand + Selling = Success

What do Ikea, Red Bull, Mini Cooper, and Apple have in common? All four are strong and highly identifiable **brands**⁴. You might wonder what role a brand name plays in selling strategy. Perhaps it is not always noticeable, but when you buy a Red Bull at the corner store for some extra energy, at that very moment, a specific, chosen brand has become an extremely powerful selling tool, and it has significantly influenced your inclination to purchase *that* particular drink. Selling can only be successful when that thing that you sell has *perceived* value applied to it by the consumer—why Red Bull rather than another caffeine drink? Red Bull must be more effective if a person chooses it rather than the other brand nearby. A brand is a tool to establish value in the eyes of the customer because it indicates something unique. On the surface, a brand is identified by a name, logo, or symbol so that it is consistently recognized. Michael R. Solomon, Greg W. Marshall, and Elnora W. Stuart, *Marketing: Real People, Real Choices* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 286. But a brand is more than that.

4. A product, service, or concept that is unique, consistent, and relevant and has an emotional connection with its customers.

5. A product or service that is not available from any other competitor.

A great brand has four key characteristics:

1. It is **unique**⁵. (Ikea furniture has exclusive, on-trend styling at unbelievable prices.)

2. It is **consistent**⁶. (Red Bull looks and tastes the same no matter where you buy it.)
3. It is **relevant**⁷. (Mini Cooper looks cool and doesn't use much gas, and you can design your own online.)
4. It has an **emotional connection**⁸ with its customers. (An iPod, with hundreds of personalized qualities, becomes a loved companion.)

A brand is important in selling because it inherently offers something special that the customer values. In addition, people trust brands because they know what they can expect; brands, over time, establish a reputation for their specific and consistent product. If this changes, there could be negative repercussions—for example, what would happen if thousands of Mini Coopers started to break down? Customers expect a reliable car and would not purchase a Mini if they could not expect performance. Brand names emerge in all different sects of the consumer market—they can represent products, like PowerBar, or services, like FedEx. Brands can also be places, like Macy's, Amazon.com, or even Las Vegas (everyone knows that what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas! Michael McCarthy, "Vegas Goes Back to Naughty Roots," *USA Today*, April 11, 2005, http://www.usatoday.com/money/advertising/adtrack/2005-04-11-track-vegas_x.htm (accessed June 4, 2009).). Brands can be concepts or causes like MTV's Rock the Vote or the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Brands can also be people, like Lady Gaga, Jay-Z, Martha Stewart, or Barack Obama.

When products, services, concepts, ideas, and people demonstrate the characteristics of a brand, they are much easier to sell. For example, if you go to McDonald's for lunch, you know you can always get a Big Mac and fries, and you always know it will taste the same whether you go to the McDonald's near campus or one closer to your home. Or if you go to Abercrombie & Fitch, you can expect the store to look and feel the same and carry the same kind of merchandise whether you go to a store in Baltimore, Maryland, or Seattle, Washington.

The same concept applies to people. Think about your classmates: is there one that is always prepared? He or she is the one who always does well on the tests, participates in class, is a good team player, and gets good grades on assignments. This person has created a brand. Everyone knows that they can count on this person; everyone knows what to expect. Conversely, the same is true for a person who is often times late and sometimes arrives unprepared. You probably wouldn't want to work with that person because you're not sure if that person will hold up his or her end of the project. Which one would you choose as a teammate? Which one would you trust to work with on a class project? Which person is your brand of choice?

6. A product or service that is reliable or the same every time.

7. A product or service that is pertinent and important to specific customers.

8. A bond or relationship with a brand.

The Power of an Emotional Connection

Uniqueness (no other fries taste like McDonald's), consistency (a Coke tastes like Coke no matter where you buy it), and relevance (your college bookstore is only relevant on a college campus, not in your local mall) are clear as characteristics of a brand, but the most important characteristic is also the most abstract—the emotional connection it creates with its customers. Some brands create such a strong emotional connection that its customers become brand fans or advocates and actually take on the role of selling the brand by way of referrals, online reviews, user-generated content, and word-of-mouth advertising.

Figure 1.2



Harley-Davidson sells by using an emotional connection between the brand and its customers.

© 2010 Jupiterimages Corporation

Harley-Davidson measures their customer loyalty by the number of customers who have the company's logo tattooed on their body. Fred Reichheld, "The Ultimate Question: How to Measure and Build Customer Loyalty in the Support Center," presented via Webinar on May 14, 2009. These customers are emotionally connected with the brand, which offers unique selling opportunities for Harley-Davidson dealerships. Another example of emotional connection to a brand can be found by examining consumer relationships to sports teams. Fans willingly advertise their favorite team by wearing T-shirts, hats, and even putting decals and bumper stickers on their cars. They attend games (some of which require hours of standing in line) or watch them religiously on television. For popular events, in fact, many times customers are willing to pay more than the face value of tickets to attend; some will spend hundreds of dollars to see the NCAA Final Four, the World Series, or the Super Bowl. These consumers are emotionally connected to their teams, and they want to be there to support them. A loud, sold-out stadium certainly illustrates why it's easier to sell brands when customers are emotionally connected.

Power Selling: Lessons in Selling from Successful Brands

Emotion Sells

Did you ever consider why the salespeople at Starbucks are called baristas instead of employees?

Howard Schultz, the chief executive officer of Starbucks, has built the brand in his vision since the company began in 1982. He believes strongly that the brand stands for more than beans. During an interview, he said, “By making a deeper emotional connection with your customers, your brand will stand out from the hundreds, if not thousands, of vendors, entrepreneurs, and business owners selling similar services and products.” Carmine Gallo, “How to Sell More Than a Product,” *BusinessWeek*, May 19, 2009, http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/may2009/sb20090519_058809.htm (accessed June 7, 2009). Schultz is especially passionate about the role salespeople have in creating the “Starbucks” experience.

The brand recently launched a new marketing campaign called “It’s not just coffee. It’s Starbucks.” Listen to what baristas have to say about the latest Starbucks marketing campaign. Eleftheria Parpis, “Starbucks Claims ‘It’s Not Just Coffee,’” *Brandweek*, May 1, 2009, http://www.brandweek.com/bw/content_display/news-and-features/retail-restaurants/e3i88d85d8ede4fd0afae2e6d752751e2a3 (accessed June 7, 2009).

Starbucks baristas talk about their emotional connection to the brand.

[\(click to see video\)](#)

Source: Starbucks Corporation

The concept of emotional connection is not limited to the brand, it is also an especially critical component in the actual practice of selling. Customers are much more readily persuaded to make a purchase if they develop an emotional connection with the salesperson. If you go to Best Buy to look at a new home theater system, a helpful (or unhelpful) salesperson can make all the difference in whether you buy a particular system from that particular Best Buy or not. If the salesperson asks questions to understand your needs and develops a good

relationship (or emotional connection) with you, it will greatly increase your chances of purchasing the home theater system from him. Rock star Gene Simmons, front man for the legendary rock band KISS and wildly successful entrepreneur, summed it up best: “I have to have an emotional connection to what I am ultimately selling because it is emotion, whether you are selling religion, politics, even a breath mint.” “Gene Simmons: Rock ‘n’ Roll Entrepreneur,” *BusinessWeek*, September 5, 2008, http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/sep2008/sb2008095_987221.htm (accessed June 7, 2009).

Clearly, brands are fundamental building blocks in the selling process. The bottom line is, great brands = great sales.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Personal selling** is a powerful part of everyday life. The selling process can help you get what you want both personally and professionally.
- You are always selling your ideas, your point of view, and yourself in virtually every situation, from class participation to going out with friends.
- In order to understand the selling process, you have to understand **brands**. A brand can be a product, service, concept, cause, location, or even a person. A brand consistently offers value to a customer with something that is unique, consistent, and relevant and creates an emotional connection.
- **Brands** are important in selling because customers trust brands. The brand doesn't end with the product, service, or concept; the salesperson is also a brand.

EXERCISES

1. Identify a situation in which you were the customer in a personal selling situation. Discuss your impressions of the salesperson and the selling process.
2. Think about this class. In what ways do you sell yourself to the professor during each class?
3. Think about your school as a brand. Discuss what makes it unique, consistent, and relevant and have an emotional connection with its customers. How would you use these characteristics if you were trying to sell or convince someone to attend the school?
4. Think about the following brands: Xbox, Victoria's Secret, and BMW. Discuss how each brand forms an emotional connection with its customers. Why is it important in selling?

1.2 Selling: Heartbeat of the Economy and the Company

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss the role of selling in the economy.
2. Explain the role of selling in an organization.

Look around. Your computer, your car, your jewelry, your eyeglasses, and your cell phone—many of the things you own—were probably sold to you by someone. Now, think about things you *can't* see, like your cell phone service, your Internet service, and your car insurance. Chances are, those services were probably sold to you by someone as well. Now that you think about it, you can see that selling is involved in life in so many ways. But did you ever think about the impact that selling has on the economy?

In the United States alone, almost 16 million people were employed in jobs in sales in 2008. This number includes retail salespeople and cashiers, insurance sales agents, real estate brokers and sales agents, and manufacturing sales reps just to name a few. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, that number will increase to almost 17 million people employed in sales and sales-related occupations by 2018, which represents a 6.2 percent increase from 2008. That translates to one in every ten people in the United States having a job in sales. United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Employment by Major Occupational Group, 2008 and Projected 2018,” Economic News Release Table 5, 2009, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.t05.htm> (accessed May 6, 2010). Other estimates, such as the *Selling Power Magazine's* annual report of America's Top 500 Sales Forces in 2008, puts the total number of salespeople at the top 500 companies at over twenty million for the first time. “Selling Power 500: America's 500 Largest Sales Forces,” *Selling Power*, October 2008, 52.

But the bigger story is the fact that many companies sell their products and services globally. **Multinational corporations (MNCs)**⁹, large companies that have operations, including selling, in several countries, [citation redacted per publisher request]. such as Procter & Gamble, Dell, Reebok, and Kraft Foods, employed 32 million workers in 2007. Bureau of Economic Analysis, International Economic Accounts, “Summary Estimates for Multinational Companies: Employment, Sales, and Capital Expenditures for 2007,” April 17, 2009, <http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/international/mnc/2009/mnc2007.htm> (accessed June 5, 2009). Although not all these employees are engaged in selling, the number helps provide

9. Large companies that have operations, including selling, in multiple countries.

some sense of relativity as to the proportional impact of international business. Most large MNCs have offices (including sales offices) in many foreign countries. This provides the company with the opportunity to become integrated into the culture, customs, and business practices of each country in which it has operations.

A large number of MNCs generate a significant portion of their sales from countries outside the United States. If you've traveled outside the United States, think about the products you saw. Companies such as Coca-Cola, eBay, Gillette, KFC, and Starbucks have a significant presence in foreign countries. Many companies expand selling to international markets for several reasons, including slow population growth in their domestic country, increased competition, opportunity for growth and profit, and sometimes, out of sheer necessity due to the fact that globalization is rapidly changing the economic landscape. George E. Belch and Michael A. Belch, *Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing and Communications Perspective*, 8th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2008), 653–54.

In the past, expansion to foreign markets was limited to those corporations that could make the investment required to locate offices and operations abroad. The Internet, however, has provided that same opportunity to small- and medium-sized companies, so that they may sell products and services internationally. Why would small companies want to do this? With only a one-to-five proportion of Internet users living in the United States, almost 80 percent of Internet users live in places abroad; thus, there is a much larger market to be found by way of the Internet. Before you take your lemonade stand global, however, remember that selling internationally is not as simple as just setting up a Web site. Language, shipping, currency exchange, and taxes are just some of the costs and considerations necessary for selling products and services internationally via the Internet. To help companies overcome these barriers of doing business internationally, organizations such as e-commerce service provider FiftyOne offer technology solutions that manage these important components of international selling. FiftyOne, <http://www.fiftyone.com/solution> (accessed June 5, 2009).

Think about the possibilities. When companies such as Overstock.com want to sell globally, companies like FiftyOne have a selling opportunity. Caroline McCarthy, "Overstock.com Will Extend Reach to Canada, Europe," CNET News Blog, http://news.cnet.com/8301-10784_3-9933344-7.html (accessed June 5, 2009). In other words, selling products and services can generate more opportunities for selling other products and services in the future. When companies (FiftyOne is a perfect example) and salespeople think creatively and see the environment through the customer's eyes, they can identify selling opportunities that might not otherwise exist. This is a basic tenet of selling, both domestically and internationally.

The Internet: Power to the People

The Internet has been a game changer for selling in many ways. Just like the Internet expands the reach of a company to virtually anywhere in the world, it also provides customers with access to information, products, and services that they never had before. In some industries, the Internet has virtually eliminated the need for a salesperson. Travel agents are no longer the exclusive providers of reservations and travel plans. Music stores are almost extinct. Newspaper want ads have almost vanished. In other industries, the relationship of the salesperson and customer has changed dramatically. The power has shifted from the seller to the buyer. Take, for example, the auto industry. It used to be that when you wanted to buy a car, you went to a car dealership. The salesperson would show you the cars, take you out on a test drive, and then negotiate the selling price when you were ready to buy, holding the dealer invoice close to the vest. Today, customers may e-mail a car dealership to set up an appointment to drive a specific car after they have researched different models of cars including features, benefits, competitive models, editor and customer reviews, competitive pricing, and dealer invoice pricing. In some cases, the customer may know more than the salesperson. Robert McGarvey and Babs S. Harrison, “The Human Element: How the Web Brings People Together in an Integrated Selling System,” *Selling Power* 20, no. 8, <http://www.sellingpower.com/content/article.php?a=5566> (accessed March 16, 2010).

Sales organizations are embracing a movement called **Sales 2.0**¹⁰. You may have heard of Web 2.0, the second generation of the Internet, which includes interactivity, community, and on-demand information. Sales 2.0 is a term that appropriately describes a new way of thinking about the role of the Internet in the selling process as it encompasses the impact of constantly changing technology and multiple electronic devices, “mash-ups” of different sources of information, and user-generated content on sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Twitter. According to Tim Sullivan, director of intellectual property and information for Sales Performance International, these Internet-based changes pose new implications for sales. Educating customers is no longer the primary function of the salesperson. Customers are actively involved in engagement, interaction, and collaboration to seek information. Salespeople need to understand the power of collaboration both inside their organization and with their customers, so that they may participate in the online conversation, enabling them to better deliver value. Just as customers use blogs, wikis, and social networking as tools to learn about a product, companies can use these tools to learn about customers (and what they want and need). It’s a new mind-set and new technology tools are constantly changing the landscape—salespeople must be prepared to adjust their reactions accordingly. Heather Baldwin, “What Does Sales 2.0 Mean for You?” *Selling Power Sales Management eNewsletter*, March 3, 2008, <http://www.sellingpower.com/content/newsletter/issue.php?pc=801> (accessed March 16, 2010). The shift of power

10. A term used to describe the role of the next generation of the Internet in the selling process including social networking, “mash-ups,” communities, and collaboration.

to the customer is underscored by Gerhard Gschwandtner, founder and CEO of Selling Power, Inc. According to him, “Sales 2.0 gives the customer a 360-degree view of the company and provides sales organizations with a variety of tools that help manage that two-way communication process.” Selling Power, Sales 2.0 Newsletter, September 18, 2008, <http://www.sellingpower.com/content/newsletter/issue.php?pc=868> (accessed June 21, 2010). Sales 2.0 takes the selling process to the next generation.

Video Clip

Whiteboard Session with David Thompson, CEO of Genius.com

Sales 2.0 and how it works.

http://www.bnet.com/2422-13731_23-187203.html

Source: BNET

Sales Is Not a Department, It’s a State of Mind

Sold.

It’s a deal.

Let’s shake on it.

Sign on the dotted line.

You’ve got the job.

11. The activity of selling a company’s products and services.

Those are the words that signal success in selling. They seem simple, but according to Gerry Tabio, bringing a **sale**¹¹BNET Business Dictionary, “Sales,” BNET, <http://dictionary.bnet.com/definition/Sales.html?tag=col1:rbDictionary> (accessed

June 5, 2009). to fruition is “not just about celebrating the sale; it’s about celebrating the growth of the customer.” Gerry Tabio, “How to Create Ideas That Sell,” presentation at Greater Media Philadelphia Sales Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, May 15, 2009. The most successful companies work to build and sustain relationships with the customer at every **touch point**¹², any way in which the company comes in contact with the customer, and consider selling the job of everyone in the organization. In other words, although there are specific functional departments such as sales, marketing, operations, human resources, finance, and others, everyone in the organization is focused on the customer. This is called a **customer-centric organization**¹³. Barry Welford, “7 Habits of a Truly Customer-Centric Selling Organization,” SMM Internet Marketing Consultants Newsletter 13, <http://www.smmbc.ca/newsletter-13.htm> (accessed June 5, 2009).

Figure 1.3



Customer touch points include any point at which the customer comes in contact with or “touches” the brand. Customer-centric companies ensure that every customer touch point provides a positive experience for the customer.

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You might wonder why all companies aren’t considered customer-centric. After all, if they were in business to sell products and services to customers, it would make sense that they would be customer-centric. However, you have probably encountered companies that aren’t really focused on the customer. How many times have you heard this message while you were on hold to talk to a salesperson or customer service representative, “Your call is important to us. Please stay on the line for the next available representative”? Being on hold and hearing a recorded message hardly makes you feel as if you are important to the company.

It’s All about the Customer

Being customer-centric means insisting on accountability. Although everyone is focused on the customer, every employee is part of a department or function. Each department has goals and accountabilities. In a true customer-centric organization,

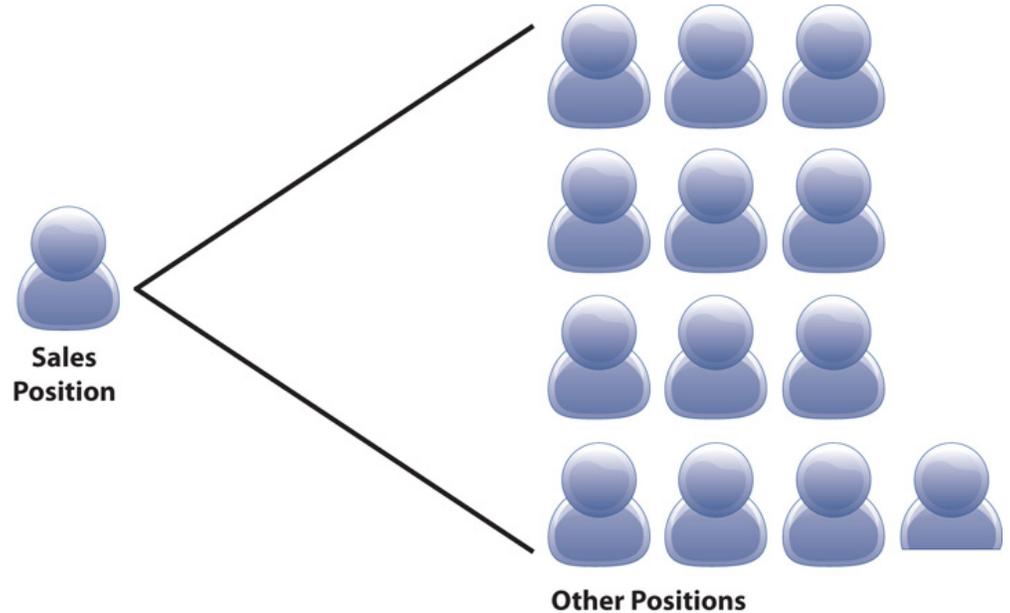
12. Any point in which the customer comes in contact with a company, such as in person, by phone, by e-mail, Web site, invoice, advertising, and more.
13. All employees are focused on anticipating and meeting the needs of the customer.

the departments work together to satisfy the needs of the customer and achieve the financial objectives of the company. Most companies have core functions or departments such as sales, customer service (sometimes it is included as part of the sales department), marketing, operations, finance, human resources, product development, procurement, and supply chain management (also called logistics). Departments such as finance and human resources are called **support (or staff) functions**¹⁴ since they provide support for those that are on the front lines such as sales and customer service (these departments are also called **line functions**¹⁵ as they are part of a company's daily operations). BusinessDictionary.com, "Staff Function," <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/staff-function.html> (accessed June 8, 2009). In a customer-centric organization, the focus on the customer helps prevent organizational "silos" (i.e., when departments work independently of each other and focus only on their individual goals).

The sales department is the heartbeat of every company. According to *Selling Power Magazine*, the manufacturing and service companies listed on its "Power Selling 500 Report" generate \$6.7 trillion dollars in sales annually. Each salesperson supports an average of 12.9 other jobs within the company. "Selling Power 500: America's 500 Largest Sales Forces," *Selling Power*, October 2008, 53. This means that the level of sales that is generated by each salesperson actually pays for the roles in human resources, marketing, operations, and other departments. It makes sense that the salespeople fund the operations of the company. After all, it is a salesperson with whom you interact when you buy a Nissan Cube, lip gloss at Sephora, or an interview suit at Macy's. The people in the sales department "ring the cash register" (whether the business has a cash register or not). They are responsible and accountable to deliver sales to generate revenue and profit, which are required to operate and to invest in the company. In fact, the sales department is considered so important that even in this difficult economy, companies should continue to fill open sales positions even if they are not hiring in other departments, according to Dennis J. Ceru, a professor of entrepreneurship at Babson College and the president of Strategic Management Associates, a consulting firm in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts. Elaine Pofeldt, "Empty Desk Syndrome: How to Handle a Hiring Freeze," *Inc.*, May 1, 2008, <http://www.inc.com/magazine/20080501/empty-desk-syndrome.html> (accessed June 7, 2009). Without a healthy and strong sales department, companies can wither and die.

14. A department that provides services that support those that are on the front lines with customers, such as human resources, finance, and marketing. This department is also called a staff function.
15. A department that is part of the daily operations of a company such as sales and customer service.

Figure 1.4



Each salesperson generates enough revenue and profit to support 12.9 jobs in the average company.

Power Point: Lessons in Selling from the Customer's Point of View

Role Reversal

How would you feel if you wanted to buy a new car, but every sales rep you called was in a meeting?

Brad Lathrop, a sales professional, learned the hard way about how a customer feels in this situation. When he was in the market for a new car, he called several dealerships. Every receptionist told him that all the salespeople were in meetings. The receptionist at the last dealership he called said the same thing, but added that if Brad would hold for a minute, she would get a salesperson out of a meeting. It's no surprise that was the dealership where Brad eventually bought the car and learned a powerful lesson about selling.

Is It Sales, or Is It Marketing?

So you might be wondering, if the sales department interacts with customers, what exactly does the marketing department do? That's a great question. Some people use the terms in tandem—sales and marketing—to refer to sales. Some people use the terms interchangeably and refer to marketing as sales. It's no wonder that it confuses so many.

According to the American Marketing Association, “**marketing**¹⁶ is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” American Marketing Association, “About AMA,” October 2007, <http://www.marketingpower.com/AboutAMA/Pages/DefinitionofMarketing.aspx?sq=definition+of+marketing> (accessed June 6, 2009). In other words, it is the role of the marketing department to use the four Ps of the marketing mix (product, place, promotion, and price) to determine the brand message, which is ultimately communicated to customers. Michael R. Solomon, Greg W. Marshall, and Elnora W. Stuart, *Marketing: Real People, Real Choices* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 380. Then, the marketing department uses the elements of the promotional mix of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, interactive marketing, and personal selling to get the word out to customers. George E. Belch and Michael A. Belch, *Advertising and Promotion*, 8th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2008), 10. Marketers seek to motivate prospective customers to purchase by driving them to a Web site, store, phone, event, or another related, desired action. Essentially, marketing builds relationships between customers and the brand. When you see an online ad for Best Buy, get a text message about the new release of *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* on Blu-ray, call the 800 number to check on your Rewards Zone point balance, post a comment on the Best Buy Facebook page, respond to a tweet from Best Buy on Twitter, see a newspaper insert or an ad on television, or read about the opening of a new store near you, these are all examples of marketing. They are designed to encourage you to engage with the brand and encourage you to take an action—visit the store, go to the Web site, call the 800 number, or tell your friends about the brand.

When you go into the store or visit the Web site, it's the sales department that takes over. A salesperson will speak with you (either in person in the store, online with live chat, or by phone) to determine what you need and to help you make the best decision by communicating product information (*this printer is wireless*), service information (*we can deliver that tomorrow*), warranty information (*it has a 90-day manufacturer warranty*), and other pertinent facts. The salesperson extends the relationship that was established with the marketing contacts and makes a personal

16. The activity of creating communicating and delivering brand messages to customers.

connection with you. If you have a good experience, your relationship with Best Buy gets even better, and you are more likely to shop there again and tell your friends.

At times, however, sales and marketing don't play well together. When organizations are not customer-centric, the departments may appear to have separate or conflicting goals. Marketing may feel that sales doesn't follow up on prospective customers, or perhaps sales feels that the marketing efforts are focused on the wrong customers. To understand more about the relationship between sales and marketing, watch Chip Terry, vice president and general manager of sales intelligence at Zoom Info, talk about how the two functions are aligned (and sometimes how they may not be aligned):

Video Clip

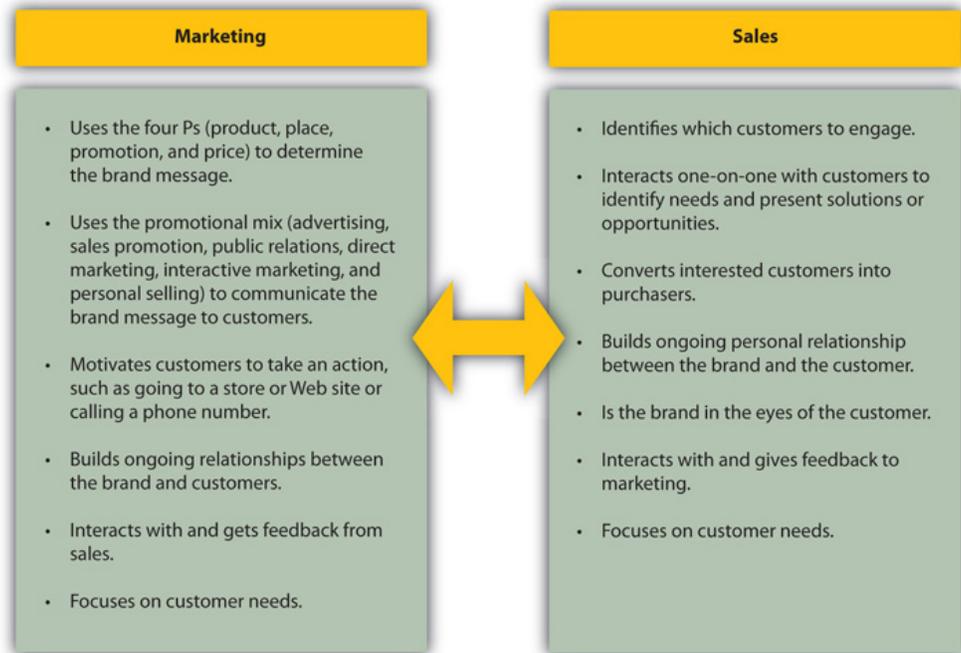
Chip Terry Interview

How sales and marketing work together.

http://www.bnet.com/2422-13723_23-222675.html

Source: BNET

Figure 1.5 *Marketing and Sales: How They Work Together*



In addition to closing the sale (when the customer purchases the product or service), the salesperson has a very important role in the marketing process. Because the salesperson (in the store, online, or on the phone) is a primary touch point and a personal interaction with the customer, the salesperson is the brand in the eyes of the customer. According to Dr. David A. Shore of Harvard University, “The sales force is the most visible manifestation of the brand. Salespeople need to say with a singular voice, ‘This is who we are, and, by extension, this is who we are not.’ The critical element that power brands have is trust, and a sales force needs to become the trusted advisor to the customer.” Gerhard Gschwandtner, “How Power Brands Sell More,” *Selling Power* 21, no. 3, <http://www.sellingpower.com/content/article.php?a=5705> (accessed March 16, 2010).

So now you can see that marketing and sales work hand-in-hand: one develops the brand and the other assumes the image of the brand. Neither works without the other, and the relationship between the functions must be transparent to the customer. There’s only *one brand* in the eyes of the customer, not two departments. When marketing and sales work well together, the customer experience is seamless.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Sales** is a career opportunity for you to consider; one in ten people in the United States has a job in sales or a sales-related occupation.
- In this global economy, many companies sell products in multiple countries around the world. Many **multinational corporations** have sales offices in foreign countries, and large and small companies sell globally by using the Internet.
- **Sales 2.0** is a term that is used to refer to the ever-changing technology, such as social networking, that is changing the relationship salespeople have with customers. It's important to understand how technology can support your communication and collaboration with customers.
- A **customer-centric** organization has the customer as the focal point. You work as a team with all functions in the company to provide products and services that meet customers' needs.
- **Sales** and **marketing** are two distinct but closely related functions. **Sales** converts the customer to a purchaser with one-on-one interaction. **Marketing** determines the brand message and uses the elements of the promotion mix to motivate the customer to take an action. Both work together to build ongoing relationships with customers.

EXERCISES

1. Visit <http://www.sellingpower.com> and review the "Selling Power 500." Discuss the top ten companies listed in one of the six categories of businesses (office and computer equipment, insurance, consumables, communications, medical products, or financial services). Did you realize these companies employed so many salespeople? Have you come in contact with salespeople from any of these companies? To whom do these salespeople sell?
2. Identify a company that you think is customer-centric and one that is not. Identify at least three touch points for each company. Based on this, discuss why you think each company is customer-centric or not.
3. Discuss the difference between sales and marketing. Choose one of your favorite retail brands and discuss one example of sales and one example of marketing.

1.3 *Selling U*: The Power of Your Personal Brand

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Understand how the selling process can help you get the job you want.

Ultimately, this book is about the power of YOU.

To help you realize that power and get the job you want, this textbook includes a section called *Selling U*. It is the final section in every chapter, and it is filled with proven methods, information, examples, and resources to help you apply the selling concepts you learned in the chapter so that you may sell yourself to get the job you want.

In the *Selling U* sections throughout this book you'll learn skills, such as how to create a cover letter and résumé that help you stand out, how to communicate with prospective employers, how to go on successful interviews, how to follow up, and how to negotiate and accept the right job offer. The complete table of contents is shown here.

Selling U Table of Contents

Chapter 1 "The Power to Get What You Want in Life": The Power of Your Personal Brand

Chapter 2 "The Power to Choose Your Path: Careers in Sales": Résumé and Cover Letter Essentials

Chapter 3 "The Power of Building Relationships: Putting Adaptive Selling to Work": Networking: The Hidden Job Market

Chapter 4 "Business Ethics: The Power of Doing the Right Thing": Selling Your Personal Brand Ethically: Résumés and References

Chapter 5 "The Power of Effective Communication": The Power of Informational Interviews

Chapter 6 "Why and How People Buy: The Power of Understanding the Customer": Developing and Communicating Your Personal FAB

Chapter 7 "Prospecting and Qualifying: The Power to Identify Your Customers": How to Use Prospecting Tools to Identify 25 Target Companies

Chapter 8 "The Preapproach: The Power of Preparation": Six Power-Packed Tools to Let the Right People Know about Your Brand

Chapter 9 "The Approach: The Power of Connecting": What's Your Elevator Pitch for Your Brand?

Chapter 10 "The Presentation: The Power of Solving Problems": Selling Yourself in an Interview

Chapter 11 "Handling Objections: The Power of Learning from Opportunities": How to Overcome Objections in a Job Interview

Chapter 12 "Closing the Sale: The Power of Negotiating to Win": Negotiating to Win for Your Job Offer

Chapter 13 "Follow-Up: The Power of Providing Service That Sells": What Happens after You Accept the Offer?

Chapter 14 "The Power of Learning the Ropes": It's Your Career: Own It

Chapter 15 "Entrepreneurial Selling: The Power of Running Your Own Business": Inspiration, Resources, and Assistance for Your Entrepreneurial Journey

Getting Started

Some people know exactly what they want to do in life. Madonna, Venus and Serena Williams, Steve Jobs, and countless others have been preparing for their chosen careers since they were young. Dylan Lauren, daughter of designer Ralph Lauren and chief executive of Dylan's Candy Bar, could see her path even when she was young. With a father who was a fashion designer and her mother a photographer, she said, "I always knew I wanted to be a leader and do something creative as a career." Patricia R. Olsen, "Sweets Tester in Chief," *New York Times*, June 7, 2009, business section, 9. Katy Thorbahn, senior vice president and general manager at Razorfish, one of the largest interactive marketing and advertising agencies in the world, always knew she wanted to be in advertising. Her father was in advertising, her uncle was in advertising, and she had an internship at an advertising agency, so it was no surprise that she pursued a career in advertising. You probably know some people like this. They know exactly the direction they want to take and how they want to get there.

It's not that way for everyone, however. In fact, most people don't really know what they want to do for a career or even what types of jobs are available. Whether you are currently working at a job or you are just beginning to determine your career direction, it's never too early or too late to learn about what career might be a good fit for you. It's a good idea to use the three steps outlined below to help you begin your career search. These steps can be most effective if you complete them even before you put together your résumé (you'll get the tools to create your résumé and cover letter in *Selling U* in Chapter 2 "The Power to Choose Your Path: Careers in Sales").

Step 1: Explore the Possibilities

Whether you know your direction or are trying to figure out what you want to do “when you grow up,” there are some excellent tools available to you. The best place to start is at your campus career center. (If your school does not have a career center, visit the library.) The people who work there are trained professionals with working knowledge of the challenges to overcome, as well as the resources needed to conduct a career search. People find that visiting the career center in person to meet the staff is a great way to learn firsthand about what is available. Also, most campus career centers have a Web site that includes valuable information and job postings.

At this stage in your career search, you might consider taking a **career assessment survey**¹⁷, **skills inventory**¹⁸, and/or **aptitude test**¹⁹. If you’re unsure about your direction, these tools can help you discover exactly what you like (and don’t like) to do and which industries and positions might be best for you. In addition, there are many resources that provide information about industries, position descriptions, required training and education, job prospects, and more. These are especially helpful in learning about position descriptions and job opportunities within a specific industry.

Here are some resources that you may find to be a good place to begin a search. Most of the Web sites listed provide surveys exercises and information at no charge.

Table 1.1 Resources for Your Job Search

Resource	Description
<p>Career One Stop</p> <p>http://www.careeronestop.org/SKILLS/SkillCenterHome.asp</p>	<p>Information, job profiles, skills assessment, and more information available at no charge. The Skill Center is especially helpful. The site also includes salary and benefits information as well as other job search information.</p>
<p>Job Hunter’s Bible</p> <p>http://www.jobhuntersbible.com/counseling/index.php</p>	<p>Links to job assessment tests, personality tests, and more. This is the companion Web site to the popular best seller <i>What Color Is Your Parachute?</i></p>

17. A tool to determine which jobs might be the best fit for your skills, strengths, and experience.

18. A survey or questionnaire that helps identify your level of skills, strengths, and weaknesses to help determine what job or industry you might consider pursuing.

19. A test to determine your interest, skills, and abilities.

Resource	Description
<p>Queendom, the land of tests</p> <p>http://www.queendom.com/tests/testscontrol.htm?s=71</p>	<p>Free tests for leadership, aptitudes, personality traits, and more.</p>
<p>Riley Guide</p> <p>http://rileyguide.com/assess.html#tools</p> <p>http://rileyguide.com/careers.html</p>	<p>A robust Web site with free information and links to help with your career search. The assessment section and career and occupational guides are especially helpful. (Some charges may apply on some linked sites).</p>
<p>Career-Intelligence.com</p> <p>http://www.career-intelligence.com/assessment/career_assessment.asp</p>	<p>Self-administered career assessment tests, personality tests, and more; charges apply.</p>
<p>Lifeworktransitions.com</p> <p>http://www.lifeworktransitions.com/exercises/exercs.html</p>	<p>Articles and exercises to help you determine your strengths, passions, and direction available at no charge.</p>
<p>United States Department of Labor Career Voyages</p> <p>http://www.careervoyages.gov/automotive-main.cfm</p>	<p>Free information about industries, jobs, and more, including in-demand jobs.</p>

Resource	Description
<p>United States Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook</p> <p>http://www.bls.gov/oco</p>	<p>Free detailed information about occupations by industry, training and education needed, earnings, expected job prospects, what workers do on the job, and more.</p>

Step 2: Create Your Personal Mission Statement

You might be thinking that you just want to get a simple job; you don't need an elaborate **personal mission statement**²⁰. Although you may not be asked about your personal mission statement during an interview, it is nonetheless important, because it provides you with a concrete sense of direction and purpose, summarized in relatable words. Great brands have clear, concise mission statements to help the company chart its path. For example, Google's mission statement is "To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." Google, "Corporate Information, Company Overview," <http://www.google.com/intl/en/corporate/> (accessed June 6, 2009). The mission statement for Starbucks is "To inspire and nurture the human spirit—one person, one cup, and one neighborhood at a time." Starbucks, "Our Starbucks Mission," <http://www.starbucks.com/mission/default.asp> (accessed June 6, 2009).

It's worth your time to write a personal mission statement. You might be surprised to discover that people who have a personal mission statement find it easier to get an enjoyable job. This is precisely because a personal mission statement helps provide framework for what's important to you and what you want to do and accomplish.

A mission statement is a concise statement about what you want to achieve—the more direct, the better. It should be short (so don't worry about wordsmithing) and easy to recall (you should always know what your mission statement is and how to measure your activities against it). A mission statement should be broad in nature. In other words, it doesn't specifically state a job you want. Instead, it describes who you are, what you stand for, what you want to do, and the direction you want to take. Kim Richmond, *Brand You*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 18.

20. A brief but broad statement of who you are and what you want to accomplish.

Links

Learn more about how to write your personal mission statement.

Quintessential Careers

http://www.quintcareers.com/mission_statements.html

http://www.quintcareers.com/creating_personal_mission_statements.html

Nightingale Conant

http://www.nightingale.com/tmission_ExampleStatement.aspx

Time Thoughts

<http://www.timethoughts.com/goalsetting/mission-statements.htm>

Once you write your mission statement, you should put it somewhere where you can see it daily—perhaps on your computer wallpaper, on your desk, or on the back of your business card. It should remind you every day of your personal goals. Kim Richmond, *Brand You*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 20.

Step 3: Define Your Personal Brand

Choosing a career direction and writing a personal mission statement are not things that can be done in one day. They require research, evaluation, consideration, and a lot of soul searching. The same is true for defining your **personal brand**²¹.

You've learned about the power of a brand in the selling process and that a brand can be a product, service, concept, cause, or even a person. Truly, the most important product, brand, or idea you will ever sell is yourself. Kim Richmond, *Brand You*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 1. You're not just a person, you're a brand. When you begin your job search, you will need to sell yourself to prospective employers. When you sell yourself effectively, you will be

21. The characteristics that define you and what you have to offer to a prospective employer.

able to sell your ideas, your value, your experience, and your skills to get the job you want.

It's easy to talk about brands. It's harder to define one, especially when the brand is *you*. Many people feel uncomfortable talking about themselves. Others feel as if they are bragging if they are forced to put themselves in a positive light. The fact of the matter is, to be successful and stand apart from the competition, you have to know yourself and carefully craft your brand story. Peggy Klaus, *Brag: How to Toot Your Own Horn without Blowing It* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 2003), 3. For the purposes of finding a career, it is important to carefully consider what you believe defines you—what makes you unique, consistent, and relevant—and how to tell your brand story to create an emotional connection with prospective employers.

Here's a strategy to help you think about defining your personal brand. If you were on a job interview and the interviewer asked you, "Tell me three things about yourself that make you unique and would bring value to my company," what would you say? Would you be able to quickly identify three points that define you and then demonstrate what you mean?

Many students might answer this question by saying, "I'm hardworking, I'm determined, and I'm good with people." Although those are good characteristics, they are too generic and don't really define you as a brand. The best way to tell your brand story is to use the characteristics of a brand covered earlier in this chapter—unique, consistent, and relevant and creating an emotional connection with its customers.

If you identify three "**brand points**"²² you can tell a much more powerful brand story. Brand points are like platforms that you can use to demonstrate your skills and experience. Here are some examples of powerful brand points:

- **Leadership skills.** This provides a platform to describe your roles in leadership positions at school, work, professional, or volunteer or community service organizations.
- **Academic achievement.** This provides a platform to highlight your scholarships, awards, honors (e.g., dean's list), and more. A prospective employer wants to hire the best and the brightest (if academic achievement isn't your strong suit, don't use this as one of your brand points).
- **Sales (or other) experience.** This provides a platform to underscore your contributions and accomplishments in your current and past positions. Past achievements are the best predictor of future success

22. Specific characteristics that define your personal brand. They are platforms that you can use to demonstrate your skills and experience.

for a prospective employer so you can focus on results that you have delivered.

You can see how specific brand points can make a big difference in how you might answer the question above; they help define your brand as being unique (no one else has this combination of education, skills, and experience), consistent (each one demonstrates that you are constantly striving to achieve more), and relevant (prospective employers want people who have these characteristics). Finally, the ability to communicate your brand story in a cover letter, a résumé, and an interview will help you establish an emotional connection with your prospective employer because he or she will be able to identify with components of your personality.

You've Got the Power: Tips for Your Job Search

You Have More to Offer Than You Think

If you're putting off thinking about your career because you don't have any experience and you don't know what you want to do, don't worry. Take a deep breath, and focus on how to define your personal brand. You have more to offer than you think.

- Have you worked in a restaurant, hotel, retail store, bank, camp, or other customer service environment? You have multitasking skills, customer service skills, and the ability to work under pressure and deliver results.
- Have you worked for a landscaping company, technology company, or other service provider? You have experience interacting with clients to understand their needs. (Also, don't forget to mention the fact that you increased the company's sales if you made any sales).
- Have you worked as a cashier in a bank or in an accounting department? You have had the responsibility of handling money and accurately accounting for it.
- Have you earned money on your own with a small business such as babysitting or lawn care? You have entrepreneurial experience. Include how you landed your clients, advertised for new ones, and managed your costs and time. Every company wants people who can demonstrate drive and independence.

Creating your brand points can effectively make the difference between being an ordinary applicant and being the person who lands the job. Indeed, your brand points are the skeletal framework for the way you sell yourself to get the job you want. You'll learn how to use your brand points as the core of your résumé, cover letter, and interviews in [Chapter 2 "The Power to Choose Your Path: Careers in Sales"](#) and [Chapter 10 "The Presentation: The Power of Solving Problems"](#).

For now, just take the time to really think about what are the three brand points that define you. Your education, skills, and experience will probably be different from the example, but your brand points can be just as powerful. Use the box below as a starting point to identify your three brand points.

Suggestions for Brand Points

These are thought starters. You should define your brand based on what you have to offer.

- Sales experience (or experience in marketing, retail, finance, etc.)
- Project management experience
- Leadership experience
- Management experience
- Negotiating experience
- Work ethic and commitment (e.g., working while going to school)
- Entrepreneurial experience (e.g., eBay or other small business experience)
- Customer service experience (e.g., working in a restaurant, retail store, bank)
- Academic achievement
- Subject matter expert (e.g., author of a blog)
- International study
- Community service

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Selling U* is the final section in each chapter that provides information, resources, and guidance about how to sell yourself to get the job you want.
- Getting started for your job search includes three steps:
 1. Explore the possibilities. Learn about yourself through **career assessment surveys, skills inventory questionnaires, and personality tests**. Investigate industries in which you may want to work by using the resources provided. Don't forget to visit your campus career center.
 2. Write a personal mission statement. State your purpose briefly and concisely. It will help you plot your course.
 3. Define your personal brand. Identify three **brand points** that define your personal brand and become platforms on which to showcase your skills and experience. These three **brand points** will be the basis of your résumé, cover letter, and interviews.

EXERCISES

1. Visit at least two of the Web sites listed in [Table 1.1 "Resources for Your Job Search"](#) for a career assessment, skills inventory, or personality test. Complete at least one of the free tests or surveys. Discuss one thing you learned (or the test confirmed) about yourself.
2. Write your personal mission statement. Discuss what you learned about yourself by creating it.
3. Discuss how the characteristics of a brand can relate to a person (e.g., unique, consistent, and relevant and has an emotional connection with its customers).

1.4 Review and Practice

Power Wrap-Up

Now that you have read this chapter, you should be able to understand the role of selling in everyday life, in the economy, and in companies.

- You can **identify** examples of selling in your everyday life.
- You can **describe** the characteristics of a brand.
- You can **compare and contrast** the difference between sales and marketing.
- You can **understand** how to define your personal brand.

TEST YOUR POWER KNOWLEDGE (ANSWERS ARE BELOW)

1. Name three situations in your life in which you use selling.
2. Name the four key characteristics of a brand.
3. Describe what this sentence means: “Each salesperson supports an average of 12.9 other jobs within the company.”
4. Is sales considered a line or a support function? Why?
5. What is the impact of Sales 2.0 on the selling function?
6. Which of the four characteristics of a brand is most important when you are selling your personal brand?
7. What is a customer-centric organization?

POWER (ROLE) PLAY

Now it's time to put what you've learned into practice. The following are two roles that are involved in the same selling situation—one role is the customer, and the other is the salesperson. This will give you the opportunity to think about this selling situation from the point of view of both the customer and the salesperson.

Read each role carefully along with the discussion questions. Then, be prepared to play either of the roles in class using the concepts covered in this chapter. You may be asked to discuss the roles and do a role-play in groups or individually.

College Admissions: Who Is Selling Whom?

Role: College admissions director

You are the director of admissions at your school. You want to choose only the best candidates for admission for next year's class. The focus of the school is to attract and accept students that demonstrate diversity, academic achievement, life experience, community service, passion for learning, and potential to grow.

You personally meet with each one of the final candidates to determine how they will fit into the culture of the school and help the school meet its objectives. It's something you enjoy doing because it's a chance to put a name with a face and see exactly what makes each student special. You and the other management at the school consider it to be a customer-centric organization.

You are about to meet with a prospective student. You are under some pressure to increase enrollment (after all, the admissions department is really like the sales department in a lot of organizations). You are not sure he's a perfect fit for the school, but you are one of the school's customer contact points so you want to make him feel at ease while you are learning more about him.

- How will you greet this prospective student to make him feel welcome?
- What questions will you ask to learn about his personal brand and determine if he will be a good fit for the school?
- If he is not exactly the right fit for the school, will you admit him anyway because you want to increase admissions? Why or why not?

Role: Prospective student

You are a prospective student at your school. Your grades are good (not outstanding), but you have been involved in the drama club and Spanish club in high school. You don't know what you want to do in life, but you know you want to go to college and get a good job. You are nervous about your interview with the director of admissions because it's your first interview and you don't really know what to expect.

- How will you “sell” yourself to the director of admissions?
- How will you make an emotional connection with the director of admissions?
- What are your three brand positioning points, and how will you use them in this situation?

PUT YOUR POWER TO WORK: SELLING U ACTIVITIES

1. Visit your campus career center in person. (If you don't have a campus career center, visit your library and meet with a librarian.) Meet with one of the staff members to learn about activities, resources, and people that are available to help you with your career search. Learn about the campus career Web site and how to view job postings. Sign up for one of the upcoming workshops on career searching.
2. Write your personal mission statement. Meet with a professor or advisor to review it and get feedback.
3. Identify your three brand points. Write them down and determine at least two examples of experience that demonstrates each point. (Hint: This will become the basis for your résumé and cover letter in the *Selling U* section in [Chapter 2 "The Power to Choose Your Path: Careers in Sales"](#).)

TEST YOUR POWER KNOWLEDGE ANSWERS

1. Getting into the school of your choice, convincing your parents of something, getting the job you want (as well as other situations you may name).
2. The four characteristics of a brand are the fact that it is unique, consistent, and relevant and has an emotional connection with its customers.
3. “Each salesperson supports an average of 12.9 other jobs within the company” means that the level of sales that is generated by each salesperson is enough to fund the salaries and benefits of almost thirteen people in the organization in departments such as human resources, marketing, operations, finance, and others. Without the sales, the company would not be able to pay for the other jobs.
4. Sales is considered a line function because salespeople are part of the daily operations of the company.
5. Sales 2.0 is a term that applies to the ever-changing world of technology, communication, and relationships in selling. The evolution of the Internet has led to a change in the balance of power in the selling process. Now, customers may have more information than a salesperson due to the research they are able to do on Web sites, through communities, and user-generated content. (In other words, both good and bad news travel fast.) Salespeople have to focus on collaboration inside their companies and with their customers to deliver the best solution to meet their customers’ needs.
6. All of the characteristics are important when you are selling your personal brand. It’s important to define your brand by developing the three most important brand points that best describe you.
7. The organizational chart in a customer-centric organization has the customer at the center so that all functions focus on meeting the needs of the customer rather than working in silos.