

Yes, You Are in Sales!

There's a word that I don't like, and the word is "marketing." Whoa! What do you mean by that? Well, I don't mean what it sounds like I mean. I'm in favor of marketing; I'm a marketer myself; I'm an instinctive marketer. But, there's a word that sometimes, because of the over-use of marketing, which gets ignored. Sales. Everything in the world—a seven-person business process reengineering team in the logistics department—every single person on that team is a salesperson. The issue: The first 7 percent is, "Did you write good code?" The last 93 percent is, "Does the user on the other end actually fall in love with the code that you have written?"

You know, as some of you know who know a little bit about me, you will know that I think that if the MBA were wiped off the face of the earth, we would live in a better world. And thinks that the reasons that we can be happy about what's going on in China in terms of our competitiveness is that they are developing MBAs, which means that they are on the slippery slope to oblivion. But, don't get me started. What I will tell you is, I don't know of any sales courses in business schools. It is not *sexy* enough, it is not *sophisticated* enough. We have 3,722 courses on marketing and *nothing* in sales.

Well, let me tell you about sales. You know what I do for a living? I *sell*. Pure, raw, unmitigated traveling salesman, as they used to call them. What do I sell? Passion, ideas. I'm *desperate* for people to change. But, how do I do it? I'm a salesman! I'm an engineer; it doesn't come instinctively. But, I would like to help people get better; I would like to help things get implemented. I'm a *salesman*.

I was on a trip a while back and I was with a guy for a couple of days who was an incredibly successful producer in Hollywood. And he said he thought he had very good ideas, and it was certainly proven later on. He said he couldn't make a deal. And he said suddenly he realized that his problem was he wasn't a good salesman. This is a guy who's incredibly sophisticated, incredibly intelligent. He said, "Tom, I went out and bought 25 books on sales." He said, "For God's sake, I attended one-day, How-to-Make-

a-Million-Dollars-in-Real-Estate seminars.” And he said, “Most of it was junk.” But he said, “I taught myself to become a salesperson. And then a funny thing happened—I was able to make my dreams come true.”

You’re an engineer, you’re an accountant, you’re an MBA, you’re a person involved in the technical stuff. Oh no, you aren’t. If you’re going to be remembered for having gotten things done, you are a salesman in the morning, you are a salesman in the afternoon, you’re a salesman at lunch, you’re a salesman at dinner. And then you dream about it at night. Sales, sales, sales, sales, sales, sell, sell, sell, sell, sell. Period.

[Transcript of a video recorded by [Skillsoft](#) on 30 April 2008 and posted at this link:
<http://www.tompeters.com/entries.php?note=010385.php>]

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