Foreword by Patty Aubery

PREPARED TO WIN

Consistent Sales Success for Territory Pros Without Guesswork, Gimmicks, or Commission Breath

TODD 'FRENCHY' FRENCH

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by
Todd 'Frenchy' French

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Frenchy's Dynamic Success Training
https://fdstpreparedtowin.com

DEDICATION

To you, the reader—
the learner, the dreamer, the doer.
You chose growth over comfort, progress over excuses, and possibility over doubt.

This book is your reminder: preparation creates power. With purpose, belief, and relentless effort, you already carry what it takes to win.

Victory belongs to those who never stop learning.

“Prepare to win or lose to someone who is”
— **Jeffrey Gitomer**, *The Little Red Book of Selling*

“Selling, to be a great art, must involve a genuine interest in the other person’s needs. Otherwise it is only a subtle, civilized way of pointing a gun and forcing one into a temporary surrender.”
— **Percy H. Whiting**, *The Five Great Rules of Selling*

Advance Praise

"Sales doesn't have to feel pushy, sleazy, or complicated, and Todd proves it in Prepared to Win. He blends integrity with strategy in a way I rarely see in this space. This book isn't just about selling more, it's about showing up prepared, with purpose, so you can serve people better and build a business that actually feels good. Every entrepreneur needs this."
—**Leona Burton**, Award-winning Business Mentor & Speaker

"Life and sales have one thing in common: if you don't prepare, you're bound to stumble. Todd French reminds us that preparation isn't boring, it's freeing. Prepared to Win gives sales professionals the structure and the spirit to walk into every room confident, ready, and unshakable. This isn't just a sales book, it's a lifeline."
—Pat Allen, Bestselling Author of Hurdles in a Girdle and Motivational Speaker Helping Women Get Unstuck

"Todd French has given the sales world a gift. Prepared to Win is not just about strategies and numbers, it's about aligning with your true self, your values, and your purpose. When preparation meets belief, abundance follows. This book is your invitation to stop winging it, start owning it, and step into a life of integrity, prosperity, and joy."
—Judy Marie Balloff, Author of 365 Days of Abundance and President, Abundance 365 LLC

"Frenchy teaches discipline and preparation with the charm of someone who's survived the school of hard knocks, and is happy to tell you all about it. His stories are

funny because they're true, and his lessons stick because they're timeless. Prepared to Win is both a guide and a good time. You'll walk away smarter and smiling."
—Luis Vicente García, Leadership & Mindset Coach · Canfield's Success Principles Trainer CEO & Founder of Incrementum Academy

"In a world full of generic sales advice, Prepared to Win stands out as something truly special. Frenchy's framework is strategic, actionable, and immediately useful, but it's his honesty and heart that take this book to another level. He understands the emotional landscape of selling, and he guides readers toward alignment, belief, and consistent execution. The blend of mindset work and tactical structure is masterfully done. This book will make you a better salesperson, but it will also make you a more prepared and grounded human being. It is exceptional."
—Dr. Wesley Williams, DC. Co-Owner and CEO of Pioneer Chiropractic

"Selling without preparation is just another version of indecision. You guess, you hope, you panic, and then you wonder why it feels so difficult. Todd French shows you how preparation becomes power, how clarity becomes confidence, and how selling can feel honest again. Prepared to Win is not just about sales, it is about choosing integrity over pressure, and finally feeling good about how you work."
—Jan Janzen, *Entrepreneur Success Mentor and The* Queen of No Regrets

"There comes a moment in every person's life when the mask of confidence slips, when charm and instinct are no longer enough, and the weight of unpreparedness presses heavy on the chest. I know that moment well… and I know

the liberation of walking into a room prepared, steady, and certain. In 'Prepared to Win,' Todd French doesn't just hand you a strategy, he hands you back your belief. Belief that preparation can silence fear. Belief that discipline can turn pressure into power. Belief that you already have what it takes, if only you'll choose to prepare. This is not just a book on sales. It is a lifeline, a mirror, and a map. Read it, work it, and let it remind you, winning begins long before the pitch is made."

—**Earl Waud**, Owner of Hindsight Mentor Publishing, Award-winning author, public speaker, and recognized leader in personal transformation

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Foreword

When I first met Todd "Frenchy" French, what struck me most wasn't his resume, his track record, or even his success in the sales world. It was his heart. Todd carries the rare combination of grit and grace, he's lived the challenges most sales professionals only whisper about, and he's done the work to turn those challenges into a framework that others can follow.

This book isn't theory. It's not another "10 quick tips to boost your numbers." It's a roadmap born out of lived experience, the kind of experience that comes from long nights on the road, missed family dinners, tough lessons in boardrooms, and yes, even personal battles that forced him to reevaluate what really matters.

And that's exactly why this book is so needed.

Sales, at its core, is about people. It's about trust, connection, and authenticity. Yet somewhere along the way, the industry convinced us that success required scripts, gimmicks, and "commission breath." Todd calls that out for what it is, garbage. Instead, he invites you into a different way of working: one where preparation creates confidence, integrity fuels influence, and your spark, the reason you started this journey, becomes your greatest advantage.

As I read Prepared to Win, I found myself nodding, highlighting, and, honestly, reflecting on my own journey. How often do we lose sight of our "why"? How often do we settle for winging it instead of preparing ourselves to shine? Todd doesn't just hand you strategies; he hands you a mirror. And in that reflection, you'll see the version of yourself that's always been capable of more, more alignment, more purpose, more impact.

Here's what I love most: Todd isn't asking you to become someone you're not. He's showing you how to succeed by being more of who you already are. That's where the magic lives. And when you combine that magic with method, the systems, the habits, the intentional preparation, everything changes.

So, as you turn these pages, I want you to do more than just read. I want you to pause. To reflect. To ask yourself the questions Todd poses with courage and honesty. Because if you do, this won't just be another book on your shelf. It will be the turning point you look back on years from now and say, That's when I stopped winging it. That's when I started winning it.

Todd has poured his story, his lessons, and his heart into this book. My encouragement to you is simple: receive it fully. Apply it boldly. And prepare yourself not just to win in sales, but to win in life.

Because you deserve it. And the people you serve deserve it too.

With gratitude and belief in what's possible for you,
—Patty Aubery, NYT Bestselling Author of Chicken Soup for the Christian Soul

Preface

When I first got into sales, I thought success came down to charm, hustle, and a little bit of luck. I thought if I could just "wing it" better than the next person, I'd come out on top. And for a while, that worked, until it didn't.

The truth hit me hard: when the stakes are high, winging it fails. It's unpredictable, exhausting, and unsustainable. I had to learn the hard way that preparation, not personality, was the real difference-maker. Preparation is what turns pressure into confidence, chaos into clarity, and opportunities into wins.

But this book isn't just about sales strategy. It's about life strategy. I've lived through moments of deep struggle, where I had to take ownership of my choices, recover, rebuild, and choose to live with integrity. That same ownership is what I bring to sales, leadership, and coaching. Every principle in these pages has been tested-not just in boardrooms and across territory maps, but in my own journey of personal transformation.

You'll see tools here, yes, frameworks, filters, maps, and mirrors. They're practical, repeatable, and battle-tested. But underneath the tools is a deeper promise: when you prepare, you empower yourself and the people you serve. Sales stops being a transaction and becomes a transformation.

If you're reading this, chances are you're not looking for tricks or shortcuts. You want to perform at your best, earn trust, and create results that last. You want to walk into meetings knowing you're ready, not guessing, not hoping, but prepared to win.

This book is for you.
—Todd ‘Frenchy’ French

Introduction: From Winging It to Winning It

“I believe that people make their own luck by great preparation and good strategy.”
— Jack Canfield

“Don’t wish it were easier. Wish you were better.”
— Jim Rohn

You're good at what you do. Hell, you're probably great at it. You've been in the game long enough to know your product inside and out, you've built relationships that matter, and you've closed deals that others said were impossible. Your track record speaks for itself.

So why does it feel like you're stuck in quicksand?

Maybe it's the endless cycle of chasing quotas that seem to grow every quarter, regardless of market conditions or your personal bandwidth. Maybe it's the pressure to hit numbers using tactics that make you feel like a used car salesman when you know you're so much more than that. Or maybe it's the gnawing feeling that you're winging it more often than you'd like to admit, relying on instinct and hustle when what you really need is a system that works as hard as you do.

If you're nodding along, you're not alone. And more importantly, you're not broken.

What's Really Broken Here

The traditional sales world has sold you a bill of goods. It's told you that success comes from grinding harder, making more calls, and pushing through rejection with nothing but grit and a smile. It's handed you scripts that sound like they were written by someone who's never actually sat across from a real buyer with real problems and real budget constraints.

The truth is, most sales training treats you like you're fresh out of college with a business degree and a head full of theory. It doesn't account for the fact that you've been in the trenches for years, that you understand the complexity of long sales cycles, and that you've learned the hard way that relationships matter more than closing techniques.

But here's what really gets under my skin: somewhere along the way, the industry convinced you that selling with integrity and selling successfully were mutually exclusive. That you had to choose between being authentic and being effective. That caring about your customers' actual outcomes was a luxury you couldn't afford if you wanted to hit your numbers.

That's complete garbage.

Why You Feel Stuck

Let me guess where you are right now. You've hit a plateau. The instinct and hustle that got you this far aren't cutting it anymore. The market has changed, buyers have changed, and frankly, you've changed too. You want more than just a paycheck. You want to feel proud of what you do and how you do it.

You're tired of reactive selling. Tired of scrambling to respond to RFPs that landed in your inbox at 4:47 PM on a

Friday. Tired of presentations that feel like you're throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping something sticks. Tired of follow-up calls that make you feel like you're bothering people instead of helping them.

The magic's gone. The work feels heavy. And deep down, you're wondering if there's a better way to play this game. One that's aligned with who you actually are, sustainable for the long haul, and powerful enough to consistently deliver results.

You're right to wonder. There is a better way.

The Promise: From Winging It to Winning It

This book isn't about teaching you how to sell. You already know how to sell. This book is about teaching you how to sell like you, with preparation that builds confidence, with purpose that creates connection, and with a system that works because it's built on who you are, not who someone else thinks you should be.

I'm going to give you the tools to reignite your passion for this work and restore your confidence in your ability to win consistently. More than that, I'm going to show you how to create a sales process that doesn't just work. It works for you.

By the time you finish this book, you'll stop winging it and start owning it. You'll have a framework that transforms preparation into real-world momentum. You'll rediscover the pride and purpose behind every deal you close. More than that, you'll build a reputation as someone who doesn't just sell products. You create transformations.

The Magic Meets Method Framework

Here's what most sales training gets wrong: it treats the emotional side of selling and the tactical side as separate things. You're told to "fake it till you make it" for confidence, then you're given a bunch of techniques to memorize. The problem is, your buyers can sense the disconnect between who you are and what you're saying. They can smell commission breath from a mile away.

The Magic Meets Method Framework is different. It's built on the understanding that your inner game and your outer game aren't separate. They're inseparable. When you're aligned internally, your external actions become more powerful. When you're prepared strategically, your authenticity shines through.

This framework blends personal transformation with proven strategy. It's the missing link between emotional alignment and practical success. You'll move from spark to system, from pressure to power, from wondering if you're good enough to knowing you're prepared for whatever comes next.

Here's how it works:

Wonder is where the journey begins. It’s the spark that reignites your passion for the work and reminds you why you chose this path in the first place. Here you’ll clarify your beliefs, reconnect with your purpose, and anchor your energy to what matters most. Wonder gives you the internal foundation, clarity, confidence, and conviction, that transforms preparation from a checklist into a calling.

Work is where preparation turns into practice. Once you've reconnected with your spark and clarified your beliefs in Wonder, it's time to build the playbook that brings them to life. Work is about the how, the tactics, tools, and touchpoints that transform intent into impact. Here, you'll learn to design experiences that stand out, craft stories that sell without scripts, and elevate every interaction with a touch of magic. This is where discipline meets creativity, and where your preparation builds trust, momentum, and measurable results.

Win is where it all comes together. Success isn't just about closing deals, it's about alignment, loyalty, and lasting impact. In this stage, your inner game matches your outer game, your customers become raving fans, and your results ripple beyond transactions into transformation. Win is the reward for doing the inner work and the outer preparation, and it's where the way you sell begins to change the way your world buys.

What You'll Learn

In the pages ahead, you'll discover how to:

Find Your Spark allows you to reconnect with the purpose and energy that first drew you to this work. You'll learn why happiness isn't just a nice-to-have. It's a strategic advantage that buyers respond to instinctively.

Build Your Belief Foundation develops unshakeable confidence that comes from clarity about who you are, what you offer, and why it matters. No more imposter syndrome. No more second-guessing yourself in the middle of important conversations.

Design for Impact, Not Just Income shifts you from quota-chasing to problem-solving. When you understand the real transformation you create for customers, everything about how you sell changes for the better.

Inject Magic into the Buyer Journey teaches you how to create intentional moments of wonder, connection, and humanity that make you unforgettable. This isn't about gimmicks. It's about genuine care expressed in strategic ways.

Use Stories to Sell, Not Scripts helps you master the art of authentic storytelling that builds trust and connection. You'll learn how to structure narratives that make your customers the hero of their own success story.

Deliver Experiences, Not Just Info transforms every interaction from routine to remarkable. It's not just what you say. It's how you make people feel that determines whether they buy from you or someone else.

The Alignment Mirror helps you match your actions to your intentions. When your mindset, words, and behaviors reflect the values you stand for, trust deepens and results follow naturally. Alignment isn’t about perfection—it’s about consistency that customers can feel.

Turn Buyers into Raving Fans creates long-term loyalty that generates referrals, repeat business, and a reputation that precedes you. This is where one-time wins become lasting success.

A Personal Note

Before we dive in, I want you to know something: I've been where you are. I've felt the frustration of inconsistent results despite consistent effort. I've questioned whether I was cut out for this work. I've wondered if there was something fundamentally wrong with me because I refused to compromise my values for short-term gains.

Twenty-eight years in municipal and industrial sales taught me that the best reps aren't the ones who talk the fastest or push the hardest. They're the ones who show up prepared, lead with belief, and create experiences that people remember long after the contract is signed.

This book contains everything I wish someone had told me fifteen years ago. It's the system I developed not because I read it in a manual, but because I lived it in the real world. It's been tested in conference rooms and construction sites, in budget meetings and boardrooms, with skeptical purchasing agents and visionary leaders.

It works because it's built on a simple truth: when you align who you are with what you do, everything becomes easier. Not easy, but easier. And that difference is everything.

Your Next Chapter Starts Now

The sales world needs more people like you. People who care about doing the right thing. People who understand that relationships matter more than transactions. People who are willing to put in the work to get better, not just busier.

This book is your roadmap from where you are to where you want to be. From winging it to winning it. From pressure to power. From wondering if you're good enough to knowing you're prepared for whatever comes next.

Your customers are waiting for someone they can trust. Your industry is waiting for someone who'll do things the right way. Your future self is waiting for you to step into your full potential.

Let's get to work.

Watch the Introduction Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from the introduction and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-intro

Part I: Wonder

Before you can win in the world, you've got to light the fire inside. Wonder is where you reconnect to the work you love, rebuild the beliefs that make you unshakeable, and reorient your aim from "quota" to real-world impact. This is the spark that turns preparation into power.

You'll learn to…

- **Find your spark on purpose** using the Spark Inventory and a one-week Energy Audit so your days are fueled by meaning, not just metrics.
- **Build a belief foundation** that customers can feel—clarifying what you stand for so confidence replaces second-guessing. (Use the personal inventory and "Sell What You Believe" check.)
- **Design for impact, not just income** by mapping the outcomes you create and writing a simple Impact Statement that becomes your North Star.

Chapter 1: Find Your Spark

Rediscover happiness and purpose in your work

"Quality performance starts with a positive attitude."
— Jeffrey Gitomer

"Everything you want is on the other side of fear."
— Jack Canfield

Marcus had been selling industrial equipment for twelve years when I met him at a trade show in Denver. On paper, he was successful. Top 15% of his company nationally, consistent performer, well-respected in his territory. But when we grabbed coffee after the show, the first thing he said to me was, "I think I'm losing my mind."

"How so?" I asked.

"I used to love this work," he said, staring into his cup like it held answers. "I mean, really love it. I'd get excited about new products, about solving problems for customers, about the whole game. Now? I wake up dreading Monday mornings. I'm going through the motions, hitting my numbers mostly, but I feel like I'm slowly dying inside."

Marcus paused, looked up at me, and said something I'll never forget: "I don't even remember what made me excited about this job in the first place."

If you've ever felt like Marcus, you're not alone. And more importantly, you're not stuck.

When the Fire Dies Down

Here's what nobody tells you about sales careers: the things that got you excited in the beginning can get buried under years of quota pressure, difficult customers, and the daily grind of CRM updates and expense reports. Somewhere between your first big win and your hundredth follow-up call, the spark that made you good at this work can get smothered.

But here's what I've learned in 28 years of doing this work and coaching others: that spark isn't gone. It's just buried under layers of should-dos, have-tos, and the voices of people who told you that caring too much about your customers was a luxury you couldn't afford.

The truth is exactly the opposite. Your spark, your genuine enthusiasm for what you do, isn't just a nice-to-have. It's your secret weapon. When you're lit up about your work, that energy is contagious. Buyers feel it. They're drawn to it. They want to be part of whatever you're building.

Think about the last time you bought something significant from someone who was genuinely excited about what they were selling. Maybe it was a car, maybe a house, maybe even a piece of software for your business. How did their enthusiasm make you feel? Did it make you more confident in your decision? Did it make the whole experience more enjoyable?

That's the power of spark. And it's available to you right now, regardless of how buried it might feel.

The Happiness Strategy

Most sales professionals treat happiness like it's the result of success. Hit your numbers, then you get to be happy. Close the big deal, then you get to feel good about your work. Win the recognition, then you get to enjoy what you do.

This is completely backwards.

Happiness isn't the result of success. It's the fuel for it. When you're operating from a place of genuine enthusiasm and purpose, everything else becomes easier. Your energy attracts opportunities. Your authenticity builds trust. Your excitement about your product becomes infectious.

I call this the Happiness Strategy, and it's based on a simple principle: people buy from people who they know, like and trust, and they like people who are genuinely happy to be doing what they're doing.

This doesn't mean you have to be a perpetual optimist or pretend everything is perfect. It means reconnecting with what drew you to this work in the first place and protecting that connection like your career depends on it. Because it does.

Story: The Rep Who Almost Quit

Let me tell you about Julie. She'd been selling municipal water treatment systems for eight years when her manager referred her to me. She was two weeks away from putting in her notice.

"I can't do this anymore," she told me during our first conversation. "I used to believe in what I was selling. I used to get excited about helping communities solve their water quality problems. Now I feel like a fraud every time I walk into a meeting."

When I asked her what changed, she said, "The pressure. The constant focus on numbers. My manager keeps pushing these aggressive tactics that make me feel like I'm manipulating people instead of helping them. I got into this business because I wanted to make a difference, and now I feel like I'm just another pushy salesperson."

Julie's story broke my heart because I'd been there myself. That moment when you realize you've drifted so far from your original purpose that you don't recognize yourself anymore.

But here's what I told Julie, and what I'm telling you: your original purpose is still there. It's just been overshadowed by other people's expectations and definitions of success.

We spent the next hour talking about why she got into municipal sales in the first place. She told me about growing up in a small town with water quality issues, about seeing how the right treatment system transformed not just the water but the entire community's health and confidence. She talked about the pride she felt when she helped her first municipality solve a problem that had been plaguing them for years.

By the end of that conversation, Julie's whole demeanor had changed. Her voice got stronger. Her posture straightened. She was reconnecting with her spark.

Six months later, Julie had her best quarter ever. Not because she learned new techniques or started using manipulative tactics, but because she remembered why she was doing the work in the first place. That remembering changed everything about how she showed up.

When you're connected to your purpose, selling doesn't feel like selling. It feels like helping. And buyers can sense the difference immediately.

Story: Frenchy's Fork in the Road

I need to share my own story here because I want you to know that even those of us who coach others through this stuff aren't immune to losing our spark. Sometimes life has a way of forcing us to confront what really matters.

It was a Friday afternoon in my fifteenth year of sales. I was driving south on I-95 in a rental car, music blasting, excited to get home for the weekend with my wife and three young boys. I was hitting my numbers, building my reputation, and by all external measures, succeeding.

Then the blue lights lit up my rearview mirror.

What happened next would change not just my weekend, but my entire perspective on life and work.

The officer's routine traffic stop turned into something much more serious when he discovered my driver's license was invalid. As someone who needed a Commercial Driver's License for my job, I was required to get a physical every two years to maintain it. But I'd been avoiding that physical because my blood pressure was dangerously high, directly related to years of heavy daily drinking.

I'd made the poor decision to skip the physical, thinking I could deal with it later. Now "later" had arrived in the worst possible way.

"Do you know why your license is invalid?" the officer asked.

I honestly didn't. I used that license to make my living. Within minutes, I was handcuffed on the side of the road, watching a tow truck hook up my rental car. My first thought wasn't about the legal trouble or the inconvenience. It was about my family.

"Can I call my wife?" I asked, visibly shaking. "She's expecting me home to help with the boys."

The officer reluctantly held my phone to my ear as I tried to explain to my wife that I'd been arrested and would call her from jail. You can imagine how that conversation went.

Sitting in that holding cell, waiting for my wife to arrange bail, I had to confront some hard truths. My drinking wasn't just affecting my health anymore. It was affecting my ability to do my job, support my family, and maintain the professional standards I claimed to believe in.

When my wife had to drive an hour and a half to pick me up the next morning because the rental company wouldn't let me retrieve the car, I realized how my personal choices were creating chaos that rippled out to everyone around me.

That arrest was a wake-up call I couldn't ignore. I got the required physical, managed to renew my license for one year due to my blood pressure issues, and resolved the legal matter. But the bigger issue remained: I was living a double life where my personal habits were undermining everything I was trying to build professionally.

It took me longer than it should have to fully address the drinking problem, but that day on the side of I-95 was when I first understood that you can't compartmentalize your life indefinitely. Your personal choices either support your professional goals or they sabotage them. There's no middle ground.

Looking back, I realize I'd been going through the motions professionally while my personal life was slowly burning down. I had lost my spark not because the work had changed, but because I had lost my way as a person.

That realization would eventually lead me to get sober, which happened several years later. But the process started that day in the holding cell when I had to admit that the person I was being wasn't aligned with the person I wanted to be or the professional I claimed to be.

When you're living out of alignment with your values, when your personal choices are undermining your professional goals, it's impossible to maintain genuine enthusiasm for your work. Your spark gets smothered under the weight of trying to manage the contradictions in your life.

Real transformation begins with honest self-assessment and taking full responsibility for the choices that got you where you are. Sometimes it takes a crisis to force that level of honesty.

The Spark Inventory: Rediscovering Your Why

If you're feeling disconnected from your work right now, don't panic. That's normal, and it's fixable. The first step is conducting what I call a Spark Inventory. This is a process of rediscovering what drew you to this work in the first place and reconnecting with the impact you're creating.

Here are the questions that will help you find your spark again:

Original Purpose Questions:

- What originally attracted you to sales work?
- What did you think you'd be able to accomplish in this role?
- What kind of impact did you want to have on customers?
- What excited you most about your product or service when you first started?

Impact Recognition Questions:

- What's the best outcome you've ever created for a customer?
- How has your product or service improved someone's business or life?
- What problems do you solve that no one else can solve the same way?

- What would happen to your customers if your product or service didn't exist?

Energy Assessment Questions:

- What part of your sales process energizes you most?
- When do you feel most authentic and confident at work?
- What type of customer interaction leaves you feeling fulfilled?
- What aspect of your work would you miss most if you left tomorrow?

Purpose Alignment Questions:

- How does your work connect to your personal values?
- What legacy do you want to leave in your industry or territory?
- How do you want to be remembered by your customers?
- What impact do you want to have beyond just hitting your numbers?

Take time with these questions. Don't rush through them looking for quick answers. Sit with them. Let them marinate. The goal isn't to find perfect responses but to reconnect with the parts of your work that matter to you.

The Energy Audit

Once you've completed your Spark Inventory, it's time to do an Energy Audit. This is about identifying what activities, interactions, and approaches give you energy versus what drains it.

For one week, keep a simple log of your work activities and how they make you feel. After each significant interaction or task, rate your energy level on a scale of 1-10 and make a note about what contributed to that rating.

You might discover that you're energized by problem-solving conversations but drained by administrative tasks. You might find that you love presenting to groups but feel depleted by one-on-one negotiations. You might realize that certain types of customers or projects light you up while others feel like drudgery.

This isn't about avoiding everything that drains you. That's not realistic in any job. But it is about understanding your energy patterns so you can:

- Schedule energy-giving activities when you need a boost
- Prepare differently for energy-draining tasks
- Look for ways to modify draining activities to make them more engaging
- Recognize when you need to recharge and how to do it effectively

Protecting Your Spark

Once you've rediscovered your spark, you need to protect it. This means being intentional about maintaining your connection to purpose and guarding against the things that tend to erode enthusiasm over time.

Daily Connection Rituals: Start each day by reminding yourself why your work matters. This could be reading testimonials from satisfied customers, reviewing the impact your products have had, or simply taking a moment to visualize the positive outcomes you're working toward.

When you need a recharge: Make contact with a loyal raving fan this will boost your confidence as they reaffirm how awesome you are for providing such great customer service.

Purpose-Driven Goal Setting: Instead of just focusing on revenue targets, set goals related to the impact you want to create. How many problems do you want to solve this quarter? How many customer relationships do you want to deepen? What new value do you want to deliver?

Energy Management: Pay attention to what gives you energy and what drains it. Structure your days and weeks to maximize energy-giving activities and minimize or modify energy-draining ones.

Story Collection: Actively collect stories about the positive impact your work has had. When a customer tells you how your product solved a problem or improved their situation, write it down. These stories become fuel for your spark when things get challenging.

Boundary Setting: Learn to say no to activities, approaches, or pressures that compromise your connection to purpose. This doesn't mean being difficult or inflexible, but it does mean being protective of the things that keep you engaged and authentic.

The Contagious Effect

Here's what happens when you reconnect with your spark: it becomes contagious. Customers sense your genuine enthusiasm and are drawn to it. Colleagues notice your energy and want to work with you. Prospects feel your authenticity and trust you more quickly.

When you're lit up about your work, selling doesn't feel like convincing. It feels like sharing something you believe in with people who can benefit from it. That shift changes everything about your approach and your results.

Marcus, the rep I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, sent me an email six months after our conversation. He'd gone through his own process of rediscovering his spark, and the results were dramatic. Not just in his numbers, which had improved significantly, but in his enjoyment of the work.

"I remembered why I got into this business in the first place," he wrote. "I love solving problems. I love the challenge of matching the right solution to the right need. I love building relationships with people who are trying to improve their operations. Once I reconnected with that, everything else fell into place."

Your Spark, Your Success

Your spark isn't just feel-good motivation. It's a strategic advantage that differentiates you from every other salesperson your prospects encounter. In a world full of people going through the motions, someone who's genuinely excited about their work stands out immediately.

More than that, your spark is sustainable fuel. Unlike pressure, which eventually burns you out, or external motivation, which comes and goes, genuine enthusiasm for your work can carry you through difficult periods and challenging customers.

When you're connected to your purpose, rejection doesn't feel personal. Difficult negotiations don't feel overwhelming. Long sales cycles don't feel frustrating. You're not just trying to hit numbers. You're trying to create impact. And that makes all the difference.

Moving Forward with Purpose

Finding your spark is just the beginning. In the next chapter, we'll talk about building the belief foundation that allows your spark to translate into consistent confidence and results. But for now, your job is simple: reconnect with what lights you up about this work.

Do the Spark Inventory. Conduct the Energy Audit. Start paying attention to what energizes you and what drains you. Begin collecting stories about the positive impact your work has had.

Most importantly, give yourself permission to be excited about what you do. In a world that often treats enthusiasm as unprofessional, choosing to be genuinely lit up about your work is a radical act. It's also a powerful one.

Your customers are waiting for someone who believes in what they're selling. Your industry needs people who are passionate about solving problems and creating value. Your territory needs a representative who shows up with energy and purpose.

That person can be you. In fact, that person already is you. You just need to remember it.

Watch the Chapter 1 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter1

Chapter 2: Build Your Belief Foundation

Strengthen mindset, values, and inner game

"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."
— Jim Rohn

"You only have control over three things in your life—the thoughts you think, the images you visualize, and the actions you take."
— Jack Canfield

There's a moment in every sales conversation when everything hangs in the balance. It's not when you're presenting features or discussing pricing. It's much more subtle than that. It's the moment when your prospect looks you in the eye and decides whether they believe you.

Not whether they believe your product specifications or your company's claims. Whether they believe *you*. Whether you're someone they can trust with their budget, their timeline, their reputation, and their results.

Here's what I've learned after nearly three decades in this business: customers can sense doubt faster than they can sense confidence. If you don't believe in yourself, your product, and your ability to deliver what you're promising, they won't either. It's that simple and that crucial.

Your belief foundation isn't built overnight, and it's not something you can fake. It's constructed from clarity about who you are, conviction about what you offer, and confidence in your ability to create the outcomes your customers need. Without this foundation, every other sales technique in the world is just window dressing on a shaky structure.

What You Believe Becomes Your Reality

I used to think belief was just positive thinking dressed up in business clothes. I was wrong. Belief is much more powerful and practical than that. What you believe about yourself, your product, and your customers literally becomes the reality you create in your sales interactions.

If you believe you're bothering people when you call them, you'll sound apologetic and tentative. If you believe your product is overpriced, you'll unconsciously undermine your value proposition. If you believe your customers are just trying to get the lowest price, you'll position yourself as a commodity.

On the flip side, if you believe you're helping people solve important problems, you'll sound confident and purposeful. If you believe your product delivers exceptional value, you'll present it with conviction. If you believe your customers want the best solution for their needs, you'll position yourself as a trusted advisor.

Your beliefs don't just influence how you show up. They influence how others respond to you. Confidence is magnetic. Certainty is compelling. When you truly believe in what you're doing and selling, that belief creates a gravitational pull that draws customers toward you.

Story: The Misaligned Closer

Let me tell you about Derek. He was one of the most technically skilled salespeople I'd ever met. He knew his product inside and out, could handle any objection you threw at him, and had closing techniques that would make veteran reps jealous. On paper, he should have been crushing it.

Instead, he was struggling. His conversion rates were below average, his deals took longer to close than they should have, and he was constantly frustrated with his results.

When Derek called me for coaching, the first thing I asked him was, "Tell me about your product."

He launched into a detailed technical explanation that was impressive in its thoroughness and completely devoid of enthusiasm. When he finished, I asked, "Do you believe in what you're selling?"

There was a long pause. Then Derek said something that explained everything: "Honestly? I think our product is good, but I'm not sure it's worth what we're charging for it. There are cheaper options out there that do basically the same thing."

There it was. Derek had spent months trying to convince customers to buy something he wasn't completely convinced they should buy. Every conversation carried the subtle undertone of his own doubt. Every presentation was undermined by his internal conflict about value and pricing.

Derek was selling without belief, and it was creating resistance at every level. Customers sensed his uncertainty and responded with uncertainty of their own. Negotiations became battles because Derek secretly agreed that the price was too high. Objections became obstacles because Derek wasn't sure he had good answers to them.

The problem wasn't Derek's technique. The problem was his belief system. And until we fixed that foundation, no amount of tactical improvement was going to help.

The Cost of Selling Without Belief

When you're not fully aligned with what you're selling, several things happen, none of them good:

Internal Resistance: You experience constant internal conflict between what you're saying and what you're thinking. This creates stress, anxiety, and burnout over time.

Mixed Messages: Your verbal communication says one thing while your body language, tone, and energy say something else. Customers pick up on this incongruence immediately.

Weak Positioning: You can't effectively advocate for the value of something you don't fully believe in. Your value propositions sound hollow and your confidence appears forced. Always approach the conversation with the mindset of strength and certainty.

Objection Amplification: When prospects raise concerns, you secretly agree with them, which makes it nearly impossible to address their objections effectively.

Price Sensitivity: If you don't believe your product is worth the price, you'll avoid pricing conversations, discount too quickly, or apologize for your costs. Do not use the race to the bottom price point as a strategy this makes your product a commodity.

Relationship Strain: Selling without belief feels manipulative, even when that's not your intention. This creates distance between you and your customers.

The bottom line is this: you can't give what you don't have. If you don't have genuine belief in yourself and what you're offering, you can't transfer that belief to your customers. And without that transfer, selling becomes an uphill battle.

Story: The Belief Rebuild

The arrest story I shared in the previous chapter was just the beginning. Resolving the license issue was the easy part. Getting the physical, paying the fine, appearing in court to show I'd fixed the problem. But the deeper issue, the one that had created the crisis in the first place, remained unaddressed.

Several weeks after my arrest, I drove back to that small Georgia town for my court appearance. I was dressed in a full suit and tie, honestly mistaken for someone's attorney while waiting outside the courtroom. I was prepared, professional, and confident that this would be a simple matter of showing proof that I'd resolved the license issue.

The judge quickly reduced my charge from invalid license to "no license on person" and announced the fine. I was free to go after paying downstairs. As I stood to leave, I asked where to pay the fine, got my answer, and walked out of the packed courtroom.

Just as I stepped into the waiting area, I heard a loud command from behind me: "Check him!"

The bondsman was shouting to the police officer outside the courtroom. Before I could process what was happening, I had blown into a breathalyzer and was immediately handcuffed again. The reading showed I was intoxicated.

"How much have you had to drink today?" they demanded. "When did you start drinking?"

There I was, on the grass in front of the courthouse in my expensive suit, being marched back into the courtroom in handcuffs. The officer announced to the judge: "He's drunk in your courtroom, sir!"

The elderly judge looked at me with a mixture of disappointment and disbelief. "Who in the world thinks it's a good idea to drink before going to court?"

"I'm sorry, sir," I replied. "I'm a heavy drinker and didn't stop until very late last night."

The judge said he'd already processed me, but the officer insisted I couldn't just be released while intoxicated. After some back and forth, the judge ordered me held for six hours to sober up, then released.

Back to the same holding cell I'd occupied weeks earlier. But this time was different. This time I couldn't blame anyone else. I couldn't claim it was just bad luck or poor timing. I had created this situation entirely through my own choices.

For six hours, I sat in that cell completely unreachable. My wife was frantic, calling hotels, having them check my room to make sure I hadn't died. A family friend eventually pieced together enough information to call the jail and confirm where I was.

In that cell, I finally understood what Derek, the customer I mentioned earlier, had been going through. I was trying to present a professional image while my foundation was completely compromised. I was attempting to build credibility with customers while I couldn't even trust myself to make good decisions.

How could I convince others to believe in my solutions when I didn't believe in my ability to handle my own problems? How could I project confidence and reliability when my personal life was chaos? How could I advocate for the value of my products when I was systematically destroying value in every other area of my life?

That second arrest forced me to confront a truth I'd been avoiding: you cannot build sustainable professional success on a foundation of personal destruction. Your beliefs about yourself, your capabilities, and your worthiness of success are directly connected to how you live your life when no one is watching.

It would be several more years before I got sober, but that day in court was when I realized that all the sales techniques in the world wouldn't fix what was really broken. The problem wasn't my product knowledge or my presentation skills. The problem was that I didn't believe I deserved the success I was trying to achieve because my actions didn't align with the person I claimed to be.

Recovery taught me that belief isn't just positive thinking. It's the deep conviction that comes from living in alignment with your values. When your personal choices support your professional goals, when your private behavior matches your public persona, when you can look at yourself in the mirror and respect what you see, that's when real confidence emerges.

I'm now over eight years sober, and that sobriety is the foundation of everything else I've built. Not because drinking was my only problem, but because getting sober taught me how to take complete responsibility for my choices and their consequences.

Derek's story of rebuilding his belief foundation reminded me of my own journey. Like him, I had to start with honest self-assessment. I had to acknowledge the gap between who I was and who I needed to be. I had to do the work to close that gap before I could authentically help others with their challenges.

Your belief foundation isn't just about your professional capabilities. It's about your integrity as a complete person. When those two things align, everything becomes easier. Not easy, but easier. And that difference changes everything.

The Three Pillars of Belief

Building a strong belief foundation requires work in three specific areas: belief in yourself, belief in your product or service, and belief in your customers. Each pillar is essential, and weakness in any one area can undermine your entire foundation.

Pillar 1: Belief in Yourself

This is about knowing who you are, what you bring to the table, and why customers should trust you with their business. It's not about arrogance or false confidence. It's about honest self-assessment and authentic self-worth.

Personal Value Inventory: What unique combination of experience, skills, and perspective do you bring to your customers? What problems can you solve that others can't? What level of service and support can you provide? What makes working with you different from working with your competitors?

Track Record Review: What successes have you achieved for previous customers? What challenges have you helped them overcome? What results have you delivered? Your past performance is the foundation for future confidence.

Continuous Improvement: Belief in yourself isn't static. It grows as you develop new skills, gain new experiences, and achieve new results. Commit to continuous learning and improvement, not because you're inadequate but because growth strengthens your foundation.

Pillar 2: Belief in Your Product or Service

This goes far beyond knowing features and benefits. It's about understanding the real impact your offering has on customers' lives and businesses. It's about being genuinely convinced that what you're selling makes people's situations better.

Impact Documentation: Collect specific stories and data about how your product or service has improved customers' situations. Track metrics, gather testimonials, and document outcomes. The more evidence you have of positive impact, the stronger your belief becomes.

Value Equation Analysis: Understand not just what your product costs but what it's worth. What problems does it solve? What opportunities does it create? What risks does it mitigate? How does the total value compare to the investment required?

Competitive Intelligence: Know how your offering compares to alternatives in the market. Understand your strengths and weaknesses relative to competitors. This knowledge allows you to position your product confidently and honestly.

Pillar 3: Belief in Your Customers

This is about approaching your customers with positive assumptions about their intentions, intelligence, and decision-making ability. It's about believing that they want to make good decisions and that they're capable of recognizing value when they see it.

Positive Intent: Assume your customers are trying to make the best decisions they can with the information they have. Even when they're challenging or difficult, approach them with the assumption that they have good reasons for their behavior.

Intelligence Respect: Treat your customers as intelligent people who can understand complex information and make sophisticated decisions. Don't talk down to them or oversimplify things. Respect their ability to evaluate options and make choices.

Value Recognition: Believe that your customers can recognize and appreciate real value when it's clearly presented. If you're offering genuine value, trust that they'll see it. If they don't, look at your presentation, not their intelligence.

The Personal Inventory Worksheet

To build strong belief in yourself, you need clarity about what makes you valuable to your customers. This Personal Inventory Worksheet will help you identify and articulate your unique strengths and value proposition.

Experience Assessment:

- How many years have you been in sales?
- How many years in your current industry or product category?
- What's the total dollar value of business you've closed in your career?
- What's the largest or most complex deal you've ever closed?
- What types of customers or situations do you work with best?

Skills Evaluation:

- What sales skills are you strongest in?
- What technical knowledge do you possess that adds value?
- What problem-solving abilities do you bring to customer situations?
- What communication skills help you connect with customers?
- What project management or follow-up capabilities do you offer?

Relationship Building:

- How do you typically build trust with new prospects?
- What's your approach to understanding customer needs?
- How do you handle conflict or difficult situations?
- What makes customers want to work with you long-term?
- How do you add value beyond just selling products?

Results Delivery:

- What specific outcomes have you achieved for customers?
- What problems have you solved that others couldn't solve?
- What cost savings or revenue increases have you delivered?
- What efficiency improvements have you facilitated?
- What risks have you helped customers avoid or mitigate?

Unique Differentiators:

- What combination of skills and experience is unique to you?
- What perspective do you bring that others in your role don't have?
- What level of service or support do you provide?
- What makes your approach different from your competitors?
- Why do customers choose you over other options available to them?

The "Sell What You Believe" Checklist

This checklist helps ensure that you're fully aligned with what you're selling and that your beliefs support rather than undermine your sales efforts.

Product Conviction:

- ☐ I understand the real problems my product solves
- ☐ I have documented evidence of positive customer outcomes

- ☐ I believe the value delivered exceeds the price charged
- ☐ I can explain why our solution is better than alternatives
- ☐ I would recommend this product to a close friend or family member

Company Confidence:

- ☐ I believe in my company's mission and values
- ☐ I trust my company to deliver on the promises I make
- ☐ I'm proud to represent my organization in the market
- ☐ I believe my company treats customers fairly and ethically
- ☐ I would want to do business with my own company

Personal Alignment:

- ☐ My personal values align with how I'm expected to sell
- ☐ I feel authentic and genuine in my sales conversations
- ☐ I believe I'm helping customers, not manipulating them
- ☐ I'm comfortable with my pricing and value proposition
- ☐ I enjoy talking about what I sell

Customer Respect:

- ☐ I believe my customers are intelligent and capable
- ☐ I assume positive intent in difficult situations
- ☐ I trust customers to make good decisions when given good information
- ☐ I believe customers want value, not just low prices
- ☐ I approach each customer as a potential long-term partner

If you can't honestly check every box on this list, you have belief work to do. That's not a criticism. It's an opportunity. Addressing belief gaps is one of the highestleverage activities you can engage in as a sales professional.

Rebuilding Damaged Beliefs

Sometimes belief erosion happens gradually. A few bad experiences, some difficult customers, a product issue that wasn't handled well, pressure from management to use tactics that don't feel right. Over time, these experiences can chip away at your confidence and conviction.

If you find yourself in this situation, belief rebuilding is possible, but it requires intentional effort:

Honest Assessment: Identify specifically what beliefs have been damaged. Is it confidence in your product? Trust in your company? Faith in your customers? Belief in yourself? You can't fix what you don't acknowledge.

Evidence Gathering: Actively collect evidence that supports positive beliefs. Seek out success stories, customer testimonials, and examples of value delivered. Look for data that contradicts the negative beliefs you've developed.

Perspective Expansion: Talk to colleagues, managers, or customers about their perspectives. Sometimes our view of situations becomes skewed by our own experiences, and outside perspectives can provide important balance.

Incremental Building: You don't have to rebuild all your beliefs at once. Start with the areas where you have the most evidence and the strongest foundation. Success in one area will give you confidence to work on others.

Professional Support: If belief issues are significant or persistent, consider working with a coach, mentor, or counselor who can help you process experiences and rebuild confidence systematically.

The Confidence Compound Effect

Here's what happens when you build a strong belief foundation: confidence becomes self-reinforcing. When you believe in yourself and what you're selling, you show up differently. Customers respond more positively to your confidence, which gives you more success to draw on, which builds more confidence.

This creates what I call the Confidence Compound Effect. Each positive interaction builds on the previous one, creating momentum that makes the next interaction easier and more likely to succeed.

The opposite is also true. When your belief foundation is shaky, each difficult interaction confirms your doubts, making the next interaction harder and less likely to succeed. This is why belief work is so crucial. It determines which cycle you're in.

Maintaining Your Foundation

Building belief is one thing. Maintaining it is another. Sales is a challenging profession with regular rejection, difficult customers, and external pressures that can erode confidence over time. Protecting your belief foundation requires ongoing attention and maintenance.

Regular Review: Schedule time monthly or quarterly to review your beliefs and assess their strength. Are there areas where doubt is creeping in? Are there aspects of your role where confidence is wavering?

Evidence Collection: Continuously gather evidence that supports positive beliefs. Save customer testimonials, document successful outcomes, and track your progress and improvement over time.

Peer Support: Surround yourself with people who believe in you and what you're doing. Seek out mentors, join professional associations, or find colleagues who share your values and commitment to excellence.

Learning Investment: Continuously improve your skills and knowledge. The more competent you become, the more confidence you'll have in your ability to deliver results for customers.

Boundary Management: Protect yourself from activities, people, or pressures that consistently undermine your beliefs. This might mean having difficult conversations with managers, changing how you respond to certain situations, or even changing roles if necessary.

Moving from Doubt to Conviction

The journey from doubt to conviction isn't always linear, and it's rarely quick. But it's always worth it. When you operate from a foundation of genuine belief in yourself, your product, and your customers, selling stops feeling like convincing and starts feeling like serving.

Customers sense the difference immediately. They're drawn to people who believe in what they're doing. They trust people who are confident without being arrogant. They buy from people who are genuinely convinced that what they're offering will make their situation better.

Your belief foundation is the bedrock of everything else we'll discuss in this book. Without it, techniques are just techniques. With it, everything you do becomes more powerful and effective.

In our next chapter, we'll talk about designing your approach around the impact you create rather than just the income you generate. But that conversation only makes sense if you have a strong foundation of belief to build on.

Take the time to do this work. Complete the Personal Inventory. Use the "Sell What You Believe" Checklist honestly. If you discover gaps in your belief foundation, address them before moving forward. Everything else depends on getting this right.

Your customers are waiting for someone they can believe in. Make sure that person is someone you believe in too.

Watch the Chapter 2 Bonus Video

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https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter2

Chapter 3: Design for Impact, Not Just Income

Clarify the real value you offer

"Customers will want to talk to you if they believe you can solve their problems."
— Jeffrey Gitomer

"Help enough people get what they want, and you will get what you want."
— Zig Ziglar

I was sitting in a conference room with the purchasing director of a mid-sized municipality, listening to my competitor deliver what was technically a perfect sales presentation. He knew every specification, had answers for every question, and could recite feature comparisons like he was reading from a textbook.

But something was missing. The customer looked bored. The energy in the room was flat. And I could see the purchasing director's attention drifting toward his phone.

When it was my turn to present, I did something different. Instead of starting with product features, I told a story about another municipality that had been struggling with the same challenges they were facing. I talked about the late-night emergency calls, the frustrated residents, the budget pressures, and the stress on city staff.

Then I described what happened after they implemented our solution. Not the technical specifications, but the real-world impact. How the emergency calls stopped. How the city staff could focus on proactive improvements instead of reactive fixes. How the budget pressures eased because they weren't constantly dealing with crisis situations.

The difference in the room was immediate. The purchasing director put down his phone. The city engineer started asking questions. The conversation shifted from "What does this equipment do?" to "How will this change our situation?"

Six weeks later, we won the contract. Not because our product was dramatically superior to the competition's, but because we focused on impact while they focused on specifications. We talked about transformation while they talked about features.

That experience taught me something fundamental about selling: customers don't buy products. They buy better versions of their current situation.

The Income Trap

Most sales professionals get caught in what I call the Income Trap. They become so focused on hitting their numbers that they lose sight of why those numbers matter in the first place. They start chasing quotas instead of solving problems. They begin thinking about transactions instead of transformations.

The Income Trap is seductive because it seems logical. You're in sales to make money, so focusing on income makes sense. But here's the paradox: the more you focus solely on income, the harder it becomes to generate sustainable income.

When you're primarily motivated by your commission check, customers sense it. They feel like they're being sold to rather than served. They become defensive instead of collaborative. They focus on price instead of value because you've inadvertently taught them that this interaction is about money, not about making their situation better.

The antidote to the Income Trap is designing your approach around impact. When you genuinely focus on improving your customers' situations, the income follows naturally. When you solve real problems and create meaningful value, people are happy to pay for that value.

This isn't just feel-good philosophy. It's practical strategy. Customers will pay premium prices for solutions that create significant impact. They'll choose higher-priced options if they believe those options will deliver better outcomes. They'll remain loyal to providers who consistently improve their situations.

Story: The Spec Sheet Trap

Let me tell you about Jennifer, a talented rep who sold water treatment equipment to industrial facilities. She was incredibly knowledgeable about her products and could discuss technical specifications with the best engineers in the business.

But Jennifer was struggling. Her presentations were impressive from a technical standpoint, but they weren't converting. Customers would complement her expertise, thank her for the detailed information, and then choose less expensive alternatives.

When Jennifer called me for coaching, she was frustrated and confused. "I know more about water treatment than most of my competitors," she said. "My presentations are thorough and professional. I answer every technical question they have. I don't understand why I'm not winning more deals."

I asked Jennifer to walk me through her typical sales presentation. For the next twenty minutes, she delivered a masterful technical overview covering flow rates, filtration efficiency, maintenance requirements, and compliance specifications. It was impressive and completely boring.

When she finished, I asked, "Jennifer, what problem does this equipment solve for your customers?"

"Well," she said, "it treats their water according to regulatory requirements and improves the efficiency of their operations."

"Okay, but what does that mean for them personally? How does their life change when this equipment is working properly versus when it's not?"

There was a long pause. Then Jennifer said something that explained everything: "I've never really thought about it that way. I always focus on what the equipment does, not what it means for the people using it."

Jennifer had fallen into the Spec Sheet Trap. She was selling features instead of outcomes, specifications instead of transformations. She was talking about what her equipment could do without connecting it to what her customers actually cared about.

The Real Impact Discovery

Working with Jennifer, we developed what I call the Real Impact Discovery process. Instead of starting with product capabilities, we started with customer situations. Instead of leading with features, we led with frustrations and aspirations.

Jennifer began her sales conversations differently. Instead of asking, "What are your water treatment requirements?" she started asking, "What challenges are you facing with your current water treatment process?"

The responses were revealing. Customers talked about compliance worries that kept them up at night. They described equipment breakdowns that shut down production lines. They mentioned maintenance costs that were eating into their budgets. They shared frustrations about unreliable vendors and inadequate support.

Jennifer learned that her customers weren't really buying water treatment equipment. They were buying peace of mind. They were buying operational reliability. They were buying protection from regulatory violations. They were buying the ability to focus on their core business instead of worrying about water quality.

This shift in understanding transformed Jennifer's entire approach. Instead of presenting technical specifications, she told stories about how similar customers had solved similar problems. Instead of highlighting features, she focused on outcomes. Instead of talking about what the equipment could do, she discussed what the customer would be able to do once their water treatment challenges were resolved.

The results were dramatic. Jennifer's conversion rate increased by 60% in six months. Her average deal size grew because customers saw the value in investing in reliability and support, not just equipment. Her sales cycle shortened because customers could clearly understand how her solution would improve their situation.

But the most important change was in Jennifer's job satisfaction. She no longer felt like she was pushing products. She felt like she was solving problems. She wasn't just hitting quota. She was making her customers' operations more efficient, reliable, and profitable.

Story: Sell the Rescue, Not the Rope

One of my favorite examples of impact-focused selling comes from a conversation I had with a customer years after closing a significant deal. The municipality had purchased a substantial amount of road maintenance equipment from us, and I was curious about what had influenced their decision.

"You want to know the moment I decided to work with you?" the city manager said. "It was when we stopped talking about horsepower and hydraulic capacity and started talking about what winter would look like for our residents."

He was referring to a conversation we'd had about snow removal and road maintenance during harsh winter conditions. Instead of focusing on the technical capabilities of our equipment, we had worked together to paint a picture of what effective winter road maintenance meant for the community.

Together, we explored what it really meant when we talked about "keeping roads clear." We identified how winter preparedness affected parents trying to get their kids to school safely. We discussed how reliable road maintenance enabled emergency vehicles to reach people who needed help. We talked about businesses staying open and commerce continuing even in difficult weather. We examined how proper snow removal gave elderly residents confidence about leaving their homes to get groceries or visit the doctor.

"When we described it that way," the city manager continued, "I realized we weren't buying snow plows. We were investing in peace of mind for our entire community. We were purchasing the ability to keep our city functioning when nature tried to shut us down."

This story illustrates a fundamental principle: people don't buy the rope. They buy the rescue. They don't buy the drill bit. They buy the hole. They don't buy your product. They buy what your product enables them to do, have, or become.

When we understand this distinction and build our sales approach around it, everything changes. Our presentations become more engaging because we're talking about things customers actually care about. Our value propositions become more compelling because we're connecting features to meaningful outcomes. Our pricing discussions become easier because customers can see the relationship between cost and value.

The Impact Map Framework

To help you shift from feature-focused to impact-focused selling, I've developed what I call the Impact Map. This framework helps you connect every aspect of your product or service to the real-world outcomes your customers experience.

The Impact Map has four levels:

Level 1: Features - What your product or service does **Level 2: Functions** - How those features work in practice **Level 3: Benefits** - What advantages those functions provide **Level 4: Impact** - How those benefits change your customer's situation

Let me show you how this works with a simple example. Let's say you're selling a fleet management software system:

Level 1 (Features): GPS tracking, fuel monitoring, maintenance scheduling, driver behavior reporting

Level 2 (Functions): Real-time location data, automatic fuel consumption calculations, automated maintenance reminders, driving pattern analysis

Level 3 (Benefits): Improved route efficiency, reduced fuel costs, preventive maintenance, safer driving habits

Level 4 (Impact): Fleet managers can focus on strategic planning instead of daily crisis management. Drivers get home to their families earlier because routes are optimized. The company reduces its environmental footprint and operating costs, allowing for employee bonuses or business expansion.

Notice how Level 4 connects to things people actually care about: time with family, personal recognition, environmental responsibility, business growth. These are the emotional drivers that motivate purchasing decisions.

Most salespeople stop at Level 3. They talk about benefits like cost reduction and efficiency improvement. But they don't connect those benefits to the human impact they create. They don't help customers visualize what their world looks like when those benefits are realized.

Creating Your Impact Map

To create your own Impact Map, start by listing all the significant features of your product or service. Then work through each level systematically:

Step 1: Identify Functions For each feature, describe how it works in the real world. What does this feature actually do when customers are using it? How does it operate in their environment?

Step 2: Define Benefits For each function, identify the practical advantages it provides. What problems does it solve? What improvements does it create? What efficiencies does it enable?

Step 3: Discover Impact For each benefit, explore the deeper implications. How does this benefit change your customer's daily experience? What does it enable them to do that they couldn't do before? How does it affect their stress levels, their relationships, their ability to achieve their goals?

Step 4: Connect to Values For each impact, consider how it connects to your customer's personal and professional values. Does it give them more time with family? More recognition at work? Greater sense of security? Better ability to serve their own customers?

The key to this process is asking "So what?" after each level. Your GPS tracking provides real-time location data. So what? It improves route efficiency. So what? It reduces fuel costs and delivery times. So what? Drivers get home earlier and the company saves money that can be invested in growth or employee benefits.

Keep asking "So what?" until you reach the human impact. That's where the real motivation for purchasing decisions lives.

The Value Equation

Once you've completed your Impact Map, you can create what I call a Value Equation for your offering. This is a clear statement that connects your price to the impact you create.

The basic formula is: Investment + Implementation = Outcomes + Ongoing Value

Let's say you're selling that fleet management software for $10,000 annually. Your Value Equation might look like this:

"A $10,000 annual investment in our fleet management system, plus two weeks of implementation, results in $25,000 in annual fuel savings, 15% improvement in on-time deliveries, and the elimination of weekend emergency calls for dispatchers. Over three years, you'll save $75,000 while giving your team better work-life balance and your customers more reliable service."

Notice how this equation connects cost to specific, measurable outcomes. It also includes both financial and non-financial benefits. It helps customers see the total value, not just the immediate cost.

Moving Beyond Price Conversations

When you focus on impact rather than just income, price conversations become much easier. Customers stop asking, "Why does this cost so much?" and start asking, "How quickly will we see these results?"

This shift happens because you've changed the frame of reference. Instead of evaluating cost in isolation, customers are evaluating investment relative to outcomes. Instead of comparing prices, they're comparing value propositions.

This doesn't mean you'll never face price pressure or competitive situations. But it does mean you'll compete on value rather than just cost. You'll win deals based on the transformation you can create, not just the specifications you can deliver.

The Transformation Mindset

Designing for impact requires what I call a Transformation Mindset. This means thinking of yourself not as someone who sells products, but as someone who creates transformations.

When you have a Transformation Mindset, you approach every customer interaction with questions like:

- How can I make this person's situation better?
- What problems can I help them solve?
- What opportunities can I help them capture?
- What stress can I help them eliminate?
- What goals can I help them achieve?

This mindset shift changes everything about how you sell. Your presentations become more engaging because you're talking about outcomes customers care about. Your proposals become more compelling because you're connecting investment to impact. Your follow-up becomes more valuable because you're checking on results, not just satisfaction.

Measuring What Matters

When you design for impact, you also need to measure impact. This means tracking not just sales metrics but outcome metrics. How many problems have you solved? How much value have you created? What transformations have you facilitated?

Start collecting impact stories from your customers. Document the before-and-after situations. Track quantifiable improvements where possible. Gather testimonials that focus on outcomes rather than just product satisfaction.

This impact documentation serves multiple purposes. It gives you confidence in the value you're creating. It provides evidence for future sales conversations. It helps you refine your understanding of how your offering actually improves customers' situations.

Most importantly, it keeps you focused on what really matters: making your customers' world better.

The Ripple Effect of Impact Focus

When you consistently focus on impact over income, something interesting happens. Your reputation changes. Customers start thinking of you as someone who genuinely cares about their success. They begin referring other potential customers to you. They choose to work with you again when new needs arise.

You become known not as a salesperson, but as a problem solver. Not as someone who pushes products, but as someone who creates value. This reputation becomes a competitive advantage that's difficult for others to replicate.

Jennifer, the water treatment rep I mentioned earlier, experienced this firsthand. Two years after shifting to impact-focused selling, she was getting more referral business than she could handle. Customers who had initially chosen competitors based on price were calling her when they experienced problems with those lower-cost solutions.

"They realized that buying based on specifications alone didn't give them what they actually needed," Jennifer told me. "They needed someone who understood their business challenges and could solve them comprehensively. Once they experienced that level of service, they didn't want to work with anyone else."

Your Impact Statement

Before moving to the next chapter, take time to create your personal Impact Statement. This is a clear, compelling description of the transformation you create for customers.

Your Impact Statement should answer these questions:

- What specific problems do you solve?
- What outcomes do you create?
- How do you change your customers' situations?

- What makes their world better because they work with you?

Here's an example: "I help facility managers eliminate water treatment worries so they can focus on their core operations. My customers go from dealing with compliance concerns and equipment emergencies to having reliable, efficient systems that run themselves. They sleep better at night knowing their water treatment is handled by experts who care about their success."

Your Impact Statement becomes your North Star. It guides your sales conversations, shapes your presentations, and keeps you focused on what really matters. It reminds you that you're not just trying to hit quota. You're trying to make people's lives and businesses better.

Moving Forward with Purpose

In our next chapter, we'll talk about injecting magic into the buyer journey. But that magic only works when it's built on a foundation of genuine impact. When customers believe you're truly focused on improving their situation, they're open to the experiences and interactions you create.

Take the time to complete your Impact Map. Develop your Value Equation. Create your Impact Statement. Start collecting stories about the transformations you've facilitated.

Remember: you don't sell a product. You sell a better version of your customer's world. When you understand that distinction and build your approach around it, selling stops feeling like convincing and starts feeling like serving.

Your customers don't need another vendor. They need a partner who understands their challenges and can help them achieve their goals. Be that partner, and the income will follow naturally.

Watch the Chapter 3 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter3

Part II: Work

Dreams turn real through disciplined action. Work is where preparation meets persistence—guiding buyers through human, memorable moments, telling stories that stick, and elevating every touchpoint so trust compounds. This is where intention becomes momentum.

You'll learn to…

- **Inject "magic" into the buyer journey** with the Five Magic Touchpoints, small, intentional surprises that transform you from vendor to preferred partner.
- **Use stories to sell (not scripts)** so emotion leads and logic supports, ditching one-size-fits-all lines for authentic narratives that move decisions.
- **Deliver experiences, not just info** by applying the Experience Filter/Audit to make every interaction engaging, valuable, and memorable.

Chapter 4: Inject Magic into the Buyer Journey

Surprise, delight, and strategically guide the experience

"People don't like to be sold, but they love to buy."
— Jeffrey Gitomer

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."
— Maya Angelou

I still remember the exact moment I understood the power of magic in selling. It wasn't during a training session or while reading a sales book. It happened in a conference room in Toledo, Ohio, during what should have been a routine follow-up meeting.

The deal had been stalled for three months. The municipality liked our proposal, but they were hesitant about the investment. The decision committee kept asking for more information, more references, more time to think it over. I could feel the opportunity slipping away.

That morning, I'd noticed in my pre-meeting research that it was the purchasing director's birthday. Not earth-shattering information, but it gave me an idea. Instead of arriving with another folder of technical specifications, I brought a small birthday cake from a local bakery.

When I walked into the conference room carrying the cake, everything changed. The purchasing director's eyes lit up. The other committee members smiled. The energy in the room shifted from formal and guarded to warm and human.

"How did you know?" the purchasing director asked.

"I pay attention to the people I work with," I replied. "Happy birthday, by the way."

We spent the first ten minutes of the meeting talking about birthdays, families, and weekend plans. When we finally got to business, it felt like we were talking with friends rather than negotiating with strangers. The walls were down. The resistance was gone. The human connection was real.

Two weeks later, we signed the contract. Not because the cake changed their technical evaluation of our proposal, but because it changed how they felt about working with us. In a world full of vendors who treated them like purchasing decisions, we treated them like people.

That's the power of magic in selling. It's not about tricks or manipulation. It's about creating intentional moments of wonder, connection, and humanity that make you unforgettable.

What Magic Really Means in Sales

When I talk about magic in the sales process, I'm not talking about sleight of hand or clever tricks. I'm talking about creating experiences that surprise and delight your customers in meaningful ways. Magic is about injecting moments of unexpected humanity into interactions that are typically transactional and predictable.

Magic happens when you do something that shows you've been paying attention to more than just the business requirements. It's when you demonstrate that you see your customers as complete human beings, not just decision-makers with budgets. It's when you create moments that make people smile, feel valued, or remember why they enjoy working with certain vendors.

The key word here is "intentional." Magic in selling isn't accidental. It's not about hoping that your natural personality will create connection. It's about strategically designing experiences that build relationships, create emotional resonance, and differentiate you from everyone else your customers encounter.

Magic works because business is fundamentally human. Behind every purchasing decision is a person with hopes, fears, pressures, and preferences. They have good days and bad days. They have bosses who stress them out and deadlines that keep them up at night. They have families they want to get home to and goals they're trying to achieve.

When you acknowledge and honor their humanity, they respond with warmth, trust, and preference. When you treat them like order-processing machines, they respond with distance, skepticism, and price sensitivity.

The Robotic Process Problem

Most sales interactions are painfully predictable. The salesperson calls to set up a meeting. They arrive with a laptop and a standard presentation. They ask a few qualifying questions, deliver their pitch, handle objections, and ask for the order. The customer listens politely, asks for time to think it over, and promises to get back to them soon.

This robotic approach might be efficient, but it's not effective. It creates no emotional connection, no memorable moments, no reason for the customer to prefer you over your competitors. It positions you as a commodity vendor who can be easily replaced by someone with a lower price or better specifications.

The problem with robotic selling is that it assumes customers make purely rational decisions based solely on features, benefits, and pricing. But that's not how humans actually work. We make emotional decisions first, then justify them with rational arguments. We choose to work with people we like, trust, and feel good about.

When your sales process is indistinguishable from everyone else's, customers have no choice but to evaluate you on purely rational criteria. They compare specs, prices, and terms because you haven't given them any emotional reasons to prefer your solution.

Magic changes this dynamic completely. When you create moments of surprise, delight, and genuine human connection, you give customers emotional reasons to choose you. You become more than a vendor. You become a preferred partner.

Story: The Wedding Card Deal

Let me tell you about a deal that perfectly illustrates how small magical moments can create big results. I was working with a county government on a significant infrastructure project. The decision process had been going on for months, involving multiple departments and a seemingly endless series of meetings.

The project manager was a woman named Carol who had been with the county for over twenty years. She was thorough, detail-oriented, and somewhat skeptical of salespeople in general. She'd seen too many vendors make promises they couldn't keep, and she approached every interaction with a healthy dose of wariness.

Throughout the long sales process, I'd learned bits and pieces about Carol's life. She mentioned her daughter's upcoming wedding, her husband's retirement plans, and her concerns about budget pressures. I filed these details away, not with any specific plan, but because I was genuinely interested in her as a person.

Three months into the process, I learned from a casual conversation that Carol's daughter's wedding was the following weekend. I made a note in my calendar and continued with the business discussions.

Two weeks after the wedding, I sent Carol a card. Not an email or a text message, but an actual handwritten card. Inside, I wrote a simple note: "I hope your daughter's wedding was everything you dreamed it would be. I know how much it meant to you, and I hope the day was perfect."

I didn't mention our project. I didn't ask for a status update. I didn't try to advance the sale. I simply acknowledged something important in her life and wished her well.

When Carol called me three days later, her voice was different. Warmer. More personal. "Frenchy," she said, "I have to tell you something. In twenty years of working with vendors, nobody has ever sent me a personal note about something that mattered to me. That card is hanging on my office wall."

We spent the first half of our conversation talking about the wedding, her daughter's happiness, and her own feelings about this major life transition. When we finally got to business, it felt like we were partners working together rather than buyer and seller negotiating against each other.

Four weeks later, we won the contract. Was it because of the wedding card? Not directly. But that card created a level of trust and connection that made every subsequent interaction easier and more collaborative.

Carol later told me that when the final decision came down to two very similar proposals, she advocated for us because "I trust Frenchy to care about this project the way he cared about my daughter's wedding."

That's the power of magic. It's not about manipulating decisions. It's about creating authentic human connections that change the entire dynamic of the relationship.

Story: The Compass Trick

Sometimes magic comes from understanding what your customer is really trying to accomplish and finding creative ways to support that goal. This story involves a sale to a small municipality that was struggling with budget constraints and community confidence.

The city had been hit by a series of infrastructure problems. Roads were deteriorating, equipment was breaking down, and residents were losing faith in their local government's ability to manage basic services effectively. The mayor and city council were under intense pressure to demonstrate that they could turn things around.

We were proposing a comprehensive equipment package that would address many of their operational challenges, but the investment was significant for a community their size. The decision-makers wanted our solution, but they were nervous about the financial commitment and the political risk if things didn't go well.

During one of our meetings, the mayor mentioned how difficult it had become to navigate the political pressures. "Sometimes I feel like I'm lost in the woods without a compass," he said. "I know we need to make these improvements, but I'm not sure which direction to go first."

That comment sparked an idea for us to explore together. A week later, we returned for our next meeting with a small gift for each decision-maker: a high-quality compass engraved with their name and the city's motto. We presented them at the beginning of the meeting with a simple explanation:

"We've been talking about leadership and the challenge of finding direction when the path forward isn't obvious. These compasses are a reminder that you have the tools to navigate difficult decisions and find the right direction for your community."

The response was immediate and emotional. The mayor examined his compass carefully, turning it over in his hands. "This is beautiful," he said. "And the message means a lot."

But the real magic happened during the presentation that followed. Every time we discussed a challenging aspect of the project or a difficult decision point, one of the decision-makers would glance at their compass. It became a physical reminder of their ability to lead and make tough choices.

The compasses also became conversation starters. Other city employees noticed them and asked about their significance. This gave the decision-makers opportunities to talk about the project in positive terms, describing it as an example of their strategic leadership rather than just another expensive purchase.

We won the contract, and six months later, the mayor sent me a photo of his compass sitting on his desk with a note:

"Still pointing in the right direction." Two years after that, they called us for another project, specifically requesting to work with our team again.

The compasses cost less than $200 total. The goodwill they created was invaluable. More importantly, they gave the decision-makers a way to feel confident and purposeful about a difficult choice.

The Five Magic Touchpoints Framework

Creating magic in the buyer journey isn't about random acts of creativity. It's about strategically designing five key touchpoints where surprise and delight can have maximum impact. I call this the Five Magic Touchpoints Framework.

Touchpoint 1: The Unexpected Opening

Most sales interactions begin predictably. The salesperson introduces themselves, explains why they're there, and launches into qualifying questions or product presentations. This is exactly what customers expect, which means it creates no differentiation or memorable moments.

Magic happens when you open differently. This could be:

- Sharing a relevant insight about their industry or market
- Bringing something useful that's unrelated to your product
- Acknowledging something significant happening in their organization

- Creating a unique physical environment for your meeting
- Starting with a thought-provoking question that reframes their situation

The key is doing something that immediately signals "this is going to be different from every other sales meeting you've had."

Touchpoint 2: The Personal Connection

Somewhere in your sales process, you need to move from business-only interactions to genuine human connection. This is where you demonstrate that you see your customers as complete people, not just decision-makers.

This might involve:

- Remembering and following up on personal details they've shared
- Acknowledging important events in their lives
- Finding common interests or experiences
- Sharing appropriate personal stories that create mutual understanding
- Showing genuine interest in their challenges and aspirations

The goal isn't to become best friends with every customer. It's to establish authentic human connection that makes your business relationship more collaborative and trusting.

Touchpoint 3: The Insight Surprise

At some point in your sales process, you need to provide value that goes beyond your product or service. This is where you demonstrate expertise, insight, or perspective that helps your customer even if they don't buy from you.

This could include:

- Industry benchmarking information that helps them evaluate their situation
- Insights from other customers who've faced similar challenges
- Tools, resources, or frameworks that are useful regardless of vendor choice
- Introductions to other professionals who can help with adjacent issues
- Strategic perspectives that help them think differently about their goals

The Insight Surprise positions you as a trusted advisor rather than just another vendor seeking their business.

Touchpoint 4: The Experience Elevation

Every customer interaction is an opportunity to exceed expectations. While competitors are delivering standard presentations and proposals, you can create experiences that are memorable, engaging, and valuable.

This might involve:

- Interactive demonstrations that let customers experience your solution
- Customized materials that show deep understanding of their situation
- Unique presentation formats that engage multiple senses

- Site visits or experiences that build confidence in your capabilities
- Collaborative planning sessions that involve customers in solution design

The Experience Elevation makes your sales process itself a reason to choose you.

Touchpoint 5: The Gratitude Gesture

Regardless of whether you win or lose, every sales interaction should end with genuine gratitude. This is where you acknowledge the customer's time, consideration, and professionalism, and leave the door open for future opportunities.

For won deals, this might be:

- A personal thank-you note that acknowledges their trust in you
- A celebration that honors their decision and commitment
- A kickoff gift that sets a positive tone for the implementation
- Recognition that honors their leadership in making a difficult decision

For lost deals, this could include:

- A thank-you note that expresses appreciation for the opportunity
- A offer to help in any way that doesn't compromise the chosen vendor
- An invitation to stay in touch for future opportunities

The Gratitude Gesture ensures that even prospects who don't become customers remember you positively.

Designing Your Magic Moments

Creating magic requires intentional planning. You can't just hope that inspiration will strike during your sales meetings. You need to think strategically about where and how to inject surprise and delight into your customer interactions.

Start by mapping your typical sales process. Identify the standard touchpoints where you interact with customers. Then ask yourself:

- Where do customers expect routine, predictable interactions?
- What opportunities exist to exceed expectations at each stage?
- How can you demonstrate genuine interest in customers as people?
- What insights or value can you provide beyond your product?
- Where can you create memorable experiences that differentiate you?

Remember that magic doesn't have to be expensive or elaborate. Some of the most powerful magical moments cost almost nothing but show that you've been paying attention and that you care about your customers' success and wellbeing.

The Authenticity Requirement

Magic only works when it's authentic. Customers can sense when gestures are calculated or manipulative. They respond positively to genuine expressions of interest, care, and creativity, but they're put off by actions that feel scripted or artificial.

This means your magical moments need to:

- Reflect your genuine personality and style
- Connect to real insights about your customers
- Feel natural and appropriate to the relationship
- Demonstrate authentic interest rather than sales agenda
- Create value for customers regardless of their purchasing decision

If you're not naturally creative or expressive, don't try to become someone you're not. Find ways to inject magic that align with your personality and strengths. The goal is to be memorably authentic, not artificially impressive.

Magic and Trust Building

The real purpose of magic in selling is trust building. When you consistently create positive, surprising, and memorable experiences, customers begin to trust that working with you will be different from working with your competitors.

They start to believe that you'll bring the same level of attention, creativity, and care to their project that you bring to your sales process. They develop confidence that you'll go above and beyond to ensure their success.

This trust becomes a competitive advantage that's difficult for others to replicate. Competitors can match your prices, copy your features, and improve their proposals. But they can't easily replicate the relationship and trust you've built through consistent magical moments.

Measuring Magic

How do you know if your magical moments are working? Look for these indicators:

Relationship Warmth: Are your customer interactions becoming more personal and collaborative over time?

Response Time: Do customers return your calls and emails more quickly than they initially did?

Referral Behavior: Are customers introducing you to colleagues or recommending you to others?

Preference Signals: When given choices, do customers choose to work with you even when other options might be more convenient or less expensive?

Engagement Quality: Do customers seem genuinely interested and engaged during your interactions?

Repeat Business: Do customers come back to you for additional needs or future projects?

Magic creates measurable changes in customer behavior. When it's working, you'll see customers investing more time, attention, and emotional energy in your relationship.

The Ripple Effect

Magical moments don't just influence the immediate customer. They create ripple effects that extend far beyond individual sales situations. Customers who experience magic in your sales process tell stories about those experiences. They share those stories with colleagues, friends, and other vendors they work with.

This word-of-mouth marketing is incredibly powerful because it comes from credible sources who have no incentive to exaggerate your capabilities. When customers voluntarily tell others about the remarkable experiences you create, it builds your reputation and attracts new opportunities.

The wedding card story I shared earlier had ripple effects that lasted for years. Carol told that story to other county employees, to vendors she worked with, and to colleagues at industry conferences. It became part of how she described what exceptional vendor service looked like.

Magic multiplies. One thoughtful gesture can influence dozens of future interactions and opportunities.

Your Magic Toolkit

Before moving to the next chapter, develop your personal Magic Toolkit. This is a collection of ideas, resources, and approaches you can use to create magical moments throughout your sales process.

Your toolkit might include:

- A system for tracking personal details about customers
- A collection of small gifts that could be appropriate for different situations
- A list of industry insights or resources you can share
- Ideas for unique meeting formats or presentation approaches
- Templates for personal notes and follow-up communications
- A network of contacts who could provide value to customers
- Creative ideas for celebrating wins or acknowledging losses

Remember that your Magic Toolkit should reflect your personality, industry, and customer base. What works for one salesperson might not work for another. The key is developing a systematic approach to creating magical moments that feel authentic to you and valuable to your customers.

Moving Forward with Wonder

In our next chapter, we'll explore how to use authentic storytelling to build trust and connection with your customers. But those stories will be much more powerful when they're shared within relationships that have been strengthened by magical moments.

Magic opens hearts and minds. It creates emotional receptivity that makes customers more willing to listen, engage, and trust. When you consistently inject surprise and delight into your customer interactions, you create the foundation for every other aspect of your sales process to be more effective.

Start small. Pick one touchpoint in your sales process and brainstorm ways to make it more magical. Try something new with your next customer interaction. Pay attention to their response and adjust accordingly.

Remember that magic isn't about impressing people with your creativity. It's about showing them that they matter to you as human beings, not just as sources of commission. When customers feel valued and appreciated, they respond with loyalty, trust, and preference.

In a world full of robotic sales processes, a little magic goes a long way.

Watch the Chapter 4 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter4

Chapter 5: Use Stories to Sell, Not Scripts

Build connection with authentic storytelling

"You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."
— Jim Rohn

"Those who tell the stories rule the world."
— Plato

I was sitting across from the most data-driven customer I'd ever encountered. The city engineer had spreadsheets for everything. Cost-benefit analyses, technical comparisons, performance metrics, maintenance schedules. He approached every decision with the precision of a scientist and the skepticism of an auditor.

For three meetings, I'd tried to match his analytical approach. I brought charts, graphs, and technical specifications. I presented ROI calculations and efficiency metrics. I answered every question with facts and figures. And I was getting nowhere.

The engineer was polite but unmoved. He'd nod at my presentations, ask clarifying questions about the data, and promise to review everything carefully. But I could sense his lack of engagement. My facts weren't creating connection. My data wasn't driving decisions.

Then, during our fourth meeting, something shifted. Instead of launching into another presentation, I told him a story.

"You know," I said, "you remind me of another engineer I worked with a few years ago. Like you, he wanted to see every number, understand every variable, make sure every detail was perfect before making a recommendation."

The engineer leaned forward slightly. I had his attention.

I continued: "The challenge he was facing was that his equipment kept breaking down during the worst possible times. It was like Murphy's Law was specifically targeting his department. Every time there was a storm, a holiday, or a critical deadline, something would fail."

The engineer nodded. I could see recognition in his eyes.

"The breaking point came during a Christmas week emergency when his crew had to work sixteen-hour shifts in freezing temperatures to fix a system failure. He called me that night and said, 'I don't care about the data anymore. I need equipment that doesn't ruin my people's holidays.'"

I paused, then added: "Six months after installing our system, he sent me a photo of his crew at their Christmas party. They were all there because nothing had broken down. That's when I realized that sometimes the most important data point isn't on any spreadsheet. It's whether your people get to go home to their families on time."

The room was quiet for a moment. Then the engineer said something that changed everything: "Tell me more about that reliability."

For the next hour, we had the most productive conversation of our entire sales process. Not because I'd finally found the right data, but because I'd found the right story. A story that helped him see past the specifications to the human impact of his decision.

Three weeks later, we signed the contract. Not because our numbers were better than the competition's, but because our story resonated with what he really cared about: protecting his team and ensuring reliable operations.

Why Stories Work When Statistics Don't

Human beings are wired for stories. For thousands of years, before we had written language or formal education, we passed down knowledge, values, and wisdom through stories. We used narratives to make sense of complex situations, share important lessons, and connect with each other on emotional levels.

This wiring hasn't changed. Despite living in an age of data and analytics, we still respond more powerfully to stories than to statistics. We remember narratives long after we've forgotten facts and figures. We make decisions based on how stories make us feel, then use data to justify those decisions.

Yet most salespeople rely heavily on presentations filled with features, benefits, and technical specifications. They lead with logic and support with more logic. They assume that customers make purely rational decisions based on objective criteria.

This approach misses a fundamental truth about human psychology: people buy emotionally and justify rationally. They choose solutions that feel right, then find logical reasons to support their choice. Stories create the emotional resonance that makes solutions feel right.

When you tell a story about how your product helped another customer solve a similar problem, you're doing more than sharing information. You're helping your prospect visualize success. You're creating emotional connection to positive outcomes. You're making abstract benefits concrete and tangible.

Stories work because they:

- Engage multiple parts of the brain simultaneously
- Create emotional connection to logical concepts
- Make complex information easier to understand and remember
- Provide social proof through relatable examples
- Help prospects visualize themselves achieving similar outcomes
- Build trust through vulnerability and authenticity

The Problem with Scripts

Most sales training focuses on scripts. Memorized presentations, standard objection responses, and rehearsed closing techniques. The theory is that if you say the right words in the right order, you'll get predictable results.

But scripts have fundamental limitations that make them ineffective for building genuine connection and trust:

Scripts Sound Scripted: Customers can immediately tell when you're reciting memorized content. It sounds artificial and creates distance rather than connection.

Scripts Are One-Size-Fits-All: Every customer situation is unique, but scripts assume that the same approach will work for everyone. This leads to mismatched communication that doesn't resonate.

Scripts Prevent Real Listening: When you're focused on delivering your script, you're not fully present to what your customer is saying. You miss important cues and opportunities for genuine dialogue.

Scripts Create Pressure: When you deviate from your script, you feel unprepared and anxious. This pressure shows up in your delivery and affects your confidence.

Scripts Limit Authenticity: Scripts force you to present a version of yourself that may not align with your natural personality and communication style.

Stories are different. They're flexible, authentic, and responsive to the moment. You can adjust them based on your audience, shorten or expand them as needed, and use them to address specific concerns or interests that arise during conversation.

Story: From Fire Hose to Finish Line

Let me share an example of how the right metaphor can transform a customer's understanding and accelerate their decision-making process.

I was working with a municipality that was struggling with an aging infrastructure system. The city manager understood they needed to upgrade, but he was overwhelmed by the complexity of the project and the number of decisions required.

During one of our meetings, he expressed his frustration: "I feel like I'm drinking from a fire hose. There's so much information, so many options, so many variables to consider. I don't even know where to start."

That comment gave me an opportunity to use a story metaphor that would help him reframe the situation.

"I understand that feeling," I said. "It reminds me of when I decided to run my first marathon. When I looked at the training plan, I was overwhelmed. Twenty-six miles seemed impossible. All those long runs, speed workouts, and recovery days seemed incredibly complicated."

The city manager was a runner himself, so I could see him connecting with the metaphor.

"But my coach told me something that changed everything. He said, 'Don't think about running 26 miles. Think about running to the next mile marker. Then the next one. Before you know it, you'll be at the finish line.'"

I continued: "Your infrastructure project is the same way. We don't have to solve everything at once. We just need to identify the first mile marker and start moving toward it. Then we'll tackle the next milestone, and the next one, until we reach your finish line."

The metaphor completely changed how the city manager approached the project. Instead of being paralyzed by the complexity of the entire initiative, he started focusing on the immediate next steps. We broke the project into phases, identified quick wins, and created a roadmap that felt manageable rather than overwhelming.

"I never thought of it like marathon training," he told me later. "But that's exactly what this is. We're not trying to sprint to the end. We're building endurance and momentum one mile at a time."

The metaphor not only helped him understand our approach but also gave him language to explain the project to his council and staff. He started referring to project phases as "mile markers" and talking about "training" his team for implementation.

That story metaphor became the framework for our entire relationship. It helped him stay motivated during challenging phases, celebrate incremental progress, and maintain confidence in the long-term vision.

Story: Your Customer is the Hero

One of the most powerful storytelling techniques in sales is positioning your customer as the hero of their own success story. This approach acknowledges their agency, intelligence, and leadership while positioning your product as the tool that enables their success.

I learned this lesson during a sale to a small town that had been struggling with budget constraints and infrastructure challenges. The mayor was a proud man who had been working tirelessly to improve his community, but he was frustrated by the lack of progress and constant criticism from residents.

During our meetings, I noticed that the mayor seemed defensive about his town's challenges. He didn't want to appear incapable or acknowledge that problems existed. This made it difficult to discuss solutions because he was reluctant to admit that solutions were needed.

Instead of focusing on the town's problems, I started telling stories about other mayors who had successfully transformed their communities. I talked about leaders who had faced similar challenges and made difficult decisions that ultimately benefited their residents.

"There's a mayor about fifty miles from here," I said, "who inherited a town with aging infrastructure and a shrinking budget. Sound familiar?"

The mayor smiled and nodded.

"Instead of accepting the status quo, he decided to be proactive. He researched solutions, built consensus with his council, and made strategic investments that positioned his town for long-term success. It wasn't easy, and he faced criticism during the implementation phase. But three years later, his town is thriving. Property values are up, businesses are moving in, and residents are proud of their community again."

I paused, then added: "The difference wasn't the size of his budget or the severity of his challenges. The difference was his leadership. He saw beyond the immediate problems to the long-term potential."

This story reframed the mayor's situation from "struggling community needs help" to "visionary leader creates transformation." It acknowledged his leadership potential while presenting our solution as the tool that would enable his success.

The mayor's entire demeanor changed. Instead of being defensive about his town's challenges, he started talking about his vision for improvement. Instead of minimizing problems, he started discussing solutions. Instead of seeing himself as someone who needed rescue, he saw himself as someone who could create positive change.

"I want to be that kind of mayor," he told me. "I want to leave this town better than I found it."

By positioning him as the hero of his own story, I helped him see that working with us wasn't an admission of failure but an expression of leadership. Our equipment wasn't a band-aid for problems but a tool for achieving his vision.

The Hero Map Framework

To help you structure customer-centered narratives, I've developed what I call the Hero Map. This framework ensures that your stories position your customers as capable protagonists rather than helpless victims who need rescue.

The Hero Map has five elements:

1. The Hero's Situation

This is where you establish the context and challenges your customer-hero is facing. The key is to describe the situation in terms that acknowledge the complexity and difficulty without making the hero appear incompetent or powerless.

Instead of: "The city was failing to maintain their infrastructure." Try: "The city was facing the same infrastructure challenges that communities across the country are grappling with."

2. The Hero's Goal

This is what your customer-hero wants to achieve. It should be something meaningful and admirable that goes beyond just solving immediate problems.

Instead of: "They needed new equipment." Try: "The mayor wanted to position his community for long-term growth and prosperity."

3. The Hero's Challenge

This is the obstacle or difficulty that's preventing your customer-hero from achieving their goal. It should be something that requires courage, wisdom, or determination to overcome.

Instead of: "They couldn't afford a comprehensive solution." Try: "The mayor had to balance immediate needs with long-term investments while managing a tight budget."

4. The Hero's Decision

This is the moment when your customer-hero chooses to take action. It should highlight their leadership, wisdom, or courage in making a difficult choice.

Instead of: "They finally decided to buy our equipment." Try: "The mayor decided to invest in the community's future, even though it meant making some difficult short-term sacrifices."

5. The Hero's Success

This is the positive outcome that resulted from your customer-hero's wise decision. It should focus on the transformation they created rather than just the problems they solved.

Instead of: "Our equipment worked well for them." Try: "Three years later, the community is thriving, and the mayor is recognized as a visionary leader who transformed his town."

Building Your Story Library

Effective storytelling in sales requires having a library of stories you can draw from in different situations. These stories should cover various customer types, challenges, and outcomes so you can find relevant narratives for any sales conversation.

Your story library should include:

Origin Stories: How you got into this business and why it matters to you **Transformation Stories**: Customers who achieved significant positive outcomes **Challenge Stories**: Difficult situations that were successfully resolved **Relationship Stories**: Long-term partnerships that demonstrate your commitment **Innovation Stories**: Creative solutions to unique problems **Learning Stories**: Mistakes you've made and lessons you've learned **Industry Stories**: Trends and changes you've witnessed over time **Personal Stories**: Experiences that help customers understand your values and perspective

For each story, develop both short and long versions. Sometimes you need a quick two-minute example to illustrate a point. Other times you have the opportunity for a longer, more detailed narrative that builds emotional connection.

The Three-Act Story Structure

The most effective sales stories follow a simple three-act structure that creates engagement and emotional resolution:

Act 1: Setup - Establish the situation, introduce the characters, and present the challenge or conflict **Act 2: Struggle** - Describe the difficulties, obstacles, or complications that had to be overcome **Act 3:**

Resolution - Share the successful outcome and the positive transformation that resulted

This structure works because it mirrors how we naturally process information and create meaning from experiences. It builds tension that keeps listeners engaged, then provides satisfaction through resolution.

For example: **Act 1**: "I worked with a school district that was struggling with aging heating systems that kept breaking down during the coldest months of the year." **Act 2**: "The maintenance staff was exhausted from constant emergency repairs, teachers were frustrated by inconsistent temperatures, and parents were worried about their children's comfort and health." **Act 3**: "After installing our new system, they went through an entire winter without a single heating emergency, and the maintenance team could focus on preventive improvements instead of crisis management."

Story Delivery Techniques

How you tell your stories is almost as important as the stories themselves. Here are key techniques for effective story delivery:

Use Specific Details: Vague stories don't create emotional connection. Include specific details about people, places, and outcomes that make your stories vivid and memorable.

Employ Emotional Language: Choose words that help listeners feel the emotions of your story. Instead of "improved efficiency," say "eliminated the stress of constant equipment failures."

Maintain Eye Contact: Stories are intimate forms of communication. Look at your listeners while you tell stories to create connection and gauge their engagement.

Use Appropriate Pacing: Vary your speaking pace to match the emotional tone of different parts of your story. Slow down for important moments, speed up during transitions.

Include Dialogue: When appropriate, include brief quotes from characters in your stories. This makes the narrative more engaging and authentic.

Show Don't Tell: Instead of saying "the customer was frustrated," describe behaviors that demonstrate frustration: "He was working sixteen-hour days and missing his daughter's soccer games."

Stories for Different Sales Situations

Different types of sales conversations call for different types of stories:

First Meetings: Use stories that establish credibility and demonstrate understanding of customer challenges
Needs Assessment: Share stories that help customers think more deeply about their situation and goals
Solution Presentation: Tell transformation stories that help customers visualize success **Objection Handling**: Use stories of customers who had similar concerns and

were satisfied with the outcome **Closing**: Share stories that reinforce the value of taking action and the risks of delay **Follow-up**: Tell stories that maintain engagement and demonstrate ongoing value

The Trust Factor

Perhaps the most important aspect of storytelling in sales is that it builds trust through vulnerability and authenticity. When you share real stories about real customers, including challenges and struggles, you demonstrate honesty and transparency.

Customers can sense when stories are authentic versus when they're fabricated or heavily embellished. Real stories have imperfections, complications, and nuances that make them believable. They acknowledge that success isn't always easy or immediate.

This authenticity creates trust because it shows customers that you're being honest about what they can expect. You're not promising perfection or pretending that challenges don't exist. You're sharing real experiences from real customers who faced real difficulties and achieved real success.

Measuring Story Impact

How do you know if your stories are working? Look for these indicators:

Engagement Signals: Do customers lean in, ask follow-up questions, or request more details about your stories?

Emotional Response: Do you see changes in customers' facial expressions, body language, or energy level when you tell stories? **Story Sharing**: Do customers retell your stories to colleagues or reference them in later conversations? **Connection Building**: Do your stories lead to customers sharing their own stories or personal experiences? **Decision Acceleration**: Do customers move more quickly toward decisions after hearing relevant transformation stories?

Your Story Development Process

Before moving to the next chapter, start developing your personal story library:

1. **Inventory Your Experiences**: List significant customer successes, challenges overcome, relationships built, and lessons learned
2. **Identify Story Themes**: Group your experiences into categories that align with common customer situations
3. **Develop Story Outlines**: Create basic three-act structures for your most important stories
4. **Practice Story Delivery**: Rehearse telling your stories until they feel natural and authentic
5. **Test and Refine**: Use your stories in real sales situations and adjust based on customer response
6. **Expand Your Library**: Continuously collect new stories from ongoing customer experiences

Remember that your best stories often come from your most challenging experiences. Customers relate to struggles and setbacks because they face them too. Stories that acknowledge difficulties and show how they were overcome are often more powerful than stories that make success sound easy.

Moving Forward with Narrative

In our next chapter, we'll explore how to deliver experiences rather than just information. But those experiences will be much more powerful when they're grounded in the authentic stories that build trust and emotional connection.

Stories are the bridge between logic and emotion, between features and benefits, between what you're selling and what customers actually care about. When you master the art of authentic storytelling, you stop presenting and start connecting. You stop pitching and start relating.

Your customers don't need another vendor with impressive specifications. They need someone who understands their world and can help them envision a better future. Stories are how you demonstrate that understanding and create that vision.

Start collecting your stories today. The next customer you talk to is waiting to hear one that will help them see their situation differently and feel confident about moving forward.

Watch the Chapter 5 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter5

Chapter 6: Deliver Experiences, Not Just Info

Make every interaction matter

"Great salespeople are relationship builders who provide value and help their customers win."
— Jeffrey Gitomer

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."
— Benjamin Franklin

The phone call came on a Tuesday afternoon. The city manager was frustrated, and I could hear it in his voice before he even explained why he was calling.

"Frenchy, I need to ask you something," he said. "We've been evaluating proposals for three months now. I've sat through a dozen presentations, reviewed countless specifications, and analyzed more data than I care to think about. They're all starting to blur together."

He paused, then continued: "Here's my question: Why should I choose you? And please, don't give me another list of features or benefits. I need to understand what working with you will actually feel like."

That question stopped me cold. Not because I didn't have an answer, but because it was the first time a customer had directly asked about the experience of working with me rather than the specifications of what I was selling.

I realized that despite all my presentations, proposals, and product demonstrations, I had never actually shown this customer what it would be like to be my client. I had given him information about my products, but I hadn't given him an experience of my service.

"You know what?" I said. "Instead of telling you why you should choose me, let me show you. Can you give me two hours next Thursday?"

When Thursday arrived, I didn't bring a laptop or a standard presentation. Instead, I brought the customer to visit one of my existing clients who had a similar operation. We spent the morning talking with their maintenance staff, reviewing their actual results, and observing the equipment in operation.

But the real magic happened during lunch. My existing customer shared stories about our partnership that I never could have communicated in a presentation. He talked about how I had helped them through implementation challenges, how I had responded to emergency situations, and how our relationship had evolved over three years of working together.

"The difference with Frenchy," the customer said, "isn't just the equipment he sells. It's how he makes you feel like a partner instead of just another account number."

Two weeks later, the city manager called to tell me we had won the contract. "After spending that day with you and your customer," he said, "I knew exactly what working with you would be like. That experience told me everything I needed to know."

That day taught me a fundamental truth about selling: customers don't just buy products or services. They buy experiences. They choose vendors based on how those vendors make them feel and what they believe the relationship will be like.

The Information Overload Problem

We live in an age of information abundance. Customers have access to more data about products, services, and vendors than ever before. They can research specifications online, compare prices across multiple suppliers, and read reviews from other buyers.

This abundance creates a paradox: the more information customers have, the harder it becomes for them to make decisions. When every vendor can provide detailed specifications and compelling data, information stops being a differentiator. Customers reach a point of information overload where additional facts and figures don't help and may actually hinder their decision-making process.

I see this happening constantly in complex B2B sales. Customers receive proposal after proposal, each filled with technical details, performance metrics, and cost breakdowns. The proposals start to look similar, and customers struggle to identify meaningful differences between options.

This is where most salespeople make a critical mistake. When customers seem unclear about their choice, the natural response is to provide more information. More specifications, more comparisons, more data. But additional information rarely solves the decision paralysis problem. In fact, it often makes it worse.

What customers need isn't more information. They need experiences that help them understand what their choice will actually mean for their daily reality. They need to feel what it will be like to work with you rather than just think about it.

The Experience Difference

An experience engages multiple senses and emotions simultaneously. While information appeals primarily to the rational mind, experiences involve the whole person. They create emotional memories that influence decision-making in ways that data alone cannot.

Consider the difference between reading about a restaurant and actually eating there. You can study the menu, read reviews, and analyze photos of the food. But none of that information tells you what it feels like to be in the restaurant, how the staff treats you, or whether the atmosphere matches your preferences. You need to experience the restaurant to truly understand whether you want to return.

The same principle applies to business relationships. Customers can read about your company's capabilities, study your product specifications, and review your references. But until they experience what it's like to work with you, they're making decisions based on incomplete information.

Experiences are powerful because they:

- Engage emotions in addition to logic
- Create vivid memories that influence future decisions
- Demonstrate rather than just describe your capabilities
- Allow customers to test assumptions and validate concerns
- Build confidence through firsthand observation
- Differentiate you from competitors who only provide information

Story: The Demo That Changed Everything

Let me share a story about how one thoughtfully designed experience transformed a stalled sales opportunity into a significant win.

We had been working with a regional water authority for six months on a substantial equipment upgrade. The technical evaluation had gone well, our proposal was competitive, and we had good relationships with the decision-makers. But the project kept getting delayed. The authority seemed unable to move forward with any vendor.

During one of our follow-up meetings, the operations director explained the source of their hesitation: "We've never undertaken a project this complex before. We're worried about disrupting our operations during installation. We're concerned about training our staff on new systems. Frankly, we're not sure we can handle a change this significant."

We realized that no amount of additional information was going to address their concerns. They didn't need more technical details or implementation timelines. They needed to experience what a successful transition would feel like.

We proposed something different: "What if we arranged for your entire decision team to visit a facility that went through exactly the same transition you're considering? You could see the equipment in operation, talk to their staff about the implementation process, and get honest feedback about working with us."

Two weeks later, we took six people from the water authority to visit a similar facility three hours away. But this wasn't a standard site visit. We had spent considerable time preparing both the host facility and our visiting group to ensure the experience would be maximally valuable.

Before the visit, we worked together with the host facility's staff to understand our visitors' specific concerns and questions. We asked them to be completely honest about both the challenges and benefits of their transition. We encouraged them to share stories about the implementation process, including difficulties they had encountered and how those issues were resolved.

For our visiting group, we collaborated to develop a structured agenda that included time with operators, maintenance staff, and management. We prepared specific questions together that would help them gather the information most relevant to their concerns.

The day itself was revelatory. Our visitors saw the equipment operating in real-world conditions. They talked to operators who had been through the transition and could speak honestly about the learning curve. They observed the efficiency improvements firsthand and heard specific examples of how the new systems had simplified daily operations.

But the most powerful moment came during lunch when the host facility's operations manager said, "I won't lie to you. The first month was challenging. We had to learn new procedures, and there were some initial hiccups. But looking back, it was the best decision we ever made. Our operations are more reliable, our staff is less stressed, and we're delivering better service to our customers."

On the drive back, the conversation in our van was completely different from any previous meeting. Instead of discussing specifications or worrying about risks, our visitors were excited about possibilities. They were talking about how the new systems would improve their own operations and imagining the benefits for their staff and customers.

"Seeing it in operation made all the difference," the operations director told us later. "We could finally envision what success would look like for us."

Six weeks later, we signed the contract. The site visit had done what months of presentations and proposals couldn't: it gave the customer confidence that they could successfully navigate the transition and achieve the outcomes they wanted together with us as their partner.

Story: From Routine to Revelation

There's a big difference between showing up to pitch a product and showing up to prove it works in the real world. We learned this lesson during a contract competition that initially felt like an uphill battle.

We were invited to bid on a high-stakes equipment upgrade for a regional utility provider. The challenge was significant: they had used the same vendor for over a decade. While our solution was technically stronger, the incumbent had the advantage of established relationships and operational familiarity. We needed to find a way to break through years of comfortable routine.

Instead of battling solely on specifications or price, we made what some would consider a bold request. "Let us bring the machine to your facility," we proposed. "Not just for a standard demonstration, but so your actual operators can run it, test it, and experience it under real working conditions."

To our surprise, they agreed.

When demo day arrived, we didn't simply unload the equipment and run through a checklist. We came with a comprehensive plan designed to create an experience that would engage their entire team.

Together, we had developed operator checklists specifically tailored to their existing workflow, showing how our equipment would integrate seamlessly into their daily routines. Our lead technician wore a body camera that live-streamed the operation to their training room, allowing supervisors and maintenance staff to observe the demonstration in real time while asking questions and discussing what they were seeing.

Most importantly, we staged a mock malfunction together. We intentionally misaligned a component so we could walk their team through our troubleshooting process, demonstrating how quickly and easily issues could be diagnosed and corrected on-site. This wasn't about showing off our problem-solving skills. It was about giving them confidence that when problems inevitably arose, we'd have the support they needed.

The transformation in the room was immediate. What had started as a routine vendor demonstration became an interactive learning experience. Their operators weren't just watching us operate equipment. They were participating, asking questions, and discovering how our solution would actually impact their daily work.

One of their most experienced operators, someone who had been openly resistant to any change from their current setup, approached us after the hands-on trial. "I've been running the old equipment for twelve years," he said. "I honestly didn't think I'd like anything different. But this actually feels like it was designed with people like me in mind."

That comment represented exactly the shift we were hoping to create. Not just technical approval from management, but genuine buy-in from the people who would actually use the equipment every day.

But we didn't stop with the demonstration. We made space for real conversation about their operational challenges. Instead of just presenting our capabilities, we asked their team about their biggest frustrations with their current setup.

"Downtime and slow service response," they told us without hesitation.

Right there, in real time, we pulled up service logs from similar clients and showed them our actual average response times. We didn't make claims about our service quality. We provided evidence. We showed them data from customers in similar situations who had experienced measurable improvements in uptime and support response.

Before we packed up to leave, the operations manager pulled me aside. "You didn't just sell us something today," he said. "You brought the whole experience to life. The way you prepared for this demonstration tells me how you'll show up after the sale, too."

That observation was exactly what we'd hoped he would reach. By investing in a thoughtful, comprehensive demonstration experience, we had shown them not just what our equipment could do, but what our partnership would feel like.

Six weeks later, we won the contract. But more importantly, we earned their trust and respect. Not by being the loudest voice in the procurement process, but by being the most prepared, the most thoughtful, and the most willing to meet them where they were. On their turf, speaking their language, with their specific needs at the center of everything we did.

That demonstration taught us that the most powerful sales tool isn't a presentation or a proposal. It's an experience that helps customers feel confident about their decision before they make it. When you stop trying to prove features and start helping people envision success, everything changes.

The equipment performed exactly as demonstrated, and three years later, they called us for their next upgrade without even requesting competitive bids. That's the lasting power of delivering experiences that create genuine belief rather than just temporary interest.

The Experience Filter Framework

To help you systematically elevate your customer interactions, I've developed what I call the Experience Filter. This is a series of questions you should ask yourself when preparing for any customer interaction:

Sensory Engagement

What senses will this interaction engage? Most sales presentations only engage sight and hearing. Look for opportunities to involve touch, smell, or even taste when appropriate. Physical samples, hands-on demonstrations, or site visits engage more senses and create stronger memories.

Emotional Resonance

How will this interaction make customers feel? Beyond the information you're conveying, consider the emotional experience you're creating. Do you want customers to feel confident, excited, reassured, or inspired? Design your interaction to generate those emotions.

Active Participation

How can customers participate rather than just observe? Interactive experiences are more engaging and memorable than passive presentations. Look for ways to get customers involved in demonstrations, discussions, or problem-solving activities.

Personal Relevance

How does this interaction connect to customers' specific situations? Generic presentations feel less valuable than customized experiences. Find ways to tailor your interactions to address each customer's unique circumstances, challenges, and goals.

Memorable Elements

What will make this interaction unforgettable? Identify opportunities to create surprise, delight, or insight that customers will remember and share with others. This could be a unique demonstration, an unexpected insight, or a creative presentation format.

Value Beyond Purchase

What value does this interaction provide regardless of buying decisions? Experiences that educate, inspire, or help customers think differently about their challenges create goodwill even when they don't result in immediate sales.

Types of Experience-Driven Interactions

There are several ways to transform standard sales interactions into memorable experiences:

Immersive Demonstrations

Instead of showing customers how your product works, let them experience it themselves. This might mean arranging hands-on trial periods, conducting on-site demonstrations in their actual environment, or creating simulated scenarios that let them interact with your solution.

Educational Experiences

Position your sales interactions as learning opportunities that provide value beyond your specific offering. This could include industry insights, best practice sharing, or problem-solving workshops that help customers regardless of their vendor choice.

Collaborative Design Sessions

Instead of presenting pre-built solutions, involve customers in the design process. This might mean conducting needs assessment workshops, solution brainstorming sessions, or implementation planning meetings that make customers co-creators of their solution.

Peer Learning Opportunities

Facilitate connections between prospective customers and existing clients who can share real-world experiences. This might include site visits, reference calls, or user group meetings that provide authentic peer-to-peer insights.

Problem-Solving Experiences

Instead of just describing how you solve problems, demonstrate your problem-solving process in real-time. This might mean conducting diagnostic assessments, troubleshooting sessions, or strategic planning workshops that showcase your methodology.

The Preparation Investment

Creating meaningful experiences requires significantly more preparation than delivering standard presentations. You need to:

Research Thoroughly: Understand your customer's specific situation, challenges, and goals well enough to create relevant, customized experiences.

Plan Strategically: Think through every aspect of the interaction, from logistics to emotional flow, to ensure the experience achieves your intended outcomes.

Prepare Contingencies: Anticipate potential challenges or unexpected developments and have backup plans that maintain the quality of the experience.

Coordinate Resources: Experiences often require coordination with other people, facilities, or materials that need to be arranged in advance.

Practice and Rehearse: Complex experiences benefit from rehearsal to ensure smooth execution and confident delivery.

This additional investment pays dividends in differentiation, customer engagement, and relationship building. Customers recognize when you've put extra effort into their experience, and they respond with increased attention, trust, and preference.

Digital Experience Design

In our increasingly digital world, many customer interactions happen virtually. This doesn't mean you can't create meaningful experiences. It just means you need to think creatively about engagement within digital constraints.

Digital experiences might include:

- Interactive virtual demonstrations that customers can control
- Customized video content that addresses specific customer situations
- Virtual reality experiences that immerse customers in your solution

- Collaborative online workshops that engage multiple stakeholders
- Digital simulations that let customers test different scenarios
- Virtual site visits that showcase your capabilities remotely

The key is remembering that technology should enhance the human experience, not replace it. The best digital interactions still focus on creating emotional connection and meaningful engagement.

Measuring Experience Impact

How do you know if your experience-focused approach is working? Look for these indicators:

Engagement Duration: Do customers spend more time in your interactions? Are meetings running longer because customers are asking more questions or exploring ideas more deeply?

Emotional Response: Do you observe positive emotional reactions during your interactions? Are customers showing excitement, curiosity, or enthusiasm?

Follow-up Behavior: Do customers initiate follow-up conversations, request additional meetings, or introduce you to other stakeholders?

Reference Sharing: Do customers mention your interactions to colleagues or reference them in later conversations?

Decision Speed: Do customers move more quickly through their decision process after experiencing your differentiated approach?

Competitive Positioning: Do customers compare your approach favorably to competitors, or mention that your interactions were uniquely valuable?

The Compound Effect of Great Experiences

When you consistently deliver exceptional experiences, the impact compounds over time. Customers remember how you made them feel long after they've forgotten the specific details of your presentations. These positive memories influence their future interactions with you and their recommendations to others.

Great experiences also create what I call "experience expectations." Once customers have experienced your elevated approach, they expect similar quality from all their vendor interactions. This raises the bar for your competitors and makes standard presentations feel inadequate by comparison.

Most importantly, experience-focused selling builds your reputation as someone who cares about customer success beyond the immediate sale. This reputation attracts better opportunities, warmer referrals, and more collaborative relationships.

Your Experience Audit

Before moving to the next chapter, conduct an audit of your current customer interactions:

Standard Presentations: What are your typical customer interaction formats? How do they engage customers beyond providing information?

Engagement Assessment: How actively do customers participate in your sales process? Are they observers or participants?

Memorability Factor: What do customers remember most about their interactions with you? What makes you different from your competitors?

Emotional Impact: How do your interactions make customers feel? What emotions are you generating beyond interest in your product?

Value Beyond Purchase: What value do you provide to customers regardless of whether they buy from you?

Experience Consistency: Do all your customer interactions reflect the same level of thoughtfulness and engagement?

Use this audit to identify opportunities for elevating your approach and creating more meaningful customer experiences.

Moving Forward with Impact

In our final chapter, we'll explore how to turn satisfied customers into raving fans who generate referrals and repeat business. But that transformation only happens when customers have experienced something truly exceptional in their interactions with you.

Experiences create the emotional foundation for long-term relationships. When customers have positive, memorable experiences throughout your sales process, they develop confidence not just in your product but in your partnership. They begin to envision what ongoing collaboration will feel like.

Start small. Pick one upcoming customer interaction and apply the Experience Filter. Ask yourself how you can make that interaction more engaging, more valuable, and more memorable. Focus on creating one exceptional experience rather than trying to transform your entire approach overnight.

Remember that in a world of information abundance, experiences are the ultimate differentiator. Your competitors can match your features, copy your pricing, and replicate your proposals. But they can't easily replicate the experiences you create and the feelings those experiences generate.

Every interaction is an opportunity to show customers not just what you sell, but what it's like to work with you. Make those opportunities count.

Watch the Chapter 6 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter6

Part III: Win

Victory isn't just a signed contract—it's alignment, loyalty, and legacy. Win is where your inner game matches your outer game, buyers become raving fans, and the way you sell elevates the way your market buys. This is success that sustains itself.

You'll learn to…

- **Practice the Alignment Mirror** so your mindset, words, and actions line up, confidence becomes consistent, and customers feel the difference.
- **Turn buyers into raving fans** with simple, repeatable promises and signature moments that earn referrals and repeat business.
- **Lead beyond the sale,** build a reputation that attracts opportunities while you stay anchored to values, trust, and long-term relationship building.

Chapter 7: The Alignment Mirror

Master your inner game with daily reflection

"Success is nothing more than a few simple disciplines, practiced every day."
— Jim Rohn

"Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching."
— C.S. Lewis

I was having coffee with Marcus, a rep who'd been struggling for months despite having all the right technical skills. His product knowledge was flawless, his territory was solid, and his work ethic was beyond question. But something was off. His confidence seemed shaky, his presentations lacked conviction, and he was starting to dread Monday mornings.

"I don't get it, Frenchy," he said, stirring his coffee with more force than necessary. "I know what I'm doing. I've been doing this for eight years. But lately, I feel like I'm pretending to be confident instead of actually being confident. Like I'm wearing a mask that doesn't quite fit."

Marcus paused, then added something that caught my attention: "The worst part is, I can see it in my customers' eyes. They sense something's off. They're not buying from me the way they used to."

That conversation reminded me of something Jack Canfield, co-creator of Chicken Soup for the Soul, once shared about a nightly practice that changed his entire relationship with success and self-worth. It's called the Mirror Exercise, and while it might sound unconventional for a sales book, it's one of the most powerful tools I've ever recommended to struggling reps.

The Problem with Emotional Quicksand

Most sales professionals focus exclusively on external activities: making calls, sending emails, preparing presentations, following up on proposals. These activities are important, but they're not enough if your internal foundation is shaky.

When you don't feel genuinely confident in yourself and your worth, it shows up in subtle ways that customers notice immediately. Your voice carries less authority. Your body language appears tentative. Your follow-up feels desperate rather than purposeful. You start selling from a place of need rather than strength.

This creates what I call Emotional Quicksand. The more you struggle with internal doubt, the deeper you sink. The deeper you sink, the more desperate your efforts become. The more desperate you appear, the more resistance you create with customers. The cycle feeds on itself until you're stuck in a pattern that no amount of technique or activity can break.

Marcus was trapped in this quicksand. His external actions were technically correct, but his internal state was undermining everything he did. Customers could sense his lack of conviction, even when he was saying all the right words.

The Mirror Never Lies

The solution isn't more training on closing techniques or objection handling. The solution is addressing the internal stories you tell yourself about your worth, your capabilities, and your right to succeed.

This is where the Alignment Mirror practice comes in. It's a simple but powerful daily ritual that helps you build genuine confidence, take ownership of your results, and maintain emotional alignment with your goals and values.

The practice is based on a fundamental truth: the relationship you have with yourself determines the quality of every other relationship in your life, including your relationships with customers. When you can look yourself in the eye and speak words of encouragement, acknowledgment, and love, you develop the kind of inner strength that translates into outer confidence.

Story: Serena's Breakthrough

Let me tell you about Serena, a regional sales manager who had been struggling with consistency. She would have great months followed by terrible months, with no clear pattern or explanation for the ups and downs. Her results looked like a roller coaster, and the stress was affecting her health and family relationships.

When I introduced Serena to the Alignment Mirror practice, she was skeptical. "This feels like therapy, not sales training," she said. "I need tactics, not affirmations."

But Serena was desperate enough to try anything. She committed to the practice for thirty days, even though it felt awkward and unnatural at first.

"The first week was brutal," she told me later. "Looking myself in the eye and trying to say positive things felt fake. I realized I had been talking to myself like an enemy for years. I was my own worst critic, and it was poisoning everything."

But Serena stuck with it. Every night, she stood in front of her bathroom mirror and worked through the Alignment Mirror process. She acknowledged her daily wins, owned her opportunities for improvement, and closed with words of encouragement and belief.

After about two weeks, something shifted. "I started to notice that I was treating myself with the same kindness I would show a good friend," Serena said. "And that change in how I talked to myself started changing how I talked to everyone else."

The results were dramatic. Serena's confidence became more stable and consistent. Her presentations carried more authority. Her follow-up felt more purposeful and less desperate. Most importantly, her results started to level out at the high end of her previous range.

"The Mirror Practice didn't just change my sales numbers," Serena explained. "It changed my entire relationship with myself and my work. I stopped being afraid of failure because I knew I could handle whatever happened. That fearlessness made me more attractive to customers."

Six months later, Serena had her best year ever. But more than that, she had developed the kind of inner stability that would serve her for the rest of her career.

The Alignment Mirror Framework

The Alignment Mirror practice addresses three critical gaps that most sales professionals never directly work on:

The Confidence Gap: Behind every shaky presentation, missed follow-up, or tentative close is a story of self-doubt. The Mirror practice builds emotional muscle by requiring you to speak words of encouragement to yourself daily, even when you don't feel like it.

The Ownership Gap: This practice forces you to look yourself in the eyes and take complete responsibility for your results. Not to beat yourself up, but to honestly assess what you did well and where you can improve, without excuses or blame.

The Alignment Gap: When you speak words of integrity to yourself daily, you become more sensitive to situations where you're not acting in alignment with your values. You begin to sell from conviction rather than convenience.

Here's how the Alignment Mirror practice works:

Step 1: Set the Stage

Every night before bed, stand in front of a mirror where you can make direct eye contact with yourself. This isn't about vanity or appearance. It's about creating visibility and accountability with the person who matters most: you.

Turn off distractions. No phone, no TV, no music. This is a conversation between you and yourself that deserves full attention.

Step 2: Acknowledge Your Wins

Look yourself in the eye and say, out loud: "Today I made progress by..." Then list specific actions you took that moved you closer to your goals. These don't have to be major victories. They can be small wins like:

- "I prepared thoroughly for my 2 PM call"
- "I followed up with three prospects who hadn't responded"
- "I asked for the meeting instead of just providing information"
- "I stayed positive when the customer raised price objections"
- "I listened more than I talked during my presentation"

Be specific. Be honest. Be kind. The goal is to reinforce positive behaviors and build momentum, not to create unrealistic expectations.

Step 3: Own Your Opportunities

Without shame or self-attack, acknowledge areas where you can improve: "Tomorrow, I'll be better at..." or "I missed the mark on..." or "I forgive myself for..."

This might sound like:

- "I missed an opportunity to ask a deeper question about their timeline"
- "I let my nerves get the better of me during the pricing discussion"
- "I forgot to follow up on the action items from yesterday's meeting"
- "I need to prepare more thoroughly for objections"

The key is taking ownership without judgment. You're not confessing sins. You're identifying opportunities for growth with the same objectivity you'd use to review game film.

Step 4: Close with Love and Belief

Finish strong with words of encouragement and belief: "I'm proud of the way I keep showing up" or "I believe in myself" or "I'm learning, I'm growing, and I'm becoming unstoppable."

This isn't about creating false confidence or positive thinking. It's about speaking truth to yourself about your commitment, your growth, and your potential. You are showing up. You are learning. You are growing. Those facts deserve acknowledgment.

The 30-Day FDST Alignment Challenge

To help you implement this practice systematically, I've created the 30-Day FDST Alignment Challenge. This is a structured approach to building the Alignment Mirror habit and tracking the impact on your confidence and results.

Week 1: Foundation Building Focus on establishing the basic routine. Don't worry about saying the perfect words or feeling completely comfortable. Just show up to the mirror every night and work through the four steps.

Week 2: Depth Development Start getting more specific with your acknowledgments and opportunities. Instead of general statements, focus on detailed observations about your daily actions and their outcomes.

Week 3: Pattern Recognition Begin noticing patterns in your self-talk and behavior. Are there recurring themes in your opportunities for improvement? Are certain types of wins becoming more frequent?

Week 4: Integration and Planning Use your insights from the previous three weeks to set specific goals and strategies for continued growth. Plan how you'll maintain the practice beyond the initial 30 days.

The Science Behind the Practice

This might feel like touchy-feely nonsense, but there's solid research behind why the Alignment Mirror practice works:

Neuroplasticity: Your brain physically changes based on repeated thoughts and actions. When you consistently speak words of encouragement to yourself, you literally rewire your neural pathways to support confidence and resilience.

Self-Efficacy: Psychologist Albert Bandura's research shows that belief in your ability to achieve goals is the strongest predictor of actual achievement. The Mirror practice builds self-efficacy through daily reinforcement of your capabilities and growth.

Emotional Regulation: Speaking kindly to yourself improves your ability to manage stress, handle rejection, and maintain emotional stability during challenging situations.

Identity Reinforcement: The words you speak to yourself shape your identity. When you consistently acknowledge your commitment and progress, you strengthen your identity as someone who shows up, learns, and grows.

Overcoming the Awkwardness

Let's be honest: this practice feels weird at first. You might feel silly talking to yourself in the mirror. You might struggle to find positive things to say. You might resist the vulnerability required to acknowledge both wins and opportunities.

That awkwardness is normal and temporary. Like any new skill, the Alignment Mirror practice becomes more natural and comfortable with repetition. The key is commitment to the process even when it doesn't feel natural.

Marcus, the rep I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, described his initial resistance: "The first few nights, I felt like I was talking to a stranger. I realized I hadn't looked myself in the eye and spoken kindly to myself in years. No wonder my confidence was shaky."

But Marcus persisted, and the breakthrough came faster than he expected. "After about ten days, I noticed I was walking into customer meetings differently. I felt more grounded, more centered. I wasn't trying to prove myself to them anymore. I was just being myself, and that authenticity made all the difference."

Integration with Your Sales Process

The Alignment Mirror practice isn't separate from your sales activities. It's the foundation that makes everything else more effective. When you have a strong, positive relationship with yourself, every aspect of your sales process improves:

Prospecting: You approach new contacts with confidence rather than desperation. You're networking from strength rather than need.

Presentations: You speak with authority because you believe in your own competence. Your conviction becomes contagious.

Objection Handling: You respond to challenges without taking them personally. You can separate customer concerns from personal worth.

Closing: You ask for commitments from a place of service rather than desperation. You're not afraid of "no" because you know it's not about you.

Follow-up: You stay in touch because you genuinely care about customer success, not because you're afraid of losing the deal.

The Compound Effect

Like most powerful practices, the Alignment Mirror exercise creates compound benefits over time. The confidence and self-awareness you build in month one becomes the foundation for even greater growth in month two. The patterns you identify and address in week one prevent larger problems from developing in week four.

Serena, the regional sales manager, experienced this compound effect firsthand: "The Mirror practice didn't just fix my inconsistency problem. It gave me a tool for continuous improvement that I'll use for the rest of my career. Now when I notice my confidence slipping or my results declining, I know exactly what to do about it."

Your Mirror, Your Future

The relationship you have with yourself sets the ceiling for every other relationship in your life. When you can look yourself in the eye with genuine appreciation, acknowledgment, and love, you develop the kind of inner strength that's magnetic to customers and colleagues alike.

The Alignment Mirror practice isn't just about improving your sales results, though it will do that. It's about developing the kind of character and confidence that makes you proud of how you show up in the world.

Every night, you have a choice. You can go to bed replaying your mistakes, worrying about tomorrow's challenges, or beating yourself up for not being perfect. Or you can stand in front of your mirror, acknowledge your progress, take ownership of your opportunities, and speak words of encouragement to the person who deserves it most: you.

Your customers are waiting for someone who believes in themselves enough to serve them with confidence and authenticity. Your territory needs a representative who shows up from strength rather than desperation. Your industry needs professionals who demonstrate that success and integrity can coexist.

That person can be you. In fact, that person already is you. You just need to remind yourself of it every single night.

Moving Forward with Strength

In our next chapter, we'll explore how to turn satisfied customers into raving fans who generate referrals and repeat business. But that transformation only happens when you're operating from a place of genuine confidence and self-worth.

The Alignment Mirror practice gives you the internal foundation to build external success that's sustainable and satisfying. When you have a strong relationship with yourself, every other relationship becomes easier and more rewarding.

Start tonight. Stand in front of your mirror, look yourself in the eye, and begin the practice that will change not just your sales results but your entire approach to life and work.

Your reflection is waiting for words of kindness, acknowledgment, and belief. Don't keep it waiting any longer.

Watch the Chapter 7 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter7

Chapter 8: Turn Buyers into Raving Fans

Create long-term loyalty and post-sale impact

"Obstacles can't stop you. Problems can't stop you. Most of all, other people can't stop you. Only you can stop you."
— Jeffrey Gitomer

"Your habits will determine your future."
— Jack Canfield

The email arrived on a Monday morning, three years after we had completed a major infrastructure project for a mid-sized city. I almost deleted it, thinking it was spam, because the subject line read: "You changed my career."

But something made me open it. The message was from the city engineer who had been my primary contact during the original sale. He wrote:

"Frenchy, I wanted you to know that the way you handled our project has influenced how I approach every vendor relationship now. You didn't just sell us equipment and disappear. You stayed engaged, helped us through implementation challenges, and continued checking on our success long after your commission was paid. That level of partnership changed my expectations for what vendor relationships should look like. I've used your approach as the standard for evaluating every supplier since then. Thank you for showing me what exceptional service looks like."

Attached to the email was a photo from a recent industry conference where he had given a presentation about successful vendor partnerships. In his presentation slides, he had included a quote from me and referenced our project as an example of how suppliers and customers can work together for mutual success.

That email reminded me of something I had learned early in my career but sometimes forgot in the rush to close new deals: your real success isn't measured by how many customers you convert. It's measured by how many customers become advocates for your approach, your company, and your character.

The difference between satisfied customers and raving fans is the difference between transactional relationships and transformational partnerships. Satisfied customers will buy from you again if they need what you sell. Raving fans will recommend you to others, defend your pricing when competitors attack, and choose to work with you even when other options might be more convenient.

The Satisfaction Trap

Most salespeople stop working once the contract is signed. They move on to the next prospect, the next quarter's quota, the next commission opportunity. This approach treats customers like one-time transactions rather than long-term assets.

The problem with this transactional mindset is that it leaves enormous value on the table. Acquiring new customers costs significantly more than retaining existing ones. Referrals from satisfied customers convert at much higher rates than cold prospects. Repeat business typically has shorter sales cycles and higher profit margins.

But beyond the financial benefits, there's something more important at stake: your reputation and legacy in your industry. When you consistently turn customers into advocates, you build a reputation that attracts better opportunities and makes every aspect of your work easier.

The companies and salespeople who understand this create systematic approaches to customer success that extend far beyond the initial sale. They recognize that their real work begins when the contract is signed, not when it's delivered.

From Closing to Community Building

Traditional sales thinking focuses on closing deals. Get the signature, celebrate the win, move on to the next opportunity. This approach treats the sale as the end goal rather than the beginning of a relationship.

Fan-building thinking is different. It views the sale as the start of a partnership that has the potential to generate ongoing value for both parties. It focuses on creating experiences that make customers feel valued, supported, and successful long after the initial transaction.

This shift from closing to community building requires a fundamental change in how you think about your role. Instead of being someone who sells products, you become someone who creates ongoing value. Instead of being measured solely by quarterly sales numbers, you're measured by the long-term success and satisfaction of your customer base.

Community building means:

- Staying connected with customers beyond the immediate business need
- Providing ongoing value that extends beyond your product or service
- Creating opportunities for customers to connect with each other
- Celebrating customer successes and acknowledging their achievements
- Being available for guidance and support when challenges arise
- Treating every interaction as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship

Story: The Referral Machine

Let me tell you about how one customer became a referral machine that generated more business than any marketing campaign we've ever seen.

Five years ago, we worked with a small municipality on their first major infrastructure upgrade in over a decade. The project was complex, the budget was tight, and the timeline was aggressive. The city manager was under intense pressure from residents and council members to get it right.

From the beginning, we made a commitment that went beyond just delivering equipment. We promised to be a partner throughout the entire process and to ensure their success regardless of what challenges emerged.

During the implementation phase, we encountered several unexpected complications together. Underground utilities weren't where the original blueprints indicated. Weather delays pushed us behind schedule. A key piece of equipment arrived with a manufacturing defect that required emergency replacement.

Each time a problem arose, our response was the same: own the issue, communicate transparently about solutions, and go above and beyond to minimize the impact on their operations. When the defective equipment threatened to delay their project opening, we personally drove a replacement unit from our warehouse six hours away to keep them on schedule.

When weather delays created budget pressure, we worked with our finance team to restructure payment terms that eased their cash flow concerns. When the utility conflicts required design changes, we brought in our engineering team at no charge to develop solutions together.

But the real relationship-building happened in the months after the project was completed. We continued checking in regularly, not to sell additional products but to ensure their ongoing success. We sent them industry updates that might impact their operations. We connected them with other customers who had faced similar challenges. We invited them to training sessions and industry events.

Six months after completion, the city manager called us with a problem that had nothing to do with our equipment. They were struggling with a budget analysis for a different project and weren't sure how to evaluate competing proposals. We spent two hours helping them develop evaluation criteria and understand the long-term implications of different options.

"You didn't have to do this," he told us. "This isn't even your project."

"It is our project," we replied. "Your success is our success. We're partners, not just vendor and customer."

That conversation changed everything. Over the next three years, that city manager became our most effective referral source. He recommended us to neighboring municipalities, spoke at industry conferences about our partnership, and personally introduced us to other city managers who were facing similar challenges.

But the referrals weren't just about the quality of our equipment. They were about the experience of working with a team that cared about their long-term success. When he introduced us to potential customers, he would say things like, "This team doesn't just sell you equipment and disappear. They become your partners and make sure you succeed."

Those referrals converted at an incredible rate because they came with built-in trust and credibility. When a respected peer recommends a team as genuine partners rather than just another vendor, the sales process becomes collaborative rather than competitive.

In three years, that one customer relationship generated twelve referrals, eight of which became significant projects. More importantly, it established our reputation in the region as a team that delivers exceptional post-sale service and support.

Story: The Follow-Up That Felt Like Family

Sometimes the most powerful fan-building moments come from the smallest gestures that show you remember your customers as human beings, not just account numbers.

I had worked with a county maintenance director on a fleet replacement project that took over a year to complete. Throughout that process, I learned about his life beyond work. He was a devoted grandfather who constantly shared stories about his grandchildren's achievements. His office was filled with their artwork, school photos, and sports trophies.

During one of our meetings, he mentioned that his granddaughter was competing in the state science fair with a project about water treatment systems. She was nervous about the competition and had been working on her presentation for months.

A week after our project was completed, I sent a care package to his granddaughter. It included a simplified water treatment kit that demonstrated the basic principles she was presenting, a letter of encouragement from our company's head engineer, and a small trophy that read "Future Scientist Award."

The grandfather called me in tears. "You remembered," he said. "In the middle of everything else you have going on, you remembered what mattered to my family."

But the story gets better. His granddaughter won third place in the state competition. She later wrote me a thank-you note that included a photo of her holding both trophies, one from the competition and one from us.

Two years later, when that grandfather retired, he personally recommended me to his replacement. But more than that, he invited me to his retirement party and introduced me to his entire extended family as "the partner who helped make our community better."

That simple gesture, which cost less than $50 and took thirty minutes to arrange, created a relationship that went far beyond business. It showed that I valued him as a complete person and cared about the things that mattered to him.

The return on investment was immeasurable. Not just in future business opportunities, but in the reputation it built for genuine care and attention to the human side of business relationships.

The Fan Builder System

Creating raving fans doesn't happen accidentally. It requires a systematic approach that ensures every customer receives consistent, exceptional post-sale attention. I call this the Fan Builder System, and it has four key components:

Component 1: Success Tracking

The first step in building fans is ensuring your customers actually succeed with your solution. This means establishing clear success metrics, monitoring progress toward those metrics, and proactively addressing any obstacles that emerge.

Success tracking involves:

- Defining specific, measurable outcomes for each customer
- Creating regular follow up schedules to monitor progress
- Identifying early warning signs of potential problems
- Developing intervention strategies for at-risk situations
- Celebrating achievements and milestones along the way

The key is shifting from order fulfillment thinking to outcome achievement thinking. Your job isn't complete when you deliver your product. It's complete when your customer achieves the results they were seeking.

Component 2: Value Addition

Raving fans are created when customers receive ongoing value that extends beyond their original purchase. This means consistently providing resources, insights, and support that help them improve their operations and achieve their goals.

Value addition might include:

- Industry updates and trend analysis relevant to their business
- Best practice sharing from other customers in similar situations
- Training opportunities for their staff

- Introductions to other service providers who can help with adjacent needs
- Tools and resources that improve their capabilities
- Strategic guidance for future planning and decision-making

The goal is to become an ongoing source of value rather than just a one-time solution provider.

Component 3: Recognition and Celebration

People want to feel appreciated and acknowledged for their achievements. When customers succeed with your solution, celebrating those successes strengthens your relationship and creates positive associations with your partnership.

Recognition might involve:

- Public acknowledgment of customer achievements
- Case study development that showcases their success
- Award nominations for their innovative use of your solution
- Speaking opportunities at industry events
- Media coverage of their accomplishments
- Internal celebrations that honor their partnership

The key is making customers feel proud of their association with you and confident about sharing their success stories with others.

Component 4: Community Building

The most powerful fan-building strategy is creating opportunities for your customers to connect with each other. This builds a community around your brand and creates peer-to-peer advocacy that's more credible than any marketing message you could develop.

Community building activities might include:

- User group meetings and conferences
- Online forums and discussion groups
- Peer mentoring programs
- Joint training sessions
- Industry networking events
- Collaborative problem-solving initiatives

When customers become advocates for each other, they naturally become advocates for you as the catalyst who brought them together.

The Three Phases of Fan Development

Converting customers into raving fans typically happens in three distinct phases, each requiring different strategies and attention:

Phase 1: Implementation Success (0-6 months)

The first phase focuses on ensuring smooth implementation and early success with your solution. This is the most critical period because first impressions are lasting, and early problems can undermine the entire relationship.

Key activities during this phase:

- Frequent communication during implementation

- Proactive problem-solving and obstacle removal
- Training and support for customer staff
- Regular follow ups to assess satisfaction and address concerns
- Quick response to any issues or questions that arise
- Celebration of early wins and progress milestones

The goal is to exceed expectations during the honeymoon period and establish a foundation of trust and confidence.

Phase 2: Value Realization (6-18 months)

The second phase focuses on helping customers achieve the full value potential of your solution. This is where the relationship moves from vendor-customer to trusted partner.

Key activities during this phase:

- Performance monitoring and optimization
- Additional training and capability development
- Introduction of advanced features or applications
- Strategic planning for future needs and expansion
- Networking and peer connection opportunities
- Recognition of achievements and success stories

The goal is to demonstrate ongoing value and position yourself as an indispensable partner in their success.

Phase 3: Advocacy Development (18+ months)

The third phase focuses on converting satisfied customers into active advocates who promote your solution to others. This is where the fan development process pays dividends through referrals and reputation building.

Key activities during this phase:

- Reference and testimonial development
- Speaking and presentation opportunities
- Case study creation and promotion
- Peer mentoring and knowledge sharing
- Industry leadership recognition
- Long-term strategic partnership planning

The goal is to create customers who are so satisfied with their experience that they actively promote you to others.

The Economics of Fan Building

Investing in fan building activities requires time and resources that could be spent on acquiring new customers. This leads some salespeople to question whether the investment is worthwhile. The economics are actually quite compelling:

Retention Value: Retaining an existing customer costs significantly less than acquiring a new one. Industry studies suggest that acquisition costs can be 5-25 times higher than retention costs.

Expansion Revenue: Satisfied customers are more likely to purchase additional products or services. They trust your recommendations and are willing to invest in expanded solutions.

Referral Conversion: Referrals from raving fans convert at much higher rates than cold prospects. They come pre-sold on your credibility and approach.

Pricing Premium: Customers who view you as a trusted partner are less sensitive to pricing and more willing to pay premium rates for your solutions.

Sales Efficiency: Existing relationships require less time and effort to maintain than new relationships require to develop.

Reputation Building: A strong base of advocates creates market reputation that attracts better opportunities and reduces marketing costs.

The return on investment for fan building activities is often difficult to measure precisely, but the long-term impact on business growth and profitability is substantial.

Digital Fan Building

In our connected world, fan building extends beyond personal relationships to digital communities and online interactions. Social media, online reviews, and digital networking create new opportunities for customer advocacy and relationship building.

Digital fan building strategies include:

- Social media engagement and content sharing
- Online review management and response
- Digital community creation and management
- Content marketing that provides ongoing value
- Email nurturing campaigns with relevant insights
- Video testimonials and case study development
- Webinar and virtual event hosting
- Online training and resource libraries

The key is maintaining the same level of personal attention and genuine care in digital interactions that you provide in face-to-face relationships.

Measuring Fan Building Success

How do you know if your fan building efforts are working? Look for these quantifiable indicators:

Referral Metrics: Number of referrals received, conversion rate of referred prospects, and revenue generated from referral business.

Retention Rates: Percentage of customers who remain active, frequency of repeat purchases, and length of customer relationships.

Expansion Revenue: Additional revenue generated from existing customers through upselling, cross-selling, or expanded engagements.

Advocacy Behaviors: Number of customer testimonials, case study participations, reference calls, and speaking engagements.

Net Promoter Score: Customer willingness to recommend you to others, measured through surveys and feedback.

Engagement Levels: Frequency and quality of customer communications, event attendance, and community participation.

Your Fan Building Action Plan

Before we move to the conclusion, develop your personal fan building action plan:

1. **Customer Audit**: List your current customers and assess their potential for becoming advocates
2. **Success Definition**: Define what success looks like for each customer relationship
3. **Value Inventory**: Identify ways you can provide ongoing value beyond your core offering
4. **Communication Plan**: Develop regular follow up schedules and touchpoint strategies
5. **Recognition Strategy**: Plan how you'll celebrate customer successes and achievements
6. **Community Vision**: Consider how you might create connections between your customers
7. **Measurement System**: Establish metrics for tracking fan building effectiveness

Remember that fan building is a long-term strategy that requires patience and consistency. The benefits compound over time as your reputation grows and your network of advocates expands.

The Ripple Effect of Raving Fans

When you consistently turn customers into raving fans, the impact extends far beyond individual relationships. You create ripple effects that influence your entire market presence:

Market Reputation: Your name becomes associated with exceptional service and customer success, making future sales easier.

Competitive Advantage: Prospects choose you based on recommendations from trusted peers, reducing the importance of price comparisons.

Talent Attraction: Other professionals want to work with companies known for customer advocacy and relationship excellence.

Business Growth: Referral-driven growth is more sustainable and profitable than acquisition-driven growth.

Personal Fulfillment: Working with customers who appreciate and advocate for you is more satisfying than constantly chasing new prospects.

The investment you make in turning customers into raving fans pays dividends that compound over time, creating a virtuous cycle of success that becomes increasingly powerful.

Your Legacy in Action

As we conclude this chapter and prepare to wrap up our journey through the Magic Meets Method Framework, consider this: every customer interaction is an opportunity to build your legacy. When you consistently exceed expectations, provide ongoing value, and treat customers as partners rather than transactions, you create something that outlasts any individual sale.

The city engineer who wrote to thank me for changing his career expectations wasn't just a satisfied customer. He became an advocate who influenced how vendor relationships work in his entire industry. That's the power of fan building: it creates positive change that extends far beyond your immediate business relationships.

Your customers are waiting for someone who will care about their success beyond the initial transaction. They're hoping for a partner who will support their goals, celebrate their achievements, and stand by them when challenges arise.

That partner can be you. In fact, with the foundation you've built through the previous chapters, that partner is you. You have the spark, the belief, the impact focus, the magic, the stories, and the experience design skills to create relationships that transform customers into advocates.

Now it's time to put it all together and step into your role as a leader in your industry and community.

Moving Forward with Raving Fans

Turning buyers into raving fans starts with the mindset that every deal is the beginning, not the end. As you move forward, focus on creating experiences that feel intentional, personal, and repeatable. Start by defining the promise you want every customer to feel when they work with you—then align your actions so that promise shows up in every interaction. Don’t just deliver the product or service; deliver peace of mind, clarity, and delight.

Keep in mind, consistency builds trust, but small surprises create loyalty. Identify a few “signature moments” you can weave into your customer journey—simple touchpoints that make people feel remembered, valued, and celebrated. When challenges arise, close the loop quickly and transparently. Customers don’t expect perfection, but they do expect honesty and responsiveness.

Finally, make it easy for your biggest fans to share their experience. A genuine ask for referrals, paired with the story of how you’ve helped others win, turns loyalty into momentum. When you commit to showing up this way, you don’t just earn customers—you build a community of champions who carry your reputation further than you could alone.

Watch the Chapter 8 Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-chapter8

Conclusion: Lead the Way

"If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they have planned for you? Not much."
— Jim Rohn

"Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge."
— Simon Sinek

When I started writing this book, I thought I was creating a guide to help experienced sales professionals improve their results and rediscover their passion for the work. But as I reflected on the stories I've shared and the framework I've developed, I realized this book is about something much bigger than individual sales success.

This book is about leadership. Not the kind of leadership that comes with a title or a corner office, but the kind that comes from choosing to do things the right way even when it's harder. The kind that comes from caring more about your customers' success than your own commission checks. The kind that comes from treating every interaction as an opportunity to elevate the profession and change how business gets done.

You've spent time learning about finding your spark, building your belief foundation, designing for impact, injecting magic into buyer journeys, using authentic stories, delivering experiences, and turning customers into raving fans. These aren't just sales techniques. They're principles for transforming how you show up in the world and how others experience working with you.

You've Done the Work

Let's acknowledge what you've accomplished by working through this framework. You've reconnected with what originally drew you to this profession. You've clarified your beliefs about yourself, your offering, and your customers. You've shifted from quota-chasing to problem-solving. You've learned to create moments of wonder and humanity in business interactions. You've discovered the power of authentic storytelling. You've designed experiences that engage emotions as well as logic. You've committed to building long-term relationships that extend far beyond individual transactions.

That's significant work. Most sales professionals never take the time to examine their approach this thoroughly or commit to this level of intentional improvement. You've demonstrated the kind of personal responsibility and growth mindset that separates true professionals from people who are just going through the motions.

More importantly, you've equipped yourself with tools that work regardless of market conditions, competitive pressures, or industry changes. The Magic Meets Method Framework isn't dependent on economic cycles or technological innovations. It's built on timeless principles of human connection, authentic relationship building, and genuine value creation.

Your New Baseline

Here's what's changed for you. Sales is no longer something you do to people. It's something you do with people and for people. You're not trying to convince anyone to buy something they don't need. You're helping them make decisions that improve their situations and achieve their goals.

You're no longer guessing about what approach to take in different situations. You have a systematic framework that guides your interactions from initial contact through long-term relationship building. You know how to find your energy when you're feeling burned out. You know how to build confidence when you're facing difficult challenges. You know how to create value even in situations where you don't make the sale.

This is your new baseline. Not the techniques you use occasionally when you remember them, but the foundation from which you operate every day. When you consistently apply these principles, they become part of who you are rather than something you do.

The Ripple Effect Begins

When you show up differently, others notice. Customers experience something they rarely encounter in business interactions: genuine care, authentic connection, and exceptional service. They start to believe that maybe not all salespeople are the same. They begin to expect more from other vendors they work with.

Colleagues observe your approach and results. They see that it's possible to hit numbers while maintaining integrity. They witness customers choosing you not because you had the lowest price but because you provided the most value. They watch as your relationships deepen and your reputation grows.

Competitors are forced to respond to the standard you set. When customers start asking why other vendors don't provide the same level of attention and service you do, it raises the bar for everyone in your industry. You become a catalyst for positive change that extends far beyond your individual success.

Your influence ripples outward through every person you touch. The customer who experiences your authentic approach carries that expectation into other business relationships. The colleague who learns from your example applies those principles in their own interactions. The industry that witnesses your success begins to shift toward more relationship-centered practices.

This is how professions evolve and improve. Not through mandates or regulations, but through individuals who choose to operate at a higher level and inspire others to do the same.

Leading by Example

Leadership in sales isn't about managing other salespeople or having authority over budgets and territories. It's about demonstrating what's possible when someone commits to excellence, authenticity, and genuine service. It's about proving that you can succeed financially while maintaining your values and treating people with respect.

Every time you choose preparation over winging it, you're leading. Every time you focus on customer impact instead of just your commission, you're leading. Every time you create a magical moment that makes someone feel valued, you're leading. Every time you tell an authentic story that builds trust instead of using a manipulative technique, you're leading.

Leadership is choosing the harder right over the easier wrong. It's investing time in relationship building when you could be making more calls. It's providing value to customers who might not buy from you. It's following up with genuine care instead of just checking on deal status.

This kind of leadership doesn't require permission or appointment. It just requires choice. The choice to be the kind of professional you would want to work with. The choice to represent your industry the way you think it should be represented. The choice to leave every interaction better than you found it.

Your Professional Legacy

Think about the sales professionals who have influenced your career. Chances are, you remember them not because of their closing techniques or presentation skills, but because of how they made you feel. Maybe they treated you with respect when you were early in your career. Maybe they shared wisdom that helped you navigate a difficult situation. Maybe they demonstrated a level of integrity that inspired you to raise your own standards.

You now have the opportunity to be that kind of influence for others. Every customer interaction is a chance to show what exceptional service looks like. Every colleague conversation is an opportunity to share insights that help someone else improve. Every industry event is a platform for demonstrating the principles that make this profession rewarding and meaningful.

Your legacy isn't just the revenue you generate or the quotas you exceed. It's the standard you set for how business relationships should work. It's the example you provide of what's possible when someone commits to genuine partnership with their customers. It's the positive change you create in an industry that desperately needs more people who care about doing things right.

The Movement You're Joining

You're not alone in this commitment to excellence. Around the world, sales professionals are recognizing that the old ways of doing business aren't sustainable or satisfying. They're choosing authenticity over manipulation, relationship building over transaction processing, long-term thinking over short-term gains.

This movement doesn't have a formal organization or official membership. It's simply a collection of individuals who have decided that their work should be a source of pride rather than shame, that their success should be built on value creation rather than pressure tactics, and that their relationships should be genuine rather than artificial.

By applying the principles in this book, you're joining this movement. You're adding your voice to a growing chorus of professionals who believe that sales can be both financially rewarding and personally fulfilling. You're proving that it's possible to win while maintaining your integrity and treating people with respect.

This movement gains strength with every person who chooses to operate differently. Your example gives others permission to raise their own standards. Your success demonstrates that these principles work in the real world. Your influence helps tip the industry toward a more positive future.

The Path Forward

Your journey with the Magic Meets Method Framework is just beginning. Like any meaningful skill development, mastery comes through consistent application over time. You'll have days when everything clicks and customers respond with enthusiasm and trust. You'll also have days when you fall back into old patterns or struggle to maintain your energy and focus.

That's normal and expected. Growth isn't linear, and change isn't instant. The key is treating each interaction as an opportunity to practice these principles and each challenge as a chance to strengthen your foundation.

Keep this book as a reference guide. Return to specific chapters when you need refreshers on particular aspects of the framework. Use the tools and worksheets regularly to maintain your focus and measure your progress. Most importantly, continue collecting stories and experiences that reinforce why this approach matters.

Consider connecting with other professionals who share your commitment to excellence. Join industry associations, attend conferences, and engage in discussions about best practices and professional development. Share your experiences and learn from others who are on similar journeys.

Your Next Actions

Before you close this book and return to your daily work, commit to specific actions that will help you implement what you've learned:

This Week: Choose one element of the framework to focus on immediately. Maybe it's completing your Spark Inventory or creating your first Impact Map. Take concrete action while the concepts are fresh in your mind.

This Month: Implement systematic changes to your sales process that reflect the principles you've learned. This might mean revising your presentation approach, developing new follow-up procedures, or creating magical touchpoints for customer interactions.

This Quarter: Measure the impact of your new approach. Track not just sales metrics but relationship quality indicators like customer engagement, referral generation, and repeat business development.

This Year: Become a resource for others who want to improve their professional approach. Share insights at team meetings, mentor newer colleagues, or speak at industry events about the importance of authentic, relationship-centered selling.

Your Customers Are Waiting

Right now, there are customers in your territory who are frustrated with their current vendors. They're tired of being treated like order numbers instead of people. They're looking for someone who will listen to their challenges, understand their goals, and provide solutions that genuinely improve their situations.

These customers are hoping that the next salesperson they meet will be different. They want to work with someone who cares about their success, who will be there when problems arise, and who will treat them as partners rather than targets.

That person is you. You have the framework, the tools, and the mindset to be exactly what these customers are seeking. You know how to create experiences that build trust, tell stories that inspire confidence, and develop relationships that generate long-term value for everyone involved.

Your territory needs a representative who operates with integrity and excellence. Your industry needs advocates who demonstrate what's possible when someone commits to genuine service. Your profession needs leaders who show that sales can be both successful and satisfying.

The Time Is Now

There's never been a better time to embrace this approach. In an age of digital communication and automated interactions, human connection is more valuable than ever. In a marketplace full of commoditized products and price-focused competition, relationship-based differentiation is increasingly powerful.

Customers are hungry for authentic interactions with people who care about their success. Colleagues are looking for examples of how to succeed while maintaining their values. Industries are searching for professionals who can elevate standards and improve reputations.

You have the opportunity to be part of the solution. To show that sales professionals can be trusted advisors rather than necessary evils. To prove that business success and personal integrity aren't mutually exclusive. To demonstrate that caring about customers and achieving financial goals can support rather than undermine each other.

The question isn't whether these principles work. The question is whether you'll commit to applying them consistently and authentically. Whether you'll choose the harder path that leads to sustainable success and personal fulfillment. Whether you'll accept the responsibility that comes with having the tools to make a positive difference.

Your Legacy Starts Today

Years from now, when customers think about the best vendor relationships they've ever had, they should think of you. When colleagues reflect on the professionals who influenced their careers, your name should come to mind. When industry leaders discuss the people who helped elevate standards and improve practices, you should be part of that conversation.

This legacy doesn't require decades to build. It starts with your next customer interaction. It grows with every relationship you approach with genuine care and authentic service. It strengthens with every moment you choose excellence over expedience, relationship building over transaction processing, long-term thinking over short-term gains.

You're no longer someone who wings it and hopes for the best. You're someone who prepares purposefully and shows up powerfully. You're no longer someone who sells products. You're someone who creates transformations. You're no longer just another vendor in a crowded marketplace. You're a trusted partner who makes your customers' lives and businesses better.

The Magic Meets Method Framework has given you everything you need to succeed at the highest level while maintaining your integrity and finding deep satisfaction in your work. The spark is lit. The foundation is built. The impact is clear. The magic is ready. The stories are powerful. The experiences are memorable. The fans are waiting to be created.

Now it's time to lead the way.

Welcome to the movement. The sales profession needs you, your customers are waiting for you, and your best work is ahead of you.

Go make it happen.

Watch the Conclusion Bonus Video

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to watch a special video clip from Todd. In this short video, Todd expands on the lesson from this chapter and shares insights to help you put it into practice.

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com/bonusvideo-conclusion

Acknowledgments

First, to you, the reader. You are the reason this book exists. To every sales professional, leader, and lifelong learner who refuses to settle for “good enough,” you inspired me to put these principles into words. Your curiosity, resilience, and relentless drive fuel my own commitment to keep learning and sharing.

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To all of you, thank you. You shaped not only this book, but also the person I have become.

About the Author

Todd "Frenchy" French isn't just another sales trainer, he's a battle-tested sales veteran who's spent 28 years in the trenches of complex, long-cycle municipal and B2B sales. From Southeast Regional Sales Manager at Vac-Con to Territory Sales Manager of North America at Fayat Environmental Solutions, Frenchy built a career rooted in belief, integrity, and preparation.

He's the founder of FDST LLC-Frenchy's Dynamic Success Training-where he helps outside sales professionals stop winging it and start winning it through coaching, keynotes, and transformational training. Certified in Jeffrey Gitomer Sales Training and Jack Canfield's Success Principles Methodology, Frenchy blends practical sales strategy with mindset mastery, emotional intelligence, and a dash of fun.

With over eight years of sobriety, his personal journey adds depth, honesty, and heart to his work, proving that real transformation starts from within. Frenchy's approach isn't about gimmicks or hype. It's about helping professionals reconnect with purpose, believe deeply in what they sell, and show up prepared to win.

He lives in Fleming Island, Florida, with his wife Kris and their three sons. Whether on stage or in the field, Frenchy is on a mission to turn sales into a vehicle for personal growth, lasting impact, and joy.

Connect with Frenchy here: https://fdstpreparedtowin.com

Ready for More?

A call to action for readers who want to continue their transformation:

- **Keynote Speaking**: Bring *Prepared to Win* to your next sales meeting, conference, or company retreat.
- **Workshops & Training**: Experience Frenchy's live sessions on preparation, belief, and aligned selling.
- **Coaching**: 1:1 or group coaching for territory pros ready to level up.
- **Online Courses**: Self-paced learning built around the Magic Meets Method Framework™.

To get started, visit:

https://fdstpreparedtowin.com

Or email us at:

frenchydogg@icloud.com

Afterword

A MESSAGE FROM THE HINDSIGHT MENTOR

If you're reading this, chances are you're someone who *knows* you have more to say. More to share. More impact to make. You've lived enough life to carry wisdom others need. And you may even feel that now is the time to put your story, your insights, and your philosophy into a book that elevates your authority and expands your opportunities.

That is where I come in.

My name is **Earl Waud**, also known as **The Hindsight Mentor**. I help entrepreneurs, sales leaders, and business owners become published authors without the overwhelm, confusion, or endless drafting cycles that stop most people before they even start. The Author Accelerator Program is a step-by-step, guided experience where you will clarify your message, structure your book, and build a manuscript that reflects your voice and amplifies your credibility.

This is not a generic "write your book someday" course. It is a *professional, personalized publishing path,* designed to help you:

- Define the core message and audience of your book with precision.
- Turn your ideas, experiences, and frameworks into clear, compelling chapters.

- Develop a manuscript that positions you as a trusted expert in your field.
- Publish and launch your book in a way that strengthens your brand and creates opportunity.

If you feel that *now* is the time to claim your voice, your story, and your legacy, I invite you to learn more and apply.

Visit: https://www.thehindsightmentor.com/author-accelerator-program
(*Scan the QR code on this page for direct access.*)

Your story has power. Let’s bring it forward.

PREPARED TO WIN

Stop winging it. Start owning it.

If you've ever felt stuck in the grind of territory sales, chasing quotas, questioning your approach, or faking confidence you no longer feel, this book is your wake-up call.

Veteran sales pro Todd "Frenchy" French doesn't teach hype or hustle. He teaches alignment. Built on nearly three decades in municipal sales and hard-earned lessons from the field (and from life), Prepared to Win delivers a powerful blend of real-world strategy, personal transformation, and emotional clarity.

Inside, you'll discover how to:

- **Reignite your spark and reconnect with your original purpose**
- **Sell with conviction, not commission breath**
- **Build systems rooted in preparation, not pressure**
- **Use stories to sell and magic to create connection**
- **Turn satisfied customers into raving, referring fans**

This isn't another sales manual. It's a mindset shift. A belief system. A practical framework for turning your territory into a loyal fan base, starting with you.

Todd "Frenchy" French is a 28-year sales veteran and founder of FDST LLC. A master of long-cycle B2B selling and certified coach, he blends preparation, belief, and fun to help territory pros stop winging it and start winning it, with purpose, integrity, and a little bit of magic.

"People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe." —Simon Sinek