



The Raphael Report

**Observations on marketing,
advertising, sales and
promotions
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Selling Rules!

What makes people buy?

Through the years we've found that certain phrases, techniques and words make the difference between "I'm just looking" and "I'll take this."

We learned these rules from other salespeople and situations that presented themselves and found what-we-say often makes the difference in what-they-buy.

We put these together in our latest book, "Selling Rules!"

We listed 52 rules for making sales (one for every week of the year) and put each one on a page by itself with an accompanying cartoon.

One reader bought the book and wrote, "My manager took each of the rules, laminated them and gave out each one to her sales force, one at a time - one idea for every week. At the end of the year she'll have done all 52!"

Today, we've taken three of the ones most commented on by readers of the book. Here they are:

The Importance of "You"

The word "you" is one of the most important words in selling. Dale Carnegie said so. Motivational speakers tell us, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." A good example is the *Newsweek* subscription letter written by copywriter Ed McLean and used for nearly 15 years! The response consistently returned a higher rate of subscriptions than all the other letters *Newsweek* tried. More than 100 million copies of this letter were mailed!

Here's how the letter began: "If the list upon which I found your name is any indication, this is not the first - nor will it be the last - subscription letter you receive. Quite frankly, your education and income set you apart from the general population and makes you a highly rated prospect for everything from magazines to mutual funds..."

The word "you" is used 26 times on just the first page!

Max Hart of the clothing firm, Hart Schaffner & Marx disliked long copy in his ads. He always instructed his ad agency to cut words out of their recommended copy.

One time a copywriter approached Hart with an ad describing the quality of wool and fine tailoring used in the firm's clothing.

Hart said there were too many words.

The copywriter said, "Mr. Hart, if I show you a headline that would make you want to read every word in the ad, no matter how many word I use, will you run this ad?"

Hart agreed. The copywriter returned came back with a new headline. Hart read it and said, "Run the ad!" The headline: "This Ad Is All About Max Hart."

Accentuate the Positive

Different words make a difference.

Don't end a sales presentation by telling the customer to "sign here." Say they can "OK the paperwork" or "Approve this form."

Don't say "price" or "cost," say "investment."

Don't say "house," say "home."

Don't say "sales pitch," say "presentation."

Don't say "used car," say "previously owned."

Don't say "pay", say "save."

Don't say "down payment," say "initial investment."

Don't say "contract," say "agreement."

Don't say "buy," say "own."

Don't use negative words: death, fail, lose, worry, obligation.

Do use positive words: easy, guarantee, safety, comfort, value.

The value of positive speaking was emphasized in a *Wall Street Journal* story. They reported 40 GOP congressmen received nine hours of language training and media coaching. Purpose of the program: to help GOP lawmakers use words and phrases (tested in polling) to sell basic themes like education, social security, defense and tax cuts.

Among the "power adjectives" Republicans were told to use were "able" and "American" and to avoid words like "inoperative," "cash flow," "feedback" and almost any word that ends in "ion."

Words convey positive or negative meanings. The most important word is this one: your customer's name. Use it often when you're selling.

Don't Use Percentages When Selling

People understand numbers but not percentages. They know what they are but not what they mean.

The state of Florida gave a test to 130,000 high school juniors. One question referred to an ad for blue jeans: "Regularly \$15. Now one third off." The question asked: "How much would you save on two pairs?"

Many of the high school juniors with ten years of schooling could not figure the answer.

Conclusion: do the math for the reader. If you say "50 percent off" then also tell the original AND the sale price. One more: Customers understand "half price" better than "50 percent off."

WARNING: Do not use the words "up to" as in "up to 40 percent off." The customer immediately thinks almost everything is 10 percent off - or lower.

"Selling Rules!" sells for \$14.95 plus \$5.00 postage and handling. Readers of The Raphael Report can have "Selling Rules!" with all 52 rules for only \$14.95 including postage - a \$5.00 saving. Simply dial our toll-free number: 888-727-4652. Customers outside US have an additional postage charge.)