

# *ICEBERG SELLING*

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*Improving Sales Performance*

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Why I Love Salespeople .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What Are You Playing For?.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>It Begins and Ends with You .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Everything Is an Iceberg.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The Lifetime-Value Mindset: Look Beyond the Deal .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>The Being-of-Service Mindset: Be a True Resource for Your Customer.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Ownership Mindset: Take Control of Your Reality .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Drivership Mindset: Make Things Happen with Greater Success .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Mindset Shifts Help You See Below the Surface .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Best Practice #1—Do the Research.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Identify What’s on the Surface.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Invest the Time .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Do a Deep Dive.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>You Never Know What You’ll Find.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Best Practice #2—Set Yourself Up for Success.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Architect Your Meeting.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Show Them Your Plans.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Stay Present .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Icebergs, Right Ahead.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Best Practice #3—Build Rapport.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Be Authentic .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Be Curious .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>It’s Not a Performance .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Show Up as Yourself, and Your Customers Will Too.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Best Practice #4—Testing for Success .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Get on the Same Side of the Table.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Take Chances.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Co-Create a Solution .....</b>	<b>50</b>

<b>Moving Forward Together .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b><i>Best Practice #5—Set Next Steps .....</i></b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Stay Out of Your Head .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Focus on the Right Fit.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Always Schedule Your Next Meeting .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Iceberg Selling Makes Closing Natural.....</b>	<b>60</b>

# Introduction

## Why I Love Salespeople

Salespeople are some of my favorite people in the world. I really mean that.

You're the cornerstones of your company, the people who make your company successful and make sure everyone gets paid. You're driven and tenacious, and you never give up. In short, you're the kind of person I want to hang out with.

We as salespeople also create the revenue that enables people to buy their first homes, pay for their kids' college education, and care for their families. We put presents underneath the Christmas tree and food on the table, and we help the people who work at our companies do the same thing. Salespeople make the world go around.

You may not have envisioned being a salesperson when you were young, but from the beginning, you probably were already a communicator, a connector, a person who makes things happen. The awesome news is that, as a salesperson, you've found a place where those are the perfect skills for the job.

I bet you're a good salesperson.

I bet you're good at connecting with people. I bet you're the kind of person who knows how to create a vision and reality. You listen and truly understand people, and you move them closer to that vision. You're the type of person who takes concepts and distills them down to accessible and even inspirational ideas. You are someone who other people want to be around. You've got a positive attitude. You see yourself as someone who can accomplish whatever you put your mind to.

And I bet you'd get even more juice, more motivation, more satisfaction with what you do every day if you could raise your game and become a great salesperson. This book is meant to inspire you and to arm you with a fresh approach that will help you make that jump. It's called Iceberg Selling.

Iceberg Selling is an approach that connects you with customers in powerful ways that set you apart from competitors. It creates a mental framework that, even if you put the smallest parts of it into practice, can lead to big, positive changes.

Selling this way helps you make your customers feel seen and understood. Which makes them want to interact with you more and more. It invites them to co-create solutions with you and pumps them up to see those solutions through to the end.

My goal in writing this book is to get you to the next level in your career, to pull you out of where you are now and show you how to get where you want to be. I'll tell you quick and memorable stories, talk about lessons learned, and share inspiration and best practices I've used in my career and life. I hope the mindset shifts and best practices I am about to show you light up your brain and get you thinking, *I can do this*. I hope the aha moments and lessons I share will make you want to commit them to memory and use them in your own unique approach to sales and life.

Because ultimately, this is a journey that you're going on yourself. Being better in sales starts with you. I can give you resources, and so can a lot of other people. But we're also going to talk about what you're playing for, and how you can commit and recommit to what you want by applying Iceberg Selling to all your customer interactions.

## What Are You Playing For?

To go from good to great, you need to look under the surface of what you want. So, I'd like you to ask yourself a question right now: *Why are you in sales?*

I'm in sales because I want the freedom to bet on myself. I want to be the one who charts my own course. Even though I believe in coming together and supporting teams, I'm an independent person. Ultimately, I run my own race, and I believe that most of us who are in sales run our own races too.

And of course I love the rush of the yes. *Yes, let's move forward. Yes, that's a great idea. Yes, let's do it.* And I'm not ashamed to say I love the money too. There's nothing quite like hitting a huge commission, achieving a quarterly or annual bonus, and seeing a big check deposited in my account.

I bet you feel the same way. You might be in sales because you want to make things happen. You want to make a lot of money. You want to bet on yourself and see yourself win. You probably want to have an impact on your organization, your life, and your family's lives too. There's nothing wrong with any or all of that being your reason, but you should know your reason.

Sales can be really stressful, yet rewarding, and I find that people who know why they're in it and what they want to get out of it have a way better time becoming great salespeople. So, here's the follow-up question I like to ask: *What are you playing for?*

I like to ask questions like these and let the salespeople I coach sit with them and really think about them. Their answers always surprise me, impress me, inspire me, and make me

smile. While we're all different, we all have similar things that we play for. Most likely, we are looking for a change in our life to a better state, whether that means offering more financial support for our spouse as they go back to school, paying for college, or having the ability to help a friend who needs it. Maybe we want to reward ourselves for all the hard work we do—whether it's with a trip, a new boat, a new car, a bigger house, or a favorite pair of shoes.

There are physical things we play for, but there are also the things that fulfill us emotionally. These are things like stability and security, freedom, and confidence in your ability to make a positive impact in the lives of other people. You get filled up by knowing you're creating the revenue your company needs to grow and support payroll. That kind of stuff can feel just as good, if not better, as an early retirement or a new car. The answer depends on you.

Whatever your motivation, I want to tell you right now it's completely okay. In fact, it's more than okay. It's incredible. It's yours, and I want you to own it.

Feeling connected to my friends, clients, and family is extremely important to me. One of the biggest things I play for is giving people I care about opportunities and support to get where they want to be faster. I'd like to share two personal examples to show how being in sales allows you to make things happen for yourself and others.

My friend Cindy is a consultant, and we've worked together for years. (By the way, her name isn't actually Cindy. I'll be using pseudonyms in this book to protect people's privacy.) Recently, she got divorced and had to take on a bigger workload to support herself and her children.

Cindy and I were working on a project together for the same client. She was running their marketing team, and I was running the sales team. I noticed that her computer setup was a mess. It was pretty old, the power cord was broken, and the battery had zero life left.

When I asked her about it, she said, "Yeah, this is an old computer. I'm saving up for a new one."

"Here's an idea," I said. "If my sales team hits our quarterly goal, we're going to get a new laptop for you and gift cards for your team."

My sales team could make higher bonuses as we achieved our sales goals, but the marketing team didn't have that kind of variable compensation. At the beginning of the quarter, the rest of the sales team and I shared with one another what we were playing for. Some people wanted new snow skis or tickets to visit family or a nice date night with their spouse.

I told my sales team we were playing for something else that quarter too—to support our marketing teammates. They were in, and true to our word, we made it happen. Everyone on the

team reached their own goals and our goals for Cindy and the marketing team. It brought us all together, and it was all possible because of sales.

So, I ask you again, what are *you* playing for? There's power in asking yourself what you play for both in the short term and the long term. There's power in understanding what inspires you, why you get out of bed in the morning, why you do what you do. Once you understand what you're playing for, this can be the energy source that drives you forward to keep you focused on tough days. God knows that, as salespeople, staying focused and inspired can be the magical fuel that keeps our tanks full when they run low. Why not own what you want in your life and make it happen? Why not get really personal and clear about what you are playing for?

I'd like to tell you another story, about a teammate I coached. Before I started working with him, he put up pretty good numbers and, by all accounts, was a pretty good salesperson. But he wasn't consistent or focused, and I don't think he was clear about why he did what he did, why he had the job that he had, or where he wanted to go.

So, one day in our one-to-one sales meeting, instead of going through his activities, digging into his pipeline, and seeing what we could unstick or close, we put everything aside, and I asked him the same question I've been asking you.

"What are you playing for?"

After what was probably only minutes but which felt like a lot more to both of us, he finally answered.

"Karl, I want to change my life. I really want to marry my girlfriend, buy a nice house, and start a family. I want to give her all the things that she wants. I want to provide for us and give our kids all the things I never had. So, I guess that is what I am playing for...I am playing for my future life."

Now we were both clear on his why, and this clarity became very powerful. From that time on, I started each meeting by asking him how his plan and relationship were going, and if he was still fired up by the vision he painted for me. The answer was always yes, and this motivation drove more and more of his focus. It was incredible to witness him raise his game through both Iceberg Selling and the clarity of what he was playing for. That December, he bought an engagement ring, and the following year he and his fiancée were married.

In what other profession can you reach for the sky like that? In a lot of other positions and career paths, they only have the framework of making a set amount of money a year. It's consistent, which some people like better, but in sales, we don't want those limits. And the impact we make is deeper than just money. As we become more successful, we create more and more stability for our team and those around us.

So, I want you to keep asking yourself, what are you playing for? What do you want in your life? What fills you up? How does your role as the master of your own destiny (what others might call “your role in sales”) enable you to have that every day?

## It Begins and Ends with You

A lot of us have heard that you shouldn’t take things personally. Forget what you have been told. I’m going to tell you to flip that around. If you are in sales, you need to take things personally.

In case you’re having a “What in the what?” moment, I’ll say that again.

Take sales personally.

In the following pages, I’m going to describe mindset shifts and best practices that will help you go from being a good salesperson to a great salesperson. But in the end, nobody is going to make those changes for you. I’m showing you a door, but you’re the one who needs to open and walk through it.

If you’re sitting here going, “I wish I could be more successful. I wish I could make more money,” you can make that wish come true for yourself. You have the ability to change; you have the ability to pivot.

With Iceberg Selling, I’m going to give you one of the most powerful tools I’ve ever found to go from being a good salesperson to a great salesperson. And the best part is, it only takes a shift in attitude and mindset to see powerful results.