

TOP SALES

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MAGAZINE



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The Making of The Modern Seller: Strategies to Sell More and Increase Your Impact

Jonathan Farrington interviews Amy Franko-- strategic sales expert,
keynote speaker and best-selling author of *The Modern Seller*



The Making of The Modern Seller: Strategies to Sell More and Increase Your Impact



Jonathan Farrington interviews Amy Franko-- strategic sales expert, keynote speaker and best-selling author of *The Modern Seller*.

JF: You recently published *The Modern Seller*. How do you define modern selling? What do sellers need to do to become modern sellers?

AF: Modern sellers consistently do three things that separate them from the crowd. First, they're recognized by their clients and prospects as a differentiator to their business. Second, the value of their product or service isn't fully realized without them. And third, a modern seller's clients see the work they do together as strategic to their competitive advantage.

Of course, skills like prospecting, presenting, negotiating, and closing will always be important. But in my research for the book, I consistently came across a different set of skills that sellers need,

"skills behind the skills." I call them dimensions, because they will help sellers make a much bigger impact in the new sales economy. Today, sellers and sales leaders need to be agile, entrepreneurial, holistic, social, and ambassadors. The good news is that you don't have to be born with these skills. You can build each one – in yourself or in your sales team.

JF: Let's dig into a couple of those dimensions here. One is that modern sellers are entrepreneurial. How is that beneficial to a sales role?

AF: Being entrepreneurial as a seller is about looking beyond what's immediately in your view and placing your focus on a bigger picture vision. This

shift positions you as more than an individual selling a product or service. You're the founder, CEO, and chief bootstrapper of your sales territory. Your ability to create a vision for your territory or book of business determines how quickly and profitably it grows, and your ultimate success.

If you're a sales leader, your ability to create a sales vision for your business segment, division, or organization has even greater impact.

JF: One of the most interesting dimensions you call out is that a modern seller is an ambassador. What does it mean for someone in a sales position to serve as an ambassador, and how does that improve results?

AF: I like to think of an ambassador as a bridge. In a global sense, an ambassador is a bridge between countries and cultures. In modern selling, ambassadors are also a bridge – connecting their organization to prospects and clients, connecting to their communities, connecting to their industries.

Ambassadors are particularly skilled in two areas. The first the ability to stand tall in their leadership brand and what makes them unique, while also living the values of your organization. Second, they take the mindset of lifetime value. Because of that, they create higher levels of loyalty, which means they're expanding within and closing more business with your hard-won current clients.

JF: I know you're a proponent of life-long learning. How can sales professionals continue to develop and modernize their sales strategies?

AF: This falls under the category of a modern seller being agile. We're all responsible for owning our own development journey throughout our careers. One strategy is to be aware of and short-circuit patterns that no longer serve you.

This involves spending time analyzing your sales patterns. It could be with the help of your leader, a professional coach, or a trusted peer. That outside perspective is a difference maker, because we're often too close to our patterns to see them, or we

find ways to justify patterns that aren't working anymore. These patterns may include how you start and end your day, how you're deciding on which prospects to engage, the way you prioritize your sales activities, or leveraging new approaches.

When you identify a pattern you'd like to short circuit, experiment with ways that you can change up your routines. You may need to try a couple of different routines to land on the right one for you.

JF: How should the sales organization of the future be structured to support modern sellers?

AF: Modern selling organizations should consider a formal sales enablement function. Sales enablement should be on the radar for anyone with responsibility for revenue growth and long-term sales success – whether you're a sales leader, sales professional, marketer, or C-level leader.

While every organization is different, sales enablement takes into consideration factors like talent acquisition and onboarding, sales methodology, learning and coaching, technology, and strategy. A well-designed sales enablement function accelerates both the sales organization and the marketing organization.

JF: We're officially halfway through the year. What is the most important sales lesson you've learned so far in 2019?

AF: To stay committed to standing in my value, so I work with the right prospects and clients. I'm always learning and staying attuned to what they most want to accomplish in their business, so I bring them the absolute right value to move forward. ■

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