To Sell is Human by Daniel Pink

I. Part 1: Introduction - We Are All in Sales

In a recent survey, 46% of respondents said their work involved “moving people” on some level. In other words, many non-sales jobs (such as teaching, “Ed-Med”, etc.) require employees to persuade others to give up something they value, for something their company has.

II. Part 2: “How to Be” - 3 Qualities for Sales and Non-Sales Selling

A. Attunement - Perspective-taking: Tuning into the emotions, perceptions, and motivations of others.

1. Increase your power by reducing it. Lower status individuals are better perspective-takers. Humility and empathy are keys to selling.
2. Use your head as much as your heart. Both are crucial, but one is more effective. Ask what the other person is thinking, not just what they are feeling.
3. Use strategic mimicry (a.k.a. “mirroring” or “chameleon-ing”). “Be strategic by being human.”
   - Watch
   - Wait
   - Wane
4. Find uncommon commonalities. “People like people like themselves.”
   ➔ What’s the best way to start a conversation? Ask a question.
5. The Ambivert Advantage (see hyperlinked article): Ambiverts make the best salespeople.
   - Extreme extroverts can come across as pushy, talk too much, and listen too little.
   - Extreme introverts can be too shy to initiate and too timid to close.
   - Extroverts are geared to respond; introverts are geared to inspect.

B. Buoyancy - Explanatory style: How you explain failure.

1. Failures should be explained as temporary, specific, and external.
2. Positive self-talk should be interrogative not declarative.
   - Ask yourself questions (i.e. “How can I improve next time?”)
3. The Positivity Ratio: www.positivityratio.com
   - Research by Barbara Fredrickson and Marcial Losada
   - Ideal ratio for positive to negative emotion is 3:1. Above this number people “flourish,” below they languish.
   - However, there is an upper limit. Beyond an 11:1 ratio there are diminishing returns.
   - Therefore, seek a balance of Levity vs. Gravity. “When combined, these two forces keep you buoyant.”
   - Practical application: When selling, seek out positive interactions throughout the day.
C. Clarity - Problem Finding vs. Problem Solving: Aim to find rather than solve problems.

1. Achieve clarity through constraints.
   - Studies show offering fewer choices results in more sales.
   - [Pecha-kucha.org](http://pecha-kucha.org) for concise presentations (alternative to PowerPoint); 20 seconds X 20 images

2. Identify and convey the “1%.” (More info below.)

3. Clarity comes with a jolt. Change your routine or route, spend a day in a different work environment, or move overseas for the ultimate jolt of clarity.

III. Part 3: “What to Do”

A. Pitch

1. Tips
   - **Sequencing** - Go first if you’re the incumbent, last if you’re the challenger.
   - **Numbers** - Granular numbers are more credible than coarse numbers.
   - **The “Invisible Pitch”** - Ask others to convey the following in three words: “What’s my company or product about?” “What am I about?”

2. Purpose/How-To
   - The purpose of a pitch isn’t to sell your idea outright.
   - The purpose is to engage your audience enough so they become co-collaborators.
   - Listen: Let them project their ideas onto yours.

B. Improvise

1. **Hear offers**. Objections are offers in disguise.
2. **Say**: “Yes, and...” rather than “but.”
3. **Make your partner look good**. Go for the win-win.
4. **Hone listening skills by pausing**. Slow down and pause for five seconds before responding.

C. Serve

1. **Make it personal and make it purposeful.**
   - Example → [Dr. Yehonatan N. Turner](http://example.com). See hyperlinked article about the effect of patient photos on radiologists.
2. **Move from distant and abstract to concrete and personal.**

D. Tips on Selling

1. **Less is more.** “Sometimes addition can lead to subtraction.”
   - Fewer choices increase likelihood of sale.
   - **Bundle items together for greater perceived value.** Studies show adding an inexpensive item to a less expensive purchase results in more buyers selecting the pricier, all-inclusive package.
2. **How to sell yourself:**
   - **Emphasize your potential, not past accomplishments.** Potential involves uncertainty, and therefore is more exciting, which moves people to value potential more than proven success.
   - **Haptics in selling** – People tend to like people who touch them. Touch improves the human experience and therefore increases sales.

3. **Give people an “off-ramp.”**
   - Clarity in how to **think** is not enough. Clarity in how to **act** is the way to move people.
   - **Provide a clear, specific course of action (call to action).**
     Example ➔ Food Drive Experiment: Even those “less likely” to give donated in greater numbers when given a map, directions, instructions, etc.

4. **Become an information curator.**
   - The information problem today is not accessing information, it’s curating it.
   - Today’s salespeople don’t hold exclusive rights to information as they once did, therefore, they must “curate” information for buyers.
   - **How to Curate Information:** “**Content Curation Primer**” by Beth Kanter
     (i) **Seek** – List good sources of information in your field and review these sources for at least 15 minutes twice a day.
     (ii) **Sense** – Make sense of the information (curate). Organize and prioritize information. For example, start a blog for your information and ideas.
     (iii) **Share** – After you have collected and organized information, share via newsletter, social media, etc.

5. **Learn to ask better questions.** Use the following procedure.
   - **Produce questions:** Generate questions by brainstorming.
   - **Improve questions:** Look for/create open-ended questions.
   - **Prioritize questions:** Pick top 3 questions, then edit and revise.

6. **Identify and communicate the “1%.”**
   - If you can identify and convey the **essence** of an idea, product, service, etc., you are much more likely to motivate others.
   - “The 1% gives life to the 99%.”
   - Go back to a 5-year-old mindset. Ask: “Why?”
     ➔ Innovative companies, such as IDEO, use the “5-Why’s” approach.