

# Are We All Salespeople?

Over the past few months, I have been contemplating and researching speakers that would be a good fit for the E0 Argentina University in November in Buenos Aries. Our theme for the university is “Tango with the Unexpected.” As co-chair of learning, I am working to bring in people that will meet E0 expectations, which are very high, and relate with our theme. One speaker I would like to bring in is Daniel Pink. However, given he is in such high demand, I am not sure we can fit into his schedule or he can fit into our budget.



Pink has written five books. I have read three of them and working on the fourth now, which is his current one: To Sell is Human: The Surprising Truth about Moving Others. Pink's work is always out on the edge and really takes a look at ideas, ways of life and thinking, digging deeper to find new meaning or a different perspective. He did that with his book Free Agent Nation, which I read in the early 2000s, and with Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Nations. Then, he really hit a nerve with people when he came out with Drive: The Surprising Truth about what Motivates People. This work changed a lot of people's minds. I did a [blog](#) on it, discussing how we should motivate others and had several findings that were unexpected.

I will provide a sneak peek into what Pink has done with To Sell is Human, because it holds a surprising twist on how we see people that sell, suggesting that every one of us is selling in just about everything we do. When Pink sat down and took an in-depth look at what he had done over a two-week

period, he realized that within the conversations – emails, texts, calls, and meetings – he was trying to get people to part with resources.

Most don't like hearing that they are sales people. Selling can be perceived as trickery and deceit. But as Pink describes, things have changed and that is not the world we can play in – not if we want to succeed in selling. Pink creates a discussion around how sales has changed more over the last 10 years than over the previous 100. Further, our assumptions about it have changed. We still have about 1 in 9 people engaged in sales today, and the other 8 of 9 are indirectly involved in sales. Pink says, "We're persuading, convincing and influencing others to give up something they've got in exchange for what we've got. "

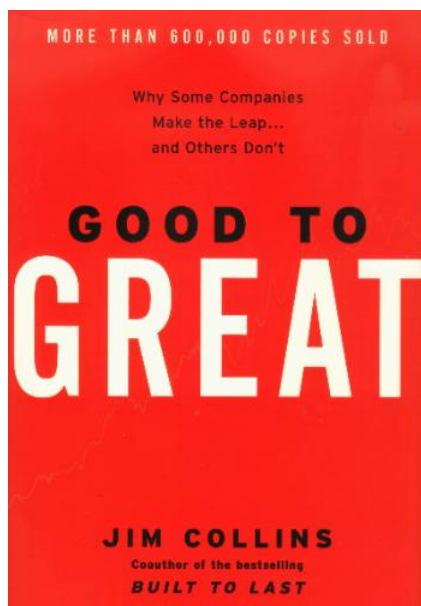
An interesting point that he brings up in the book is that as business owners, we are supposed to send our sales people out to solve problems. What Pink discovers is that it is more about going out and helping people to *find* their problems. That is different, isn't it? He discusses that an effective way to move others is to uncover their challenges. For sales to have meaning, he gets into discussing that it needs to be made personnel and purposeful.

Is your approach to sales working for you currently? I will have to say that it has been a struggle for us. If it is the same for you, maybe a radical way of changing our thinking around sales is what is needed to make them better. Check out this short interview that Pink gave on his key discoveries for the book.

Video Link: <http://vimeo.com/61559527>

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# Are You Confronting the Brutal Facts?



We have had a nice run in the markets over the past few weeks, hitting record highs for seven consecutive days. It would seem like good times ahead and I would so much like to jump on that bandwagon. I have seen this before and it makes me very cautious, given what is probably ahead. With any market and economic difficulties, there is always opportunity. The key signature of the DNA in a real entrepreneur is always being in search of opportunities in any

environment, and then acting on them.

When looking for opportunities, we must first practice the Stockdale Paradox, which is coined by Jim Collins in his book [Good to Great](#). In the book, Admiral Jim Stockdale makes observations of those that survived being prisoners of war in Vietnam and those that did not. Admiral Stockdale was there for eight years and endured the most brutal of situations.

When asked “Who did not make it out?” Stockdale replied, “The optimist.” He shared that they would say, we will be out by Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving, and when those markers came and went, the POWs would die of broken hearts.

He went on to say to Jim “This is a very important lesson. You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end – which you can never afford to lose –with the discipline to

confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever it may be.”

So what are the brutal facts of our reality? We have a huge amount of debt (\$16 trillion) that is as much as the combined total of all the goods and services transacted in one year for the US economy. Each year the bureaucrats are spending \$1 trillion more than they take in from taxes, so we are adding a trillion to the total debt each year. The worst part is they don't show any desire to stop spending! We have major uncertainties of how all the tax increases, more government controls, and medical health care changes will affect our businesses.

The fear and uncertainty makes people sit and wait it out, for the most part. We are experiencing some positives now because of pent-up demand. Some areas don't have enough new homes to account for the demand. Some businesses are spending on things that they have been putting off for a long time and can't wait any longer.

This is not the environment of record-breaking stock markets that means things will change. I was in the investment world when the Fed flooded the markets during the late 90s and worried about lots of things, but mainly Y2K. This money mostly went into stocks and drove the markets to a massive bubble that soon burst. Sadly, I watched my money and that of so many others lose unfathomable sums.

Because of the brutal facts and my experience, I am being careful about the markets and business investments. I am also keeping an eye on any opportunities that may arise, given major changes that may occur. Remember that companies like General Electric, IBM, Disney, Burger King, Microsoft and Apple, all were founded in major recession or great depression. Opportunities are not limited to the good times.

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## How Am I Here Now?

What is the opportunity that you find yourself in today? What people did you meet to get here? What are you going to do to create more such opportunities?

I am on my way to Ft. Lauderdale to meet with my [E0 Insignia Forum](#). My close friend Joe has a place there, so we are going to spend some time at his condo. I really enjoy going to meet up with my E0 friends and spending time with them. It is always a very stimulating and worthwhile experience.

I come away with a greater connection and understanding for their struggles and successes, as each one walks their own path. It opens me up to what life has to offer and awakens me to my limited perspective when the diversity of these successful entrepreneurs come together to share their minds, experiences, and visions.

You rarely understand the true power of these interactions in those specific moments. I have witnessed not only the financial but also the immense emotional impact of these exchanges. The emotional benefits of not feeling alone when leading a company is very comforting, and I look forward to spending time with these dynamic people.

Last week, my local E0 Forum participated in a Forum boost. We brought in a forum trainer who exposed ways to share and go deeper with your forum mates. Sharing very personal things, like those that you may not even tell your spouse, is very powerful and humbling to the participants.

I once read that the two things that will impact your life the most are the books you read and the people you meet. My life

experiences allow me to see the power and reality of that statement in action.

Think about this example. Joe has hired a personal trainer, Jess, to be with him for a month to focus on healthy habits in nutrition, cardio, weight training, and overall healthy balance. Jess lives in New Jersey. A mutual friend introduced her to Joe, and because of this new connection with him, she made a decision to leave her home and travel with us. This will have her meeting new people, experiencing new situations, making new connections, and opening doors to new opportunities. Who knows what this one connection and one decision could mean for the many forks that will appear in her life and where they will take her?

Do you seek situations to meet, learn, and grow with other people? What are the opportunities there?