

General Notes on Selling

Selling is not about forcing or coercing people into buying something. The core of selling is recognizing that your product has value, and that people will benefit from seeing it. Remember that in selling tickets to this show, you are doing people a service, and giving them the chance to see something that can thrill, delight, engage, amaze, and elevate the spirit. So, **this is not about getting money; the money is just what's needed for the art to happen. Selling is about serving others.**

Ways to Sell

There are many ways to sell, but all selling boil down to this: active engagement w/others. Marketing is only useful on to a large audience (ie, 100s to 1000s). It is inherently less effective because it is passive. Unless tons of people know you, it's a waste. Spend your time selling instead. Selling is **ACTIVE**, and relies on interaction with people. This can be simple conversations or targeted discussions, but it relies on you *pushing past fear of rejection* and approaching people.

Selling Step 1: It's all about Relationships aka Leveraging Personal Networks aka How to Be Friends & Influence People

Sales is about relationships. People buy based on **trust** and **perceived value**. We want long term customers and fans, not one timers. People don't like being high pressure sold, and they won't come back if we use those tactics. Instead, **ask questions and actively listen**. The best salesmen are good because they are *friendly* and *make others feel valued*. They do it through genuine attention, not empty flattery. People can sense when you fake; be authentic. **Start with your personal network**. Family, friends, work colleagues. If someone has interests that may align, use that to talk about it. "You like art, so you might like X." "You seem like a cultured person. Maybe you'd be interested in X". Ask if they know people who might be interested. **Use your network to find more leads**. Think about neighbors, places you shop, your doctor, hairdresser, friends from high school or college. All of these are leads. Remember, it benefits them to see the concert; if you don't mention it, you deprive them of the opportunity.

Selling Step 2: Direct Value Statement

First, you want to think about how you will explain the concert to others. Craft a simple, brief, poignant explanation of what the concert is about, what type of performance it involves, and some of its particulars. This is called a *Direct Value Statement*. You only have a short time to get people's attention, so speak plain. Describe how it will make them feel, and be excited. **Avoid jargon**, as it is inauthentic and snooty. If they see you excited and genuine, they will be too.

- **Don't:** "interactive post-classical take on the Deridian signified-signifier-symbol paradigm using Graham set to deconstructed fugue."
- **Do:** "Dance & music concert about reality, language, and thought. It's super interesting, with colorful costumes, amazing dancers, and some audience participation. You'll be riveted to your seat for the whole hour, and tickets are only \$20."

Selling Step 3: How to Talk about It aka What Makes People Want to Buy aka the Six Laws of Social Influence

Robert Cialdini, a leading researcher on the science behind what influences us, crafted 6 Laws based on his research:

- **Exclusivity/Scarcity:** Things that are exclusive/sparse (i.e. limited # or time) are more valued, therefore more wanted
 - How to Use: Highlight limits of time and #. Use only ("Two days only!" "Only chance to see!" "Ten tickets left")
- **Commitment/Consistency:** People are more inclined to do/value things consistent w/past commitments & behaviors
 - How to Use: "You are a cultured guy, so..." "You've come to concerts in the past, so..." "You value skill/athleticism, so..."
- **Social Influence:** People are influenced towards things/value things more when others are doing/valuing them
 - How to Use: Tell about others—especially others similar to them—who are doing X. "Already 50 people coming..."
- **Reciprocity:** People are more likely to listen to people who have done favors for them w/no strings attached.
 - How to Use: Ask people who you've done favors for (last minute subbed, gifted, etc.) to buy. Or, offer to get group discount by arranging w/a group.
- **Authority:** People automatically value what you say/suggest more based on signifiers of authority or expertise.
 - Use Authority signifiers: Clothes, Titles, Trappings, Years Experience
- **Liking:** People give more weight to requests & opinions from people they like. So, be likable.
 - Factors of Likability: Physical Attractiveness, Similarity, Compliments, Contact, Cooperation

Selling Step 4: Seven Touches aka Once is Never Enough aka Follow-through is Key to Success

Research suggests people don't notice/recognize/remember something till they've seen it **seven times**. So, mentioning it one time is not enough. It may take multiple interactions, called **touches**. You can add touches in many ways: giving them a flier, sending follow-up email/text, posting/inviting on social media, and more. Ultimately, it's about *follow through*. That friend you spoke with about the concert? Remind them later, ask them if they got a ticket yet. **Don't be afraid to ask directly: So, did you buy a ticket?** When someone commits to something in view of someone else, they are more likely to do it.

Summary and Final Notes:

- It benefits people to see your concert/art/product. You do them a disservice if you don't offer them a chance.
- Selling is ACTIVE. Don't just plop fliers down on a table or tape to a window and think you are done. Use the phone, talk in person, mail letters—but ask people directly.
- Be authentic, friendly, and kind. These are your family, friends, nice people in your life who you want to share something with.
- Leverage your personal network to find people to ask. Don't stop at just your parents and work friends: there are always more people in your life than you realize until you think about it.
- Think about how you are going to talk about the concert before you actually do. Use language people will like and understand.
- Use the six laws to help people realize the value of the concert. It is not about tricking them, it is about helping them see the value.
- Once you talk to them, your job is not done. Follow through.