

**Michael Senoff's**

# **SELLING**

I N T E R V I E W

## **AUDIO SERIES**



### **A Short Course on Sales Management Consulting**

**Michael Senoff Interviews Sales Management Consultant**

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Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://HardToFindSeminars.com).

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

*Michael Senoff*

Founder & CEO: [www.hardtofindseminars.com](http://www.hardtofindseminars.com)

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Any perceived slights of specific people or organizations is unintentional.

# It's the Head of the Fish that Usually Stinks:

## *A Short Course on Sales Management Consulting*

It may seem like some people just don't have a gift for sales...

When Ian started his first sales job, his only training for the position was, "Hang in there. You'll do fine." The job lasted two hours and ended with his boss telling him he should become a waiter.

In this interview, you'll hear how Ian went from being that no-talent kid to a highly sought-after sales management consultant in New South Wales. And he'll be the first to tell you that if he can master sales, anyone on your sales force can too -- because salespeople aren't born; they're trained.

### **Here's what you'll get from this interview:**

- A grasp of how managerial tools and methodologies can power your sales
- Ways to analyze your staff that will keep sales production high
- Examples of how "coaching" can push sales and margins up
- How a sales force is an investment and how to make the most of it
- How to find good salespeople and how to keep them when you do

Ian understands the frustration managers feel after spending a lot of money to generate a lead only to have it blown by a salesperson. It's easy to see how this happens when, according to his research...

- 50% of salespeople fall short of quota
- 90% of sales opportunities don't close when the salesperson says they will
- 75% of product-launches fail, but...

The biggest factor affecting production of sales today is

## Sales Leadership

When he says, "It's the head of the fish that stinks the most," Ian's really saying that effective sales begin at the top. If Sales Managers learn models, tips and tools, they'll be able to bring those skills back to their salespeople. So in this interview, you'll also hear how increasing sales production is mainly about finding a process that works. And, according to Ian, results will follow --**Most people see a return of 500 percent!**

Now, management-consulting skills don't come naturally to most people and there are plenty of books out there on the subject. (Ian has over 800 of them in his library alone!) You could literally spend the rest of your career reading up on the matter, spinning your wheels trying out methodology after methodology. Or, you could start with this interview to see how sales management consulting can benefit you. Remember, Ian didn't start out with a gift for sales. He just found a process that worked for him. Enjoy

Ian: Again, if we look at the research around executive coaching, where there's been a tremendous amount of work done, productivity increases. The research shows that you can get productivity increased 53%. Quality goes up, customer service goes up, customer complaints get reduced, costs get reduced, teamwork is increased, and these are all things that happen as a result of coaching. In fact, the interesting thing was that, in the research that's done on coaching, most organizations see a return on their investment of over close to 500%.

Michael: Hi, this is Michael Senoff with Michael Senoff's [www.HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com). I'm pleased to introduce to you a true master of sales in sales training. His name is Ian Segall from McKenzie Consulting. Sales people aren't born, they're trained. That's what took Ian years to learn after his first sales job. His only training for that position was, hang in there, you'll do fine. The job lasted two hours and ended with his boss telling him he should become a waiter. This was a defining moment in Ian's life and in this interview, you'll learn how Ian went from being that no-talented kid to a highly sought after sales management consultant throughout Australia and New Zealand. And he'll be the first one to tell you that if he can master sales, anyone on your sales force can, too. Here's what you're gonna learn on this interview. You'll learn how managerial tools and methodologies can power your sales like

never before. You'll learn five ways to analyze your staff that will keep sales production at their highest. You'll learn how sales coaching can push your sales and margins up. You'll learn why a sales force is an investment and how to make it pay. And you'll learn how to find good sales people and more importantly, how to keep them. Ian understands the frustration that managers feel after spending a lot of money to generate a lead and only to have it blown by a sales person. It's easy to see how this happens when, according to his research, 50% of sales people fall short of quota, 90% of sales opportunities don't close when the sales person says they will, and 75% of product launches fail. But the biggest factor affecting production in sales today is sales leadership. When Ian sales it's the head of the fish that stinks the most, Ian's really saying that effective sales begin at the top. If sales managers learn models, tips and tools, they'll be able to bring those skills back to their sales people. So in this 60 minute interview, you'll also hear how increasing sales production is mainly about finding a process that works. And according to Ian, results will follow. Most people will see a return of 500%. You'll also hear five actual case studies and their amazing results. Listen to this recording, identify it with your own sales force and take this information and start using it as soon as today. Enjoy.

Michael: Why should I listen to you? What makes you an expert? Can you give me a little history on you and your background and how all this got going?

Ian: Michael, if you were to have a look at my library, you would see probably close to 800 books on the subject of selling and sales and sales management and management. It's become an absolute passion of mine. Mainly because I was so bad at it. How can you take somebody who's not a sales person and how do you get them to sell? And can you just take anybody and turn them into a sales person? What makes good sales people? Is it just a talent? And I believe yes, in many cases, talent counts for a lot. But you can take non-talented people and if you give them the right tools and you work them and coach them over time, you can get really, really good results. In fact, many times the results you can get are better than with talented people because they're following the time and process to get the result. Where sometimes talented people just kind of do their own thing. It's a passion of mine. I have a way of being a student of the sales process in theory. Mainly because my very first experience in sales and many after then, I've failed and failed dismally.

Michael: What was your first experience in sales?

Ian: My first experience of selling was I got myself a Saturday morning job. Way back then, stores weren't open all Saturday, they closed at 1:00.

Michael: How old were you?

Ian: I was 16 years old. A friend of mine got me the job. We were selling men's and boy's clothing. The training program was, they just said hang in there, you'll be fine. That was the training. That morning, start time was about 8:30; about 10:00 that morning, this friend of mine comes up to me because we were working together and he hands me an envelope and inside the envelope is my two hours worth of pay. And he says to me the boss says that I need to tell you that you're probably not going to make it as a sales person, you better get a job as a waiter and here's your pay for your work.

Michael: So he fired you after two hours? That probably hurt.

Ian: At that point, I had a decision to make. I could either dis-believe him and say well what do you know, you didn't give me a chance and rationalize positively. Or I could actually choose to believe him and take on his belief that I was not good at selling and I would be better off as a waiter.

Michael: So what did you do? How'd you handle that?

Ian: Well, because of my self esteem at that stage, I actually chose to believe that he was right and I was wrong. And so I had this belief in my head that I was never gonna make it in sales. And no matter what I did and no matter how I tried, and I did, I tried. I was one of the youngest recruits in the insurance company, selling life insurance. And I struggled and I work hard. I would sit there making call after call after call, but I had this little voice in my head saying, you're never gonna make it, you're never gonna make it.

Michael: And how old were you when you took on the life insurance?

Ian: I was now in my early 20's.

Michael: But were you in a position where you really had to go make a living for myself?

Ian: I now had to make a living. And so then I took another sales job which I thought would be easier, selling industrial cleaning chemicals. Going to organizations and selling them cleaners.

- Michael: What kind of training did they provide?
- Ian: Like most organizations, minimum training and hang in there, you'll be fine. Just make the calls. And I did what so many sales people did. I would drive past a company and just by driving past, I could look at this company and tell that they had no need for what I was selling, by just driving past. And the truth of the matter is, I couldn't tell a thing. I just had this voice in my head that I feared the rejection, I didn't want to go in, I didn't want to make the effort. I would spend my morning driving around looking at all these potential opportunities and rationalizing well, they wouldn't need what I've got to sell. And eventually I burnt out of selling and made the decision that I was not going to be able to sell. It just so happened I was fortunate enough to be able to go back into the family business and which I ran for five years.
- Michael: And what was your family business?
- Ian: We were selling industrial garage doors and servicing them. Nothing sexy about them, it was just hard core. But again, I wouldn't even go out with the sales people to train them. So this was how I was managing my life. Anything I could do to avoid selling. I then left to go to live in America at the time.
- Michael: Where did you live?
- Ian: We lived in Dallas. I arrived in Dallas, 26 years old, with my brand new bride. What am I gonna do? And the truth is, because all I had was a high school education. Any job I could get was baking chocolate chip cookies and brownies working for \$4.00 an hour.
- Michael: Were you working in a bakery?
- Ian: Baking for Macy's at the time.
- Michael: Did you have kids at that time?
- Ian: No, fortunately not. So I'm driving down the road one morning and Dallas gets bitterly cold and we start at 4:00 in the morning, I'm driving to work thinking I'm way behind on my promises to myself and to my wife. We were driving a beat-up Mazda 323 station wagon. One thing about it, it had a great air conditioning and heating system. And it had a radio that only got AM. All of a sudden this booming voice says that if you will read for 20 minutes a day on your favorite topic, within 10 years you can become an

expert in that field. I hear this voice and I pull over to the side of LBJ freeway and it was like I had seen the light. The only problem was, I didn't know what my chosen field was. I knew I could read and because work finished at 2:00, I had plenty of time on my hands. And so that afternoon I actually went to the public library and as I walked in and call it synchronicity, call it what you will, walked in and there on one of the shelves is the book "How to Master the Art of Selling" by Tom Hopkins. And I don't know why I picked it up and read the forward or read the introduction and there he says that sales people are not born; sales people are trained. And that for me was a revelation. I hadn't realized why I'd failed in sales for so many years. And so I thought well, I'm gonna train myself. And I devoured the book. I read it from page number one to the last page over and over again thinking, okay now I know. Except that I then went out and tried to get myself a job selling, I then had to go sell myself. But by then my self esteem around this whole concept of selling was also struggling. And finally in fact I actually got a job working for Tom Hopkins. So we would go around the country promoting the seminars. We would literally call up the sales manager, ask him for 20 minutes, half an hour at one of his sales meetings, and back in those days, we'd walk in with a TV set and a VCR and show a video of Tom doing his thing, normally how to deal with the objection of, I want to think about it. And we'd do a quick presentation around that and close and try and get people to come to the seminar. What the biggest thing at that stage was I suddenly found myself with road blocks. We were out there selling sales training and yet I still hadn't had any sales training. I was listening to Tommy's tapes in the car. There was no sales management to speak of, there was no one actually guiding me saying you need to do this with your week, what have you planned, how you gonna do it? There was just again, hang in there, you'll be fine. And this was from a sales training organization. The sales training was fantastic, I mean, Tom was great. But I never felt supported.

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Michael: So what happened then, after working with Tom Hopkins? What did you do after that?

Ian: I worked with him for 6 years. But the interesting thing was, what I learned most was not only obviously working with organizations, but I learned actually start to read about selling to fulfill my own needs. My initial needs were I was struggling setting up

appointments so I went out and literally bought every possible book I could on how to set appointments and how get an appointment over the telephone. By then we were going into companies and customizing his training to suit those organizations. And we immigrated, myself and my small family. We had a little boy and we moved across to Australia. And I'm a sales trainer. And in fact I got my first job as a sales trainer for a large insurance agency with 100 agents. I was their trainer.

Michael: How'd that go?

Ian: I would run these huge workshops, these 2 day, 3 day boot camp, this is how you're gonna sell. And I couldn't understand why we weren't getting results. Fortunately, or maybe unfortunately for me, I'd been with the company for about four months and they closed the doors. They hadn't paid the rent in eight months and I suddenly found myself on the street with a mortgage and no job.

Michael: What did you do after that?

Ian: Then I started a sales training consultancy. I picked up a client here and a client there, and one of my clients was a large sporting goods retailer and they offered me to stay on and help them grow. They wanted to take the company public and I stayed on and actually through reading and learning and studying, I became the national HR and Training Manager over 250,000 people that I was responsible for.

Michael: How long were you with them?

Ian: I was with them for close on 18 years doing the corporate thing. I understand how to do the corporate thing and play the politics and stand in the Board Room and do the presentation.

Michael: Did you bring in great results?

Ian: The results were unbelievable. The company just grew massively. We took the company public, we won awards, etc. Obviously we had a great management team. I'm certainly not going to take the credit for everything that we did, but I learned about how to drive a top selling organization. And again, when I had a need and I wanted to work out how do you motivate people or how do you get people to do things, right to the book stores. And again, there's no shortage of books on HR and HR Profits and motivation and performance, etc.

Michael: Why are sales people so poorly trained?

Ian: They're poorly trained for a number of reasons. And I think like most things, it's time, it's money. And bottom line is, most sales managers at one stage or another of their lives would have even paid for themselves or had paid for them to go to a seminar or workshop. And they sat in the seminar for a day or the workshop for two days, and when you look at the actual results, how much of their time and energy actually translated into hard core sales improvement, it's normally not that much. So people get really jaded. I know when I first started on my consultancy, we just had to say we were selling sales training. And you speak to sales managers, and it's well, there's nothing you can sell my people. They already know this stuff, etc. But to know and not to do is to not get known. If I know it intellectually in my head but I'm still not doing what I know. And it's a soft skill. Soft skills are hard to train and really hard to merger. One thing is I'm teaching you about my product. Company's can waste time and energy and effort in teaching sales people about the product line and about their systems and about their procedures but not how to build rapport and how to build relationships and how to ask meaningful questions and cover needs. If I'm hiring a sales person and I'm paying you \$80,000 or \$120,000 a year plus a car, I kind of expect that you already bring those skills to the table so all I need to do is teach you about my product and then you go out and sell.

Michael: Who is this program actually suited for?

Ian: Michael, typically the types of people that come to a program like this are sales managers, national sales managers, marketing directors, in many cases CEO's. Typically those people in management that are most concerned that they're not getting the sales production, the sales performance that they're looking for.

Michael: Who would you like to work with most? Is there any one type of prospect that is more enjoyable for you to operate your business with?

Ian: People who have issues around sales. They have a sales team and they don't know how to get productivity out of their sales team. And more importantly, they're not closed; they're open to having someone come in, sit down with them, open up their head so to speak. And not only their own personal head, but the heads of their sales people and also their systems and processes. To find out where is the default, where is the problems. It's kind of like this; you go in and you've got a software program that you're installing

into an organization; it forces to make certain change because you have to change things, change your processes in many cases to meet the needs of the software program. And it's in that change that you actually get the results that you're looking for. Because when you've got your own processes and when the new system comes, it drives the new productivity and the new changes that you're looking for.

- Michael: Can you think of an example when you took on a client and you didn't enjoy the process? And if so, why didn't you enjoy it?
- Ian: We've had a few of those. Particularly, I'm thinking of one example working with an owner of an organization. The man had issues. His sales people were not motivated. They were a highly competitive market, almost a commoditized market, and after we'd done the research and looked at all the issues and put them on the table, he still had his own mindset as to what he wanted to do and how he wanted to do it. And in the end, my response was, what am I doing here if you're gonna do it your way?
- Michael: So what happened?
- Ian: He walked away.
- Michael: But he initially hired you?
- Ian: He initially hired me. He wanted to drive more production out of his sales people.
- Michael: With that type of owner, with an owner who just can't give up control, why do you think there are owners like that who are so insistent on keeping in control?
- Ian: There are many owners and man senior managers like that. They believe they've gotten to their position on the back of their own hard work, initiative, ideas and it's like anything, you get some people that know everything and they're not open and you get others that recognize that if they knew better, they would do better.
- Michael: You talk to, meet with and train a lot of sales managers. What's going on in these people's lives?
- Ian: Number one, there's stress, frustration; they've got a sales team they're not the production; they've got their boss on their heels; they've got budgets they're trying to meet. And the only way many of them know how to meet it is to get out and do the work

themselves. That means you've got one salesman on the road. Whereas if the sales manager can get his four or five or eight or twelve people performing, you've now got twelve to the one. And so many times we go into an organization and what we find is come the last two weeks of the month and sales are not big, the sales manager says right now it's time for me to get out and go and do what these people are supposed to do. Why aren't my people doing what they're supposed to do? Why is it that I'm always the one that has to go out and sell? Why is it that I'm the one that has to go out and close the deals, bringing them home?

Michael: What kind of feedback are you getting from the owners that is frustrating by having an untrained sales force, or an incompetent sales manager?

Ian: Most organizations, at the beginning of the year, say this is our budget, these are our goals, these are our objectives. And they set them up and they only worked 5% last year, or 10%, whatever the case may be. And it's almost they expect their guys to now go out and do the work that we need to do. So when you start to see month after month, the gap widening between your reality and your goal, in many times there's a panic; sometimes again it's a feeling of, what am I paying these guys for? Good sales people don't come cheap. And many times you have sales people that aren't good and they don't come cheap either. And then the boss is walking through the office and he sees sales people at the water cooler, having coffee, or they're out and the perception is, I don't know what my people are doing. The sales aren't there, and sometimes they're in the office, most times they're out of the office. It's almost like, I'm paying these people but I don't know what they're doing. I don't see them and I don't see the sales figures. All I get is excuses. I come to them every week at the sales meeting, let's look at sales, what's happening. Well this one says that they're gonna close, this one said next week, this one says . . . it's always next week. In the meantime, if you're the boss, you've got payroll to meet; you've got expenses, you've got to pay them.

Michael: In your experience working with sales managers in business and seeing some of the results that your system can bring, can you give me an example of a success story with a company that you've worked with and tell me a little bit about that?

Ian: One of the things about the work that I do, when we get somebody and we have a customer that's open, that's willing to do what we suggest, the results blow me away far more than I would ever expect. As an example, we're working with an organization,

nothing sexy about the organization; they sell sand blasting equipment and the material that goes with the equipment.

Michael: Just on a regional local basis?

Ian: They're a national company and they've got regional offices around the company.

Michael: How many sales people do they have?

Ian: Overall, they've probably got about 25 sales people across eight different offices. So we went in and the MD said, look I'm willing to give you guys a try. I've got a guy in one of our regional offices who is struggling, he's stressed, he's doing the work himself, but his team is not where they need to be, sales are not where they need to be, sales were averaging at that point \$118,000 a month and the budgets were \$150,000 a month. They were way short of what they were supposed to be during a really good market. By the way, the reason that they were chosen as the pilot test was because the MD really thought that the sales manager would be willing, would be open to receiving the help. So we went in there and within three months, we'd done no training of the sales people yet, just went into the organization, put in some systems and processes and gave the manager some tools, and literally within three months it was unbelievable. They shot up from averaging as I said \$118,000 to they're now averaging \$220,000 consistently every month. The interesting thing as well was that their margins were hovering around about the 40-42%. Within three months they'd gotten that margin up to 46%. And now they're consistently between 45 and 46%. And we haven't even gone in and trained the sales people yet.

Michael: Give me another example like that.

Ian: In fact one of the first times we ever had was an organization that the general manager called us in to help the sales manager, who was a national sales manager, just wasn't up to scratch and could we either help him get himself together, put sales on the board, or at the very worst, coach him in or coach him out of the business. So we went in and again, just looking at basic systems and processes and the way that he managed his people, we then saw the weaknesses. We totally turned him around and his department around and the beauty of that was, he didn't have to go and look for another job. We just showed him how to do his job a whole lot better. What these guys were doing, they were averaging again, as a national team, \$1.2 million a month, and literally within six weeks,

we'd blown that figure out of the water. All of a sudden, they're now doing \$300,000 extra in a month. That's a lot of money. And again, we haven't started to train their sales people yet. It's just coming into an organization, looking at improving what the sale's manager is doing and in many cases not doing, and as a result, their numbers just consistently amaze me. Many times you've got an organization and sales are not doing well, along comes someone says we need to train the sales people. That will get up our numbers. And yet you can go in and do the training you like, but at the end of the day, it's the head of the fish that always stinks. And again, I've been there and done that. I can show you yet one more example. I had a situation where I was called in by a national bank. This was a major bank and they called us in to work with their merchant services division because the sales people had failed to keep store keepers and retailers, the end process system, the credit card system. And that's big business. And they called us in and literally it was quite amazing because the guy who brought us in said, look, I don't care what you do. You've got almost an open check book. Put together the best possible training for my team. The head count was 67 people across the country. So it was wonderful. We had this open checkbook and we went in and we did diagnostics beforehand. And we invested time and effort and a whole lot of money to customize a three day workshop. And we did individually profiling of the sales people, found out their strengths and their weaknesses, we did a lot because as I said, we had pretty much an open checkbook. So we went in and did the training; one of those particular wonderful affairs where anyone can sign up and everyone comes back and says this was just the best training possible. Where was this five years ago? And literally within three to four weeks when we wanted to now move on to the second stage opportunity, the feedback was, well it hasn't really taken root. There's no traction. And that's when I suddenly realized there were holes and limits. After again, once we'd done some analysis to find out why wasn't there traction, it all came down to the sales manager. This was not from personal experience; there had been research. 85% of training is not actually taken up unless of course there's somebody, the coach or sales manager that keeps driving it into the business.

Michael: Tell me about that retail manager you coached who had 12 stores at that high fashion chain.

Ian: One of our clients, and I've been working with him on different projects for a number of years. And the MD met me over a cup of coffee and said, Ian, I really need you to get in here and turn things around and I think to find a new general manager. This is a high

fashion retailer with 12 stores around the country and the stores averaged annual sales between \$1.5 and the bigger stores is \$4,000,000 a year. We went in and again working with one-on-one with the store manager, within two store sales quarter, so six months, on average stores were up 20%. It's not just sales revenue up, margin is up. Because we're looking at things like, I'll give you an example. The organization I was telling you about earlier, the sand blasting company, we take a look at all the high margin products they have. And we see exactly what can we do to sell more of them. And in one particular example, one of their high margin products, a really high margin product, was their nozzles. So this is a thing that goes on the end of the sand blasting hose and they're about \$400 a pop and they're really high margin. They said, how can we sell more of these? So the first thing we did was say let's have the sales people actually carry these in their boot, the trunk of the car. And when they drive to these customers, it's going with an actual testing device to test the nose or the hole of the nozzle. And that could be our lead-in to then talk to these people and say, as a free service I'll come and analyze and have a look at your current nozzle, which they did; people are happy to allow you to come in and have a look, the wider the hole of the nozzle, the more sand you're using. And it didn't take long before nozzle sales were just going through the roof.

Michael: And you brainstormed that idea with the sales manager?

Ian: Correct. We look at all the things and say, this product is very high margin. Another example in the same company, they had sand blasting helmets and they had these dark visors. And so they sell them in packs of 50. Again, high margin. I said why are you selling them packs of 50? Why don't you package them in packs of 100? Well, no reason why. And so they're selling them in packs of 100.

Michael: So what happened?

Ian: People bought them. And the interesting thing is you think, well hold on a minute, here you've got a situation the first question the sales manager said to me was hold on a minute, surely now that they've bought 100, if 50 took them two months to use, the 100 will take them four months. What about comfort? But the truth of the matter is, once you know you've got those things in stock, your people use them. If you've got them on the shelf, they use them. Michael, if you were to have a look at my library, you would probably close on 800 books on the subject of selling, and sales and sales management, and management. It's become an absolute passion of mine. Mainly because I was so bad at it. And

I'm constantly looking to see how can you take someone who's not a sales person and how to you get them to sell. And can you can take anybody and turn them into a good sales person. What makes good sales people; is it just a talent? And I believe yes, in many cases talent counts for a lot. But you can take non-talented people and if you give them the right tools and you work them, coach them over time, you can get really, really good results. Because many times you the results you can get are bigger than with talented people because they follow the designed process to get the results whereas sometimes talented people just come and do their own thing. It's a passion of mine.

Michael: What are the biggest issues facing sales managers today?

Ian: Sales managers are challenged today with many, many things. You've got markets where you've got increased competition, so competition especially for good businesses in good business market, it doesn't take long before it's flooded with competitors. And before you know it, you're no longer selling something that's unique, it's a known commodity. Think about the cost today of acquiring and actually getting a new customer. The put a sales person the road today costs a lot of money. The interesting thing is many companies, when they do budgets for a sales person, they don't really actually work out the true cost of the sales calls. If you actually sit down and analyze and looked at the true cost of the sales call - when you send the sales person out there to make the call, you really want to make sure that you maximize that investment. On average, if you take someone who's earning \$80,000 a year plus a car, the average sales call cost is about \$250, so Michael if you knew you had a sales person who was going to make a sales call and it was gonna cost you \$250 out of your pocket, what would you want for that \$250? And that's one of the question I ask business owners. It's costing you \$250 to make the sales call; what do you want from the sales call? The answer is normally, well we'd like a sale.

Michael: For \$250, I would expect a lot. I would expect someone who knows what they're doing.

Ian: Let me put it to you this way; we also know through research that it takes roughly five visits or five contacts before someone is going to give you an opportunity. So think about this; if you work it out at \$250 a pop, that's quite an investment. So the question I ask business owners and sales managers, what do you want from your first visit? We know we're not going to get an order for another five visits, so what do you want from your first visit? What do you want

your sales person to accomplish? If that's your \$250 on the table, what do you want for your money? So it's really coming at this from a very different angle. And this is why coaching is so important, because if I'm going to send you as my sales person into a company and it's gonna cost me \$250, I want to make sure that you're going in and you're gonna come out with something of value. And most of the time while we're trying to build the relationship, what I need most is information; I need knowledge about the company. About what they're using, what they're not using, about the competition, about what the potential is, about decision making, etc. And these are the questions that the sales people need to be initially going in and finding out to make your \$250 worthwhile.

So other issues that sales managers are facing, the biggest one is how to increase sales. Another huge issue is the sales cycle part. If you're selling software, you're asking the company to change their whole system and process. The sales cycle can be 18 months. During that 18 months, you're supporting the sales person and his car, etc. And then you can get to the end of the 18 months and be beat out by a competitor. The other big one is where do I find a good sales person, which is hard enough. How do I keep them? I'm sure you're going to appreciate, to find a really good sales person, someone who's hard working, ethical, with his skills, that's tough. But if I find them, how do I keep them? That's a big challenge for sales managers today. One of the byproducts of actually coaching sales people and actually implementing tougher coaching practice is that retention goes up because all of a sudden people are getting their needs met. The reason why people leave generally is not because of money. They leave because they're unhappy. I'm not getting attention, I'm not appreciated. The research out there is that money is not one of them. Money becomes an issue only after I'm unhappy for the other reasons. But if I'm sitting down with my sales manager once a week and we're looking at my business and we're looking at my sales during the week, taking it apart and putting it back together again and I'm planning my week and knowing exactly what I'm doing and how I'm doing it, retention goes up.

Michael: Is it expensive to hire and train sales people for companies generally?

Ian: It is expensive to hire and train new people. Most organizations, at least small to medium organizations, just absorb the cost. As an example, I bring in the rent, they're gonna go out and sell so many; normally at a minimum there's a week or two or three if you're really conscientious of training. I put them into the business to learn the

business, to learn our systems, to learn our process, for three weeks. And then I tell them now you're ready to rock and they'll go out and they'll burn opportunities because they don't know. So there's an opportunity cost. If you've bought the sales person, paid recruitment fees for them, there's the car, there's the petrol, there's the mobile phone, there's the laptop computer, there's all these things that go in to make the cost of bringing in the sales person far more than just their salary. On average, depending on how much you're paying your sales people, but if they're leaving in three to four months, the average cost to your company can be anywhere between \$6,000 and \$50,000 because these costs are hidden; they don't show up necessarily on the P&L. That doesn't mean that those costs don't exist; they do. They just don't show up on the P&L. Most small to medium organizations don't measure the cost of their turnover. But there are larger organizations that don't do that. And then what about if the sales person spends a week with another sales person in the field? That sales person is probably not going to be as productive as they would have been. And most of the time that the manager spends with a brand new sales person, these are all costs that when you start to track them, they add up. So when you've got somebody, you have to invest in them to make sure you get your bang for the buck. As a matter of fact, with most investments, many times we return the cost all in the beginning. The Japanese have a saying, you've got to go slow to go fast. The same with sales people. You bring in the sales person, initially take some time to get going.

Michael: How do those people end up in these sales manager positions?

Ian: Most sales managers, if you think about it, end up as sales managers because in many cases they were good at being a good sales person; I'm out there doing my thing and my sales manager leaves and all of a sudden, I get tapped on the shoulder and my boss says you're good, I need a sales manager, let me make you the sales manager. Now all of a sudden the boss has got two problems. He's just lost a good sales person and he's now gained a really lousy manager. Michael, the truth is just because I have a sales manager written on my business card doesn't mean that I know how to manage. I know how to sell but the word manager doesn't turn me into a manager. There are skills, tools, processes that I need to learn. And for many managers, they've got to learn on the job. They're learning as they go, depending on copying the manager that they had or manager that they liked. Might have been a manager hung in there longer than anybody else; might have been an average sales person coming in the middle of a team but I've just been around longer than anyone else. How many

sales managers actually move into their chair with knowledge of how to manage people? Managing people is a totally different ball game. There are so many key elements as to how to get performance out of people. It's not just let me check their records, let me see how many phone calls they made this week. That's just the tip of the ice berg.

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Ian: And unfortunately because most things I've known, they revert to those things. So they may manage activity because that's something I can hang my hat on. I can see if I made 20 calls this week, if I made three appointments, whatever the case might be. Those are things I can see. I can manage them. But that's not actually managing and leading people. So unfortunately you've got a lot of managers out there that are learning as they're going. Sometimes if they're lucky, there's a course or two-day workshop or they've done a course on sales management. But there again, just because you do a course doesn't mean to say that you come back and implement anything that you've learned.

Michael: What is the biggest factor affecting the production of sales that you've found through your involvement of the training industry?

Ian: When it comes to sales production, there are a number of things that we've detected. The number one issue is sales leadership and again I come back to, if you've got a good manager and the manager's supporting, coaching, helping and mentoring his team, he will get sales results. Sales leadership is what it's about. It has something to do with the old fish stinks from the head. If a company can get the sales manager to do what sales managers should be doing, which is coaching and mentoring and supporting their team. They've done a tremendous amount of research and I think we know from the research that close on 50% of sales people fall short of closure; they fall short of their budget. 90% of sales opportunities don't close when the sales people tell us that it's gonna close. 75% of product launches fail. Why is that and how can we make it successful? The truth is, it comes from the manager. If you look at the key issues again when it comes to managers faced with their people, they don't have a sales process, they don't have the skills, people aren't doing the right sorts of activity, or the right sorts of things, people aren't being developed. These are all management issues; they're not sales issues. Sales production is a management issue, it's not a sales person issue.

Yes, the sales person has to go out and do the work, that's his job. But it's the way he's being managed.

Michael: So, Ian, why sales management coaching?

Ian: Again, if we look at the research around the system of coaching, where there's been a tremendous amount of work done, productivity increases. The research shows that you can get productivity increased 53%. Quality goes up, customer service goes up, customer complaints get reduced, costs get reduced, team work is increased. These are all things that happen as a result of coaching. In fact, the interesting thing is that in the research that's done on coaching, most organizations see a return on their investments of over 500%.

Michael: How is it that coaching a sales person one-on-one can make such a huge difference?

Ian: Really good question. If we look at the process of coaching a sales person one-on-one, you start to get into the reason why they're not actually performing. Most sales organizations would say when do they get together with a sales person? Maybe if I happen to be on the road with them, and I'm doing a joint call, if a person is actually going through a performance appraisal once a quarter. But sitting down with a sales person every single week for half an hour to 45 minutes, bisecting the week that was and the week that's coming up, you start to see where the road blocks are. You start to see where the challenges are. And you start to help them across those road blocks. If someone had sat down with me all those years ago and I did confide that my biggest issue was fear of rejection, they could have walked me through that. It's not the reason why you shouldn't have sales production. Because in so many ways, it's softening their process up. I'll give you an example. We're working with this sales person who has the exact issue. And so all we did, we sit down with him and just chunked the process up. We asked him where's the fear of rejection coming from? The rejection is coming from the fact that they're so focused on the outcome, so focused on trying to make the sale, and if they don't make the sale, they take it personally. Just focus on the process. All you want you to do is go out and find times that we can get what it is that we sell. Let's focus on such rather than the sale. Now all of a sudden the sales person's out there and their agenda is different. We're now looking for a match as opposed to I'm now looking to try and make a sale. Rejection went out the window with this particular individual. In your first visit, could you go in and find half a dozen key elements of information? Could you do that without feeling

rejection? Now, yes of course I can go and find out who this person is, who that is, who the other is. Come back with that information and once you've got that information, as a sales manager we now look at that and say what should we do? How do we now take this to the next step? We chunk it down little bit by little bit by little bit and that's all the individuals need and what they can do, what to expect. Michael, why should rejection be a reason for not wanting to be successful in sales? I want to be successful, I want to sell more, I want to keep all the benefits that come from being a good sales person. So why should rejection hold me back? The reason is that's because no one expects me to actually get beyond that. And I'm not talking about sitting down and becoming somebody's therapist. That's not what this is about. This is about giving them tools and strategies to help them overcome their basic road blocks that are stopping them.

Michael: Is there still a place for the traditional sales meeting?

Ian: Absolutely. You've gotta have the sales meeting because there's gotta be a place to recognize your top performers; they want their accolades in front of the group. They want their pats on the back; they want to be backed by their team. You've got information you need to impart to the group as a group. There's times that you want to brainstorm your ideas with the team. There's times you wanna use those meetings for training, getting out new information for the traditional sales meeting. But to use the sales meeting as a way to drive performance, you're just not gonna get it.

Michael: So let's talk about this "put a rocket up your sales team" motto and how this developed. Give me an idea of what this motto is and what it's gonna do for my sales team.

Ian: "Put a rocket up your sales team" motto covers five key elements. It covers sales performance coaching, it covers sales performance planning, it covers sales performance process, skills and how to motivate an individual. So those are the five key elements that we focus on. And within each one of those five key elements, Michael, there are things that we need to do. As an example, if we said let's take sales performance skills, if I said to you, Michael, what do you think are the skills that a sales person must have if they're gonna be successful? First of all, they've gotta know how to go out and develop business; they've gotta know how to process; those elements would have to be key. Would you agree?

Michael: I would agree.

Ian: What about planning and how to manage themselves and how they manage their time and manage their character, that's a critical element. The other thing that we know is critical is how good they are at diagnosing the problems of the customer. We know that if I can identify a need and more importantly, get the customer to identify the need within themselves, half the job of selling is done. That's a skill. Call that diagnostic intuition. That means I'm able to go in there, ask the critical questions and get to where the customer themselves self-realizing and have them say you're right, this is an issue for me. And there's many models that are being developed by wonderful training companies. They help develop skills and give them developmental time management or diagnostic intuition. But these are basic skills and processes, if they're going to be good at their job, they have to have. What about the other skill, we call it engaging all parties? Today most sales are not made through somebody one-on-one. There's normally more than one person involved in the decision. The sales person needs to be able to get to all of those people; find out what their needs are; why they would want the product and this is again how to actually bring the whole thing to a conclusion. You know, we're looking at a sales cycle time line. And it's not just about closing the sale. You don't close the sale if you haven't opened the sale up correctly. Those are processes that sales people must be doing in order to get conclusion; in order to get those sales to the point of yes, now I've got a purchase order. So those are the five key elements in just one aspect called skill.

Michael: Why is having a sales process such a vital piece of this sales production puzzle? Why a process?

Ian: I take something with me, Michael, that I think you might find interesting. It's something we do in my workshop. Are you willing to just play a little game with me for a bit?

Michael: Sure, let's do it.

Ian: I want you to think of a number from one to ten. When you've got that number, what you do, multiply that number by nine. If you've got a two-digit number, I want you to add them together.

Michael: After I've multiplied?

Ian: Whatever you multiplied, if you've got two digits, I want you to add them together. So let's say you have 23, you'd add two plus three.

Michael: And if I don't?

- Ian: Then that's fine. So I want you to subtract five from that number. Now, I want you to think of a letter of the alphabet that corresponds with that number. So in other words, if the number was a one, you'd have A. If the number was two, you'd have B. Now, thinking of that letter in your head, I want you to think of a country that starts with that letter. Got it?
- Michael: Got it.
- Ian: Now, think of the second letter of that country, and think of an animal that begins with that letter.
- Michael: Okay, got it.
- Ian: Think of the color of that animal. Okay, if we've done our work correctly, your answer should be a gray elephant from Denmark.
- Michael: That's exactly right. Not bad.
- Ian: It's a process. I took you through step by step from A to Z. Isn't that astounding?
- Michael: That's astounding. That's great. I like that.
- Ian: So when it comes to process, if you look at a sales organization, what is our process for attracting new business? What is our process once we've attracted that new business, what is our process for servicing them, what is our process to identify whether they've got needs or whether there is a fit? What is our process for follow up, etc? This is why, if you've got steps A, B, C, D, you end up with gray elephants from Denmark.
- Michael: So do you fool this process? Like, when you asked me to think of the animal, I thought of elephant but I was trying to think of another animal.
- Ian: Oh, yeah, you could have had an emu from Egypt.
- Michael: Would that have messed it up?
- Ian: Well, at the end of the day, we do this in the workshops and I would say that probably 80% of the people think of elephants from Denmark. What does that prove? It proves that process works 80% of the time. You're never going to get anything to work 100% of the time. The idea is to improve what you're going through then

to work most of the time. We've got all these processes in the rest of our business. We've got an accounting process; we've got an IT process. Why don't we have a sales process? Why is the sales process left up to the individual sales person to work it out?

Michael: Why is such a vital piece of the sales production puzzle overlooked by so many of these sales companies?

Ian: Like any process, to develop a process takes time, it takes thought, it takes an engagement. Whether you've got to bring in an outside facilitator, an expert, or you do it yourself, it still takes time. If we look at the five key elements from the sales performance process, the first element is, if you've got a design, the process is that you're going to sit down and actually design it. And the other interesting thing is, and what we usually find, is that most design processes are not designed as to how we should do it from a sales perspective so prospects will identify needs, we will present our product, and we'll try to close the sale. Processes, if they had any source, are designed from the sales person's perspectives. Where we come from, they say no. The first place to start is to look from a buyer's perspective. What is the process that your customers go through to buy a product? So it's a different game entirely, because they go and investigate the process; every customer's different and every organization's different as to how they buy. But developing a process is based on how our customers buy. And now we match our sales process to that. If we're looking at developing a process, once we've actually worked out how our customers buy and we've matched our sales process to that, the next thing we have to develop is best practice methods and tools; a template. As an example, if there's a follow up letter that goes after my first visit, should we just leave it up to the sales person to come up with their own letter or should we give them some key elements they must include in that letter. So developing tools and templates that are designed can get results. People resist following a script; however, I do believe that if I'm brand new in something then I need to follow a script initially until I can actually make it on my own; until I can start to inject my own personality until that covers all key elements. What's the process that happens when you get an incoming call? It may not get sent to the sales department immediately. Should the receptionist have a list of half a dozen questions that they should ask? These are tools and templates that must be developed as part of your process. And then, like anything, you've gotta have clear measures because once you've got a clear measure and you know you're in part B or part C of the process, then I can measure that and manage it. In no time, you've got the skills and behaviors that are required to drive the process.

Once you have a well defined set of processes, then you can plug anybody into that. So you can take somebody, a brand new sales person, you say that the way we approach our customers is, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, all the way to this is how we follow up and service. And it's clear and it's doable and the sales person can follow it, and there's tools and there's templates; all things that go towards helping them achieve what they need to achieve. If we just looked at the perfect numbers to why we should have a sales process, we know that from all the studies that have been done on products, that only between three and ten, maybe 15% if you're lucky, sales people have the intuition or the skills or natural abilities just to go out and make things happen. What about the other 85% of people? If we have a step by step process, then they too can come up with gray elephants from Denmark. It shouldn't just be the step to the top tier sales people. So if we can take the rest of the team, Joe Average, and put them through a well defined, specific sales process that details all the steps along the way and give them tools to use at each step, then all of a sudden we're headed towards, as I said, our gray elephants from Denmark.

Michael: What's the difference between managing a sales process and managing a sales person's activity level, or is this the same thing?

Ian: If you're managing activity, you're looking at things like how many calls did they make, and how many appointments did they get. But you're not actually looking at the quality or the content of the call. So when you're looking at process, you're looking at the quality as opposed to just the outcome. You're looking at things that happen along the way rather than just results. Let's face it, if it's taking me 20 calls to make one appointment, then you could say, well that should tell me that there's a problem with the process. But unless you actually go in, sit down and listen to the person, find out what they do, all you're really focused on is the outcome or the results. Whereas a process is about what do I do to get five out of my 20 calls. What do I do when I hit the gatekeeper? What is the best way to get around a gatekeeper? For what it is that we sell, not for what it is that you sell or the way to sell insurance or the way to sell software programs, or cleaning equipment. It's the way that we sell in our business, what's the best way. So again as an example, if the gatekeeper is the receptionist and I'm selling an industrial product, what's the best way to actually avoid getting through reception altogether? Is there a way that I can go around the back of the organization? And again, if you've got a process for doing that that works 70, 80, 90% of the time, now all of a sudden you've got a sales person who's started to get some success.

Michael: Ian, there's tons of sales training out there today. You've got spin selling, I've heard of solution selling, I've heard of strategic selling, consultative selling; is there a best practice sales training model that someone in sales today needs to at least investigate?

Ian: There's some really good sales training out there. The question is, what's the best model for me? I told you at the beginning it's about the architecture and the timing of an organization. How do you know that spin selling is actually going to work for what it is and the way that it is that we sell? We know from our education that when you're education adults, one of the keys is, it must be relevant. In other words, what I'm learning must be relevant to what it is that I'm doing. And that is the problem with the typical generic sales training is that people try really hard to translate the generic into what does that mean for me? So many times no matter how good the program is, it does need somebody to come in and tailor it to suit the organization. But let's face it, how many sales managers are experts at all the methodology as to what is out there for agents and sales training. So what they probably do is they get some referrals or they'll go through Google, or they'll go through the Yellow Pages and identify half a dozen or maybe three or four sales training organizations; they'll come in and they'll get them to do presentations and go through how they do things. The question is, they're only looking at three methods or four methods or five methods, and hopefully that method will be right for one organization. Where we come from is, we say we've got an open process. Depending on the need of your business, we'll find the right training methodology for your team. Depending on the way you structure your sales process, we'll find the right method. And again, there's so many wonderful methods out there. This whole thing called sales training and learning is my passions. If you were to look around my home at the moment, I'm reading probably three books; all the latest books on sales, value added selling and question based selling. There's so much wonderful stuff out there but there's so many, how do you know what's gonna fit you? You won't. So you need to go from experience or you'll do trial and error. It's a tough one because many times you don't get the right fit. If you don't get the right fit, then all that time, effort, and dollars that have just been poured into something that doesn't deliver results.

Michael: Well, let's talk about "Put a rocket up your sales team" product that you've put together. I'm looking at a headline from your flyer. "How to dramatically increase the output and revenue generation of your sales team without increasing your cost." Could this be possible, without increasing my cost?

Ian: We believe that if we find that the key elements to increase sales production is the sales manager, and if we can get the sales manager some models, some tips and tools for them to go back into their sales team and supply those models, they will get sales production. There's no question. Obviously it would be wonderful for us to come in and help the sales manager integrate these tools. But there are many people that are quite capable of picking up a tool or a model and driving it into their own organization. And what we find is that, if given the right tools, the right models and let them go into the company's and implement them. If all they got out of our session was I'm going to sit down with my sales people once a week and look at the week that was and the week that's coming up in depth, and I mean in depth, I will guarantee they will get huge, massive increase in sales. No coaching, no sales support from me or from our organization; if they just do the one thing – look at the week that was and the week that's coming up, the productivity gain that they will get will literally blow them out of the water. You know how I know? Because it blows me. If we go and put something as simple as that into the organization, within two to three months, sales are just flying.

Michael: Tell me what is this clinic, why did you put it together, and what am I gonna learn there? Give me an idea about this clinic.

Ian: We put the clinic together, I guess for two-fold. Firstly as a way of giving managers tools that they can take out to the client and use so that whether they use our service or not, we're exposing them to tools that I wish I had or I certainly wish that sales managers that I've had in my own sales career would have used. My whole purpose is, I love sales people. I love the whole concept of selling and I want those people to be successful. And I know that if sales managers would implement the tools, even if, as I said, one, two, three or four of them, they will gain results. If I'm a manager and I'm coming to this clinic, what am I gonna get? As I said, I'm gonna learn some powerful methodology that I can implement immediately and as we say, that will rocket their sales forward. We help them identify the true cost of their sales call. So as I mentioned earlier, if I knew that my sales calls on average are costing me \$250 a call, what would I do as a result? What would I expect from my sales people as a result? We actually give them some tools and tips that they can take back with them. One of them being searching, critical questions that the sales person must be able to answer before they make the call. How do I keep my best people? I've got a really good person and I know that it won't be long before competition will come in and tap him on the shoulder. How do I hold on to him?

We look at the key issues that are facing sales managers and sales directors today, and how to avoid them. Bottom line is, if you come to this workshop you will walk away with proven, effective tools and most importantly, Michael, 20 good strategies that you literally can put to work immediately to prepare your sales team, to really get them to start moving.

Michael: If you were to approach a sales manager with your consulting . . .

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Michael: Have you ever encountered a scenario where the sales manager may be hesitant about asking the boss to pay for this consulting, and why?

Ian: Great question. The interesting thing is, if I were talking to a sales manager and presenting to a sales manager that is thinking to himself, I really need this. However, if I go to my boss and say I need a coach, I need someone to help me, the boss is thinking, what am I paying you for? You're the one that's supposed to know all the answers. That's why I'm paying you to do the job of a sales manager. Now you're telling me that you need help. Business somehow is very different to say, on the sports field. You wouldn't think twice about having a coach even in a junior league, never mind in the seniors. You wouldn't think twice about, no matter how much you're paying your sports person, you'd get him a coach and yet in business, even though the new research and data are there to show the incredible improvement and performance once you have a coach, somehow the people needing the help, and this is usually driven top down, very few people would actually go for it, unless of course they were willing to pay for it themselves.

Michael: Yet you offer a 100% guarantee. Can you describe about that guarantee? What is it?

Ian: Bottom line, Michael, if you're not happy with what you get, we'll give you your money back. You walk into a shop and you buy something and it doesn't do what it promised to do, you should have every right to get your money back and this is no different. We teach our customers that they need to stand by their product. We believe you come to this workshop, if you don't get 1,000% more than you paid for, we're more than happy to write you a check on the spot.

- Michael: What is the price currently, the investment for someone to come to this workshop?
- Ian: The investment for this workshop is only \$285. We will be raising the investment but at the moment this is more of a way for businesses to get the information out there. Let's get the tools and support and help out to sales managers who really need it.
- Michael: If I come to this workshop, am I gonna be hard sold on some higher package presentation or is it a content driven workshop?
- Ian: No, the truth of the matter is we're not trying to sell you product. It's just a way of exposing McKenzie Consulting and what we do and how we do it. But most importantly, it's about giving you some tools and some skills and some strategies that you can take back and implement. At this workshop we're not set to sell you anything; we're here to give you some really practical tools and processes to help your business.
- Michael: If I wanted to bring my sales manager, and I'm the owner, I wanted to bring the partner or another person from the business, is there any kind of discount or is it the same price?
- Ian: Because we have limited space, it really is the same price. But in life, Michael, everything is negotiable. So ask one of our sales people, see if he'll give you a discount.
- Michael: If I'm interested in coming, how can I schedule and get me booked? Who do I call? What number?
- Ian: What I would recommend is give our office a call; area code 02 94607022 and ask for the sales tutor and you'll be put through to find out what you're looking for and plug you in there. Again, this is not hard sell. If you've listened this far to the recording and you've got an interest, you wouldn't be finding otherwise. We're not here to hard core sell you into a workshop. You're already calling because you're interested in coming. It's more about do we have the space. If we can't book you into this one, we'll book you into the next one.
- Michael: Ian, I really appreciate this. It's been a heck of a call. I've learned a lot and I really appreciate you sharing even some of your personal experiences. I think when you were 16 and that guy fired you, he opened up a can of worms. You gotta thank that guy.
- Ian: It was a defining moment. We all have them in our lives, don't we?