

**42**<sup>™</sup>  
Rules  
to  
Increase Sales  
Effectiveness

**2ND EDITION**

A Practical Guidebook for Sales Reps,  
Sales Managers and Anyone Looking  
to Improve Their Selling Skills

**MICHAEL GRIEGO**

  


**SECOND  
EDITION**

# **“42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)” Book Excerpt**

A Practical Guidebook for Sales  
Reps, Sales Managers and Anyone  
Looking to Improve their Selling  
Skills

**By Michael Griego**

Foreword by Mark Leslie,  
Founder/CEO of Veritas Software

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## **BOOK EXCERPT Table of Contents**

- Foreword by Mark Leslie
- Intro
- Rule 1: Rules Are Meant To Be Broken
- Rule 2: It's Not About You
- Rule 7: Know How Your Customer Buys
- About the Author
- Getting "42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)"

# Contents

**NOTE:** This is the Table of Contents (TOC) from the book for your reference. The eBook TOC (below) differs in page count from the tradebook TOC.

<b>Foreword</b>	Foreword by Mark Leslie . . . . .	1
<b>Intro</b>	. . . . .	3
<b>Part I</b>	<b>The Effective Sales Perspective . . . . .</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rule 1</b>	<b>Rules Are Meant To Be Broken. . . . .</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Rule 2</b>	<b>It's Not About You . . . . .</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Rule 3</b>	<b>It's Not About Your Product . . . . .</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Rule 4</b>	<b>It's All About Your Customer . . . . .</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Rule 5</b>	<b>It's Also All About Revenue . . . . .</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Part II</b>	<b>The Effective Sales Process . . . . .</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Rule 6</b>	<b>Target Your Customer . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Rule 7</b>	<b>Know How Your Customer Buys . . . . .</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Rule 8</b>	<b>Know How Your Customer Makes Decisions . . . . .</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Rule 9</b>	<b>Develop Your Customer's Buying Milestones. . . . .</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Rule 10</b>	<b>Develop Your Optimized Sales Process . .</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Rule 11</b>	<b>Create a Playbook . . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>

<b>Part III</b>	<b>The Effective Salesperson . . . . .</b>	<b>32</b>
Rule 12	Be a Superstar . . . . .	34
Rule 13	Have a PAR Time . . . . .	36
Rule 14	Make a 10-5-2-Do List . . . . .	38
Rule 15	Measure Activity Metrics . . . . .	40
Rule 16	Develop Your Success Formula . . . . .	42
Rule 17	Keep Score with a Scorecard . . . . .	44
Rule 18	Reading Makes Perfect . . . . .	46
<b>Part IV</b>	<b>Effective Territory Management . . . . .</b>	<b>48</b>
Rule 19	Prioritize Your Accounts and Opportunities . . . . .	50
Rule 20	Develop a Territory Attack Plan . . . . .	52
Rule 21	Develop a 360° Account Snapshot . . . . .	54
Rule 22	Upgrade Your Account Management . . . . .	56
Rule 23	Manage Your Channels . . . . .	58
Rule 24	Master Your 30-60-90 Day Forecast . . . . .	60
<b>Part V</b>	<b>Effective Sales Communication . . . . .</b>	<b>62</b>
Rule 25	Elevate Your Sales Pitch . . . . .	64
Rule 26	Develop a 20 to 40 Second Speech . . . . .	66
Rule 27	Live to Sell Another Day . . . . .	68
Rule 28	Manage Your Sales Email . . . . .	70
Rule 29	Get Them to Call Back . . . . .	72
Rule 30	Share a Great Testimonial . . . . .	74

<b>Part VI</b>	<b>The Effective Sales Meeting. . . . .</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Rule 31</b>	<b>Prepare the Call Box . . . . .</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Rule 32</b>	<b>Become a Probe Master. . . . .</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Rule 33</b>	<b>Qualify, Qualify, Qualify. . . . .</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Rule 34</b>	<b>Make a Player Chart . . . . .</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Rule 35</b>	<b>Develop an Executive Whiteboard . . . . .</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Rule 36</b>	<b>Present Your Solution . . . . .</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Part VII</b>	<b>The Effective Close. . . . .</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Rule 37</b>	<b>Become a Close Master. . . . .</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Rule 38</b>	<b>Map a Problem Chart . . . . .</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Rule 39</b>	<b>Use a Customer Decision Plan . . . . .</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Rule 40</b>	<b>Propose Like a Pro. . . . .</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Rule 41</b>	<b>Negotiate to Close . . . . .</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Rule 42</b>	<b>These are My Rules. What are Yours? . . .</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>Diagrams. . . . .</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>About the Author. . . . .</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Your Rules</b>	<b>42 Rules Program. . . . .</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Books</b>	<b>Other Happy About Books . . . . .</b>	<b>110</b>



## Foreword by Mark Leslie

I got my first sales experience selling shoes in a mall many years ago. I never forgot the fundamentals that went into the various aspects of a fairly simple sales process: engaging suspects and prospects (standing at the front door of the shoe store), qualifying (escorting them to "my" set of seats), questioning (size and style, offering alternatives if out of stock), demonstrating ("Try them on, and walk around. They look good—how do they feel?"), closing ("Do you want to wear them out, or should we wrap them?"). Over the years, in more complex technology environments, I added experiences in hiring and managing salespeople and building organizations that were high-performance selling machines. The fundamentals never changed at the field level, only got more complex. However, the sustaining of sales quality, efficiency and effectiveness across the entire organization became the greater challenge in achieving revenue goals and company success. Indeed, sales effectiveness at the micro and macro level has been the elusive target for many companies in which I have built, managed, advised and invested.

I first met Mike Griego in 2005 in a Palo Alto café. Having retired as CEO and Chairman of the Board at Veritas, I was teaching courses on Entrepreneurship and Sales Organization at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. Mike, as president/founder of a MXL Partners, a Silicon Valley sales process consulting and training firm, and Stanford MBA alumni himself, had contacted me and requested a meeting to simply meet and compare notes. We had a delightful first meeting and discussed a draft article I was writing on "The Sales Learning

Curve" which was published in the 'Harvard Business Review' in the summer issue of 2006. Mike agreed to review it for me and confirm its conclusions. It was refreshing to discuss the complexities of structuring and managing the modern enterprise sales organization with someone so well versed in all aspects of the world of sales. Mike was as comfortable and experienced in the current trenches of the Silicon Valley field sales environments as he was in the executive management and board rooms of very sophisticated organizations and the sales challenges that faced them.

While the world doesn't necessarily need another sales book, it does need a modern, fresh look at the tools, concepts and principles of sales effectiveness at all levels of an organization in today's marketplace. Mike's new book, '42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness,' is a powerful and quick read for all parties involved in driving sales revenue, from the executive team to the sales and marketing organization. He has well captured the keys to increasing sales effectiveness with a crisp, practical and highly readable book.

I wish this book was available when I started my career. It would no doubt have improved my selling prowess, but also would have developed and guided me as an engineering-oriented executive in validating my intuitive hunches and managing and overseeing the sales side of organizations. I heartily recommend you pull up a chair, grab a cup of coffee, read this book and be ready to re-confirm and even re-think your views of sales and sales effectiveness.

**Mark Leslie**

*Mark Leslie is the Founder of Veritas Software (now Symantec) and served as CEO and Chairman of the Board. During his tenure he grew annual revenues from \$95,000 to \$1.5 billion. He is currently the managing director of Leslie Ventures, a private investment firm. He is also a lecturer at Stanford's Graduate School of Business where he teaches courses in Entrepreneurship and Sales Organization.*

### **Who Should Read This?**

If you are a professional salesperson, sales manager or director, VP of Sales, CEO, any role in Marketing, or anyone supporting selling efforts, this book is for you. If you are a senior executive, consultant, venture capitalist, board member, entrepreneur or aspiring up-and-comer, you should know the updated tools, language and tactics of selling in today's market.

As a professional sales consultant and trainer to Fortune 500 firms and leading Silicon Valley technology firms, I have reduced the keys to sales effectiveness to 42 rules. These rules have been road tested over 28 years of personal sales and management experience and close observation of many salespeople and sales organizations. These rules apply to all selling efforts, from high-tech enterprise sales to non-technology sales.

### **Why Should You Read This?**

Sales isn't rocket science, but it's not ABC simple either. While selling is often either over-engineered or over-simplified, today even the professionals are caught off-guard in a changing world and marketplace. "Old school" is out; new school is in, but with a twist. There are key sales fundamentals that never go out of style but still need a refresh. This book, '42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness,' upgrades and adjusts foundational rules for today's business environment to increase the overall sales effectiveness of individuals or teams.

In '42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness,' you will learn:

- **The Effective Sales Perspective** - 5 rules that will realign your thinking about the role of a salesperson to the customer, product and company.
- **The Effective Sales Process** - 6 rules that will clarify and present the correct way to build a selling process from your customer's buying process, your corresponding sales process and tactical sales playbooks.
- **The Effective Salesperson** - 7 rules that lay out the blueprint for the successful and effective salesperson from their attributes, habits, metrics, formulas, scorecards to even their reading lists.
- **Effective Territory Management** - 6 rules that provide guidance for salespeople and anyone managing salespeople to prioritize and strategically approach and manage territories, channels and forecasts.
- **Effective Sales Communication** - 6 rules applied to various levels of your sales communications, from phone and email actions to practical best practices in structuring elevator pitches, sales messages and talking points.
- **The Effective Sales Meeting** - 6 rules that break down the requirements for your perfect and optimal customer sales call, from power preparation, probing and questioning, to qualification and executive white-boarding.
- **Effective Sales Closing** - 6 rules that get to the heart of effectively bringing your deals to closure, with sales cycle tactics and professional deal management that stands out from discovery to proposal to negotiations.

This book will challenge standard conventions while reinforcing best practices that have gotten lost in the recent advancement of new technologies and modern tools. It's a great read for any professional to confirm that their own "salesmanship" is still on target and appropriately current. Use this as your own handbook to reset on key best-practices for the new day or teach a new generation 42 nuggets and practical applications of this fascinating activity called Sales.



## 1

**Rules Are Meant To Be Broken**

**Use rules with your own applied wisdom and discretion.**

Let's be realistic. This book presents rules that really do increase sales effectiveness when applied. These rules are solid and proven over the years in numerous organizations including IBM, Sun Microsystems, Infosys, Gartner Group, Cisco and many other leading technology firms in Silicon Valley. But just as I allow for reasonable flexibility in managing sales organizations (no need to be as ruthless as Alex Baldwin in the movie 'Glengarry Glen Ross') so it is with these rules. Use them with your own applied wisdom and discretion.

I wish I had this book at the beginning of my sales career. In essence I almost did, as I was trained well at The Southwestern Company and IBM Corporation. Nevertheless the conciseness of it all would have been helpful. Likewise, I wish I had this book at the time I first became a sales manager and before my first assignment as a VP of Sales. Many pieces would have fallen together in place sooner without trial and error or without having to cobble together learnings from several mentors, books, and raw experiences. Indeed some of these rules would have made some points in my life simpler and certainly increased sales effectiveness.

Some of these rules will absolutely resonate with you, while others may not. Don't fight that. I honestly believe that the majority will provide you fodder to work with and initiate required readjustment to your own thinking, process, tactics and strategies. In any event, run with what works for you and disregard what does not. After all, in most cases, rules are meant to be broken.

## 2

**It's Not About You**

**There's nothing like a highly effective and productive salesperson with a heart and sensitivity to others.**

We spend much of our life focused on our personal needs, wants and desires. From childhood dreams to target goals in academics, sports and personal relationships, we pretty much spend a large chunk of time thinking about ourselves operating in the world around us. It's natural to carry this self absorption over to our professional lives. Of course, we think, we must focus on ourselves to consciously and effectively "get the job done."

In the Sales world, this pre-occupation with our own concerns can impede our selling efforts. There are potentially three areas where selfish thinking can get in the way of your being at your best. Think about it.

**Me vs. my Product** - Self-focused thinking plays out in how we consider our product or solution in the marketplace. If I care more about hitting my numbers, enlarging my territory or boosting my personal earnings than about bringing value to customers, I risk coming across as callous and cold to customers and partners and even others inside my company. We've all seen the sales rep who steamrolls the marketing team or support team or speaks of his customers with disdain. There's a fine line between caring for our customers and looking out for ourselves. Learn to see and believe the benefits your product solution brings to customers with you as the conduit. This big picture view brings a healthy perspective to your daily sales effort.

**Me vs. my Sales Pitch** - Selfish thinking plays out literally in how we approach our prospect or customer on the phone, email or face-to-face. If I really don't consider the person on the other side as a human being with their own wants and needs, I risk a distancing or disconnection in my communications. I may be repeating a script or common sales pitch, but I must recognize that I'm ultimately dealing with a real person with issues, dreams and desires of their own mixed up with a potential need for my products or services (see Rule 4). Approach your pitch with deft caution and a heart.

**Me vs. my Customer** - Once past the initial approach and now into the sales call or meeting, self-centeredness can also play out in how we personally engage with our customers and prospects throughout the sales call. If I am too self-focused in a customer meeting, I risk spending too much of that meeting on my own concerns; namely, my product offerings rather than my prospect or customer (see Rule 3). As we will find, the customers often cares not a whit about you. The vibe of a self-serving salesperson becomes very clear to a prospect.

When one approaches sales with a healthy and balanced sense of self and care for others, then this rule that "it's not about you" is easy to swallow. Indeed, an effective salesperson carries him or her self with strength, confidence and competence. But there's nothing like a highly effective and productive salesperson with a heart and sensitivity to others. It stands out and customers appreciate it. Even if they can't put their finger on it.

A balanced salesperson (see Rule 12) with an understanding that it's not only about him or herself will have a healthy sense of self relative to their product offerings, selling approach and customer interaction. Combine this perspective with some of the effectiveness tools and rules in this book and you have a winning combination that produces benefits for all parties.

**Are you selfish in your sales efforts?**

## 7

**Know How Your Customer Buys**

**Whether they're aware of it or not, all buyers go through a buying process.**

Salespeople need to understand how their customers buy. Specifically, how do they actually purchase the products you sell? Our customers are always making decisions about products and services via a tangible buying process. In fact, businesses and consumers go through a defined or non-defined buying process. Whether we're aware of it or not, all buyers go through a natural progression toward an end purchase. If we understand that particular buying process then we can more effectively sell to it.

Several years ago some friends referred me to Palo Alto Metro Sports for new running shoes to fix my pronation problem (caused by my ankles rolling out when I jog). When I walked into the store the salesman approached me and asked me if he could help. I described my problem and he proceeded to clarify and explain to me what pronation was and showed me two columns of shoes on the wall that addressed advanced cushioning and stability. At the same time he asked me questions about how often I run, what kind of surface I ran on, how far I ran, in a sense qualifying me while asking me also the price range I was looking at, certain brands, etc. He then said, "I'll go in the back and find two or three pairs of shoes that fit the type of shoes you're looking for. You can try them on, go outside, run up and down the runway. They'll be in your price band. You can then figure out which pair works best for you and we'll get you out of here in a few minutes. How does that sound to you?" Well, it

sounded great. What he was doing was stepping me through a shoe buying process, and essentially taking me through his matching sales cycle. At any point I could have said, "Whoa, I'm really just looking—I'd like to check over at the Stanford Shopping Center." But I said, "Bring me out some shoes and I'll give 'em a try." I purchased a pair and have since purchased my last 10 pairs of running shoes from Palo Alto Metro Sports.

Now that's purchasing at a consumer level. Most of us, whether we're buying refrigerators, other household items, cars, etc., go through a process and, if forced to, can specify the various steps of that process. This process can be documented and applied to any business purchase as well.

In the following chart you can see that there is a **Customer Buying Process** that shows a progression through different stages. Terminology can vary whether it's a consumer or business sale. First there is an initial Interest or Awareness stage followed by an Education or Information Gathering stage where information is gathered, compared and explored. Next is an Evaluation or Demonstration stage where one takes it out for a spin drive or "tries it on for size." Then comes a Justification or Confirmation stage where people conduct some type of financial justification and finally a Decision or Purchase stage where the customer makes a buying decision.

As mentioned, this often goes on without people even knowing consciously that this is happening. Good selling maps a selling process (Rule 10) to an understood buying process. If we know where the customer is going, we can map a process to it and take them along while we manage the sales cycle. Just as the good shoe salesman proactively stepped me through the process, so good salespeople know where their customers are going, how their buyers buy and move them along appropriately. This works for a very simple sale like selling shoes as well as the more sophisticated multi-million dollar complex sales efforts, as we shall soon see. Those who understand this will be way ahead of the curve.

**Do you know how your customer buys?**

## The Customer Buying Process



**Figure 1: The Customer Buying Process**

## About the Author



Michael Griego is president of **MXL Partners**, a sales consulting firm providing organizational sales training and strategic sales management and coaching services.

Michael conducts executive, sales and sales management consulting and training services for companies around the world. He brings over 28 years of practical high-technology sales and sales management experience to his clients. He has held sales and executive management positions with IBM Corporation, XL-Datacomp/StorageTek, Dataquest/Gartner Group, Zona Research/Intelliquest, Active Decisions and Workshare.

Michael has conducted sales training and consulting services for a wide range of companies from Fortune 500 firms to early-stage start-ups in Silicon Valley. He's a popular corporate and CEO summit keynote speaker and guest lecturer at leading business schools including Stanford's Graduate School of Business. Michael has a BA from Occidental College and an MBA from Stanford University. He has been married to his wife, Debbie, for 33 years. They have three children and reside in Mountain View, California.

**Getting “42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)”**  
**(<http://happyabout.com/42rules/increasesaleseffectiveness.php>)**

*42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)* can be purchased as an eBook for \$14.95 or tradebook for \$19.95 at:  
<http://happyabout.com/42rules/increasesaleseffectiveness.php> or at other online and physical book stores.

Please contact us for quantity discounts [sales@happyabout.info](mailto:sales@happyabout.info) or to be informed about upcoming titles [bookupdate@happyabout.info](mailto:bookupdate@happyabout.info) or phone (408-257-3000).

*42 Rules to Increase Sales Effectiveness* provides the keys to sales excellence in today's challenging world. These tools have been taught by Michael Griego to major companies all around the world and thousands of professional salespeople, sales managers and executives who want to improve their own personal sales effectiveness and that of their organizations.

"We see Mike Griego as the best in class sales thought leader. His new book brings together his years of experience and tools into a powerful and easy to read text. I highly recommend this to anybody interested in building a best in class sales organization."

**David Frigstad, Chairman, Frost & Sullivan**

"I've been around sales and selling for 30 years, attended every program and read nearly every book on the art and science of selling. In a highly readable format, Mike's book reconfirms and realigns modern sales and sales management best practices. It's a worthy tool for today's sales reps, sales managers and executives."

**Dr. Jeffrey Magee, best-selling author, publisher of PERFORMANCE Magazine**

"Mike has been able to capture and articulate the "art and science of selling" which to be honest I thought had become lost. Mike's 25+ years of successful sales and sales management is very evident in this book."

**John Laing, former Worldwide VP Sales, Symantec**



#### **MICHAEL GRIEGO**

is president and founder of MXL Partners, a Silicon Valley firm providing sales training, consulting and management services. After a successful sales and management career at high-technology firms like IBM, XL/Datacomp, Dataquest-Gartner Group, Inteliquist and Active Decisions, Michael is now a popular sales trainer, sales process consultant and keynote speaker for companies worldwide. He has a degree from Occidental College and an MBA from Stanford University.

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