



“To Sell Is Human”

The Surprising Truth About Moving Others

Daniel H. Pink

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Introduction

One of the things I love best about Dan Pink’s writing is his beautiful use of the English language. You should own this book almost as much as a great lesson in English composition, as the valuable information it contains.

The introduction begins with Dan sharing a personal introspective reconstruction of two weeks of his entire activity – everything from meals eaten, conversations with friends and business connections, etc. But when it was done, and he stopped to examine any aha’s, the biggest one was:

“When I stepped back to assess this welter of information – a pointillist [look that word up] portrait of what I do and therefore, in some sense, who I am – the picture that stared back was a surprise: I am a salesman.” . . . “I spend a significant portion of my days trying to coax others to part with resources. Sure sometimes I’m trying to tempt people to purchase books I’ve written. But most of what I do doesn’t directly make a cash register ring.” . . . “I am seeking resources other than money. Can I get strangers to read an article, an old friend to help me solve a problem, or my nine-year-old son to take a shower after baseball practice?”

And even for those who actually are in sales, whether that’s selling cars, perfume, consulting services, or insurance, Pink suggests, *“But all of you are likely spending more time than you realize selling in a broader sense – pitching colleagues, persuading funders, cajoling kids. Like it or not, we’re all in sales now.”*

Rather than viewing those in ‘sales’ as a noble pursuit, the traditional persona more closely resembles the obnoxious insurance salesman who keeps reappearing daily in **“Groundhog Day”**, and we cheer as Bill Murray finally KO’s him. Dan describes the old sales image this way:

“To the smart set, sales is an endeavor that requires little intellectual throw weight - a task for slick glad-handers who skate through life on a shoeshine and a smile. To others it’s the province of dodgy characters doing slippery things – a realm where trickery and deceit get the speaking parts while honesty and fairness watch mutely from the rafters. Still others

view it as the white collar equivalent of cleaning toilets – necessary perhaps, but unpleasant and even a bit unclean.”

But that’s not the ‘sales’ world that Pink will be dissecting in his book. This is largely because as Dan says,

“This is a book about sales. But it is unlike any book about sales you have read (or ignored) before. That’s because selling in all its dimensions – whether pushing Buicks on a car lot or pitching ideas in a meeting – has changed more in the last ten years than it did over the previous hundred. Most of what we think we understand about selling is constructed atop a foundation of assumptions that has crumbled.”

Part One – Rebirth of aSalesman

Chapter 1 – We’re All in Sales Now

Dan begins his exploration of sales in today’s complex world by visiting the past. He delights in telling his experiences with Norman Hall, the ‘last’ of the Fuller Brush salesmen, now in his 70’s.

Personally, I can really identify with the old ‘door to door’ . . .demo-ing your wares. . .offering a free sample . . .a sales model which flourished back in the 40’s, 50’s, going forward, even somewhat past the turn of the century. In the late 60’s, I even sold Cutco knives – door-to-door, although not very successfully. And I lost my high school presidency election in 1963 to a fellow who eventually became regional head of sales for Fuller Brush. I should have known better than to have run against a guy who was successful selling fire extinguishers to high school students.

Dan describes a business which was begun in 1903 by a Nova Scotia farm boy, Alfred Fuller - with a sales force of a few hundred - which by 1948, grew to 83,000 North American salesmen who sold cleaning and hair brushes to 20 million families in the U.S. and Canada.

Dan also reminds us that the Fuller Brush man became an icon in popular culture with examples like Red Skelton starring in “*The Fuller Brush Man*” in 1948 which Pink describes as, “*a screwball comedy in which a hapless salesman is framed for a crime – and must clear his name, find the culprit, win the girl, and sell a few Venetian blind brushes along the way.*”

But as Dan says, in February of 2012, the Fuller Brush Company filed for reorganization under the U.S. bankruptcy law’s Chapter 11. And he also reported that two months after Fuller’s bankruptcy, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* shut down production of its print version, followed a month later by Avon firing its CEO, and seeking a new corporate suitor.

“In the same way that cash machines thinned the ranks of bank tellers and digital switches made telephone operators all but obsolete, today’s technologies have rendered salesmen and saleswomen irrelevant. As we rely ever more on websites and smart phones to locate

and purchase what we need, salespeople themselves – not to mention the very act of selling – will be swept into history’s dustbin.”

But before you put down this summary wondering WHY, that if Dan Pink feels this way, did he write this book, he then turns from sending out sales “*death notices*” to forecasting a “*birth announcement*”.

He offers a surprising statistic from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

“One in Nine American workers work in sales (15 million people)” . . . “trying to convince someone else to make a purchase. They are real estate brokers, industrial sales representatives, and securities dealers. They sell planes to airlines, trains to city governments, and automobiles to prospective drivers at more than ten thousand dealerships across the country. Some work in posh offices with glorious views, others, in dreary cubicles with Dilbert cartoons and a free calendar. But they all sell – from multimillion-dollar consulting agreements to ten-dollar magazine subscriptions and everything in between.”

And as further proof that the sales profession, rather than dying, is flourishing and growing, Pink reports that the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that “*the U.S. will add nearly two million new sales jobs by 2020*”:

“Between 2000 and today, the very period that broadband, smartphones, and e-commerce ascended to disintermediate salespeople and obviate the need for selling, the total number of sales jobs increased and today the portion of the U.S. workforce in sales has remained exactly the same: 1 in 9.”

The Rise of Non-Sales Selling

So is the 1 in 9 of us being in ‘sales’ a reliable statistic? Not so says Dan Pink:

*“So while the idea 1 in 9 American workers sells for a living might surprise you, I wondered whether it masked a still more intriguing truth. For instance, I’m not a ‘sales worker’ in the categorical sense. Yet, as I wrote in the Introduction, when I sat down to deconstruct my own workdays, I discovered that I spend a sizable portion of them **selling** in a broader sense – persuading, influencing, and convincing others. And I’m not special. Physicians sell patients on a remedy. Lawyers sell juries on a verdict. Teachers sell students on the value of paying attention in class. Entrepreneurs woo funders, writers sweet-talk producers, coaches cajole players. Whatever our profession, we deliver presentations to fellow employees and make pitches to new clients. We try to convince the boss to loosen up a few dollars from the budget or the human resources department to add more vacation days.”*

Pink then turns his attention back to the concept of “moving others” (i.e. convincing, cajoling, influencing, etc.). Working with Qualtrics, a fast-growing research and data analytics company, he commissioned a survey to: “*uncover how much time and energy people are devoting to moving others, including what we can think of as **non-sales selling** – selling that doesn’t involve anyone making a purchase.*”

The two major ‘aha’ statistics he reported from the 9,057 respondents:

1. *“People are now spending about 40 percent of their time at work engaged in non-sales selling – persuading, influencing, and convincing others” . . . “Across a range of professions”, that translates to “roughly twenty-four minutes of every hour to moving others.”*
2. *“People consider this aspect of their work crucial to their professional success – even in excess of the considerable amount of time they devote to it.”*

So Dan Pink’s conclusion at the end of this chapter:

“The existing data show that 1 in 9 Americans works in sales. But the new data reveal something more startling. So do the other 8 in 9. They, too, are spending their days moving others and depending for their livelihoods on the ability to do it well.” . . . “The salesperson is alive. Because the salesperson is us.”

Chapter 2 – Entrepreneurship, Elasticity, and Ed-Med

In this chapter, Pink reveals some of the most startling statistics I have ever seen on the transformation of the U.S. workforce from the majority working inside large companies to the explosion of small entrepreneurships, especially one-person enterprises:

- *“The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the American economy has more than twenty-one million ‘non-employer’ businesses – operations without any paid employees. These include everything from electricians to computer consultants to graphic designers.”*
- *“The research from IDC estimates that 30 percent of American workers now work on their own and that by 2015, the number of nontraditional workers worldwide (freelancers, contractors, consultants, and the like) will reach 1.3 billion.”*
- *“Some analysts project that in the United States, the ranks of these independent entrepreneurs may grow by sixty-five million in the rest of the decade and could become a majority of the American workforce by 2020. One reason is the influence of the eighteen-to-thirty-four-year-old generation as it takes a more prominent economic role. According to research by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 54 percent of this age cohort either wants to start their business or has already done so.”*

What Dan Pink describes in his opening example of “*pickle entrepreneurship*” (pages 27 & 28), amplifies the point that ANY of us who are 1 – 5 person enterprises, rather than being “*specialists*” as large companies require (HR, legal, logistics-procurement, sales, marketing, payroll, accounting, etc.), we must be ALL of the above. And in performing these functions, we’re attempting to ‘*move others*’ for much of our time.

And Dan adds an interesting tab to this mix: *“One essential – and ultimately ironic - reason for this development: The technologies that were supposed to make salespeople obsolete have transformed more people into sellers.”*

Dan previews one such ‘startup’ entrepreneur ‘technology’ enterprise of which I’ve become aware recently - “**Kickstarter**”:

“. . .many entrepreneurs find fund-raising easier thanks to Kickstarter, which allows them to post the basics of their creative projects – films, music, visual art, fashion - and try to sell their ideas to funders. Since Kickstarter launched in 2009, 1.8 million people have funded twenty thousand projects with more than \$200 million. In just three years, Kickstarter surpassed the U.S. National Endowment of the Arts as the largest backer of arts projects in the United States.”

And if you consider the ‘internet’ to be a proving ground for more successful ‘micro-entrepreneurs’, look what Dan thinks as he quotes Marc Andreessen, the venture capitalist in the early 1990’s who created the first Web browser: *“The smartphone revolution is **underhyped**.”* And although Dan points out that as with many inventions and new introductions, some elements of sales will be obsoleted, the aftermath will *“turn more people into potential sellers.”*

“For instance, the existence of smartphones, has birthed an entire app economy that didn’t exist before 2007, when Apple shipped its first iPhone. Now the production of apps itself is responsible for nearly half a million jobs in the United States alone, most of them created by bantamweight entrepreneurs.”

Dan quotes MIT’s **“Technology Review”**, *“In 1982, there were 4.6 billion people in the world and not a single mobile phone subscriber. Today there are seven billion people in the world and six billion mobile cellular-phone subscriptions.”*

And as Dan concludes, *“. . .a world of entrepreneurs is a world of salespeople.”*

Elasticity

Probably the easiest way to understand Pink’s concept of ‘elasticity’ is to start with a quote from page 36:

“A world of flat organizations and tumultuous business conditions - and that’s our world – punishes fixed skills and prizes elastic ones. What an individual does day to day on the job now must stretch across functional boundaries. Designers analyze. Analysts design. Marketers create. Creators market. And when the next technologies emerge and current business models collapse, those skills will need to stretch again in different directions.”

This is not good news for those who enjoy the status quo and consider ‘constant change’ to be adversarial and threatening. And constant change, as you can imagine requires a constant need to be ‘moving others’ in new directions. Dan ends this section quoting a couple sources:

Sharon Twiss, a content strategist working on redesigning the website for a large organization in Vancouver told Dan: *“Almost everything I do involves persuasion”. . .”People who don’t have the power or authority from their job title have to find other ways to exert power”.*

Timothy Shriver, Jr. – an executive at The Future Project, a non-profit that connects secondary school students with interesting projects to adults who can coach them: *“His work reaches across different areas – marketing, digital media, strategy, branding, partners. But, he says, ‘The common thread is activating people to move.’ His title? Chief Movement Officer.”*

Ed-Med

Ed stands for Education and Med stands for Medical or healthcare.

As Dan references the U.S. Occupational Employment Statistics program which details twenty-one major occupational groups. Under the Monthly Employment Report, he reveals some very eye-opening trends. Dan's conclusion from the trend chart on page 38 comparing four sectors (Ed-Med, Professional and Business Services, Retail – Trade, and Manufacturing) growth or decline over the period 2000 to 2012:

“While jobs in the manufacturing sector have been declining for forty years, as recently as the late 1990’s the United States still employed more people in that sector than in professional and business services. About ten years ago, however, professional and business services took the lead. But their ascendance proved short-lived, because rising like a rocket was another sector, education and health services or what I call Ed-Med.”

What Dan convincingly shows that is how much professional success in these two areas, depends largely on the individual's ability to move others – ‘selling/moving’ students on the value of studying, selling them on the value of the information and skills they're teaching, while healthcare professionals are ‘selling/moving’ patients on the importance of proactively taking charge of their own health rather than just being treated when they have an illness or condition.

Dan briefly touches upon two concepts which will be dealt with in more detail later in Chapters 4 and 6 - “**Attunement**” – being tuned in by listening intently and “**Clarity**” – “*eliciting people's real goals and having the flexibility to frame what we do in that context.*”

At the end of this chapter (pages 42 and 43) are four questions. If you aren't already convinced that YOU are in sales, refer to these and you'll understand why you are.

Chapter 3 – From Caveat Emptor to Caveat Venditor

Even if you don't know any Latin, you probably know that “**Caveat Emptor**” means, “*Buyer Beware*”. Dan suggests that because today's Buyer is armed with today's technology weapons, and because today's Sellers, are armed with the realization that today's playing field has been significantly leveled, it is largely “**Caveat Venditor**” or “*Seller Beware*”.

On pages 44-63, Dan carries us through this transition in the way both buyers and sellers have changed and he offers some great stories and examples which bring this into context. One of the most obvious and visible cases he gives is the difference between the pushy model of the used car salesman of the past, compared with the new model as exemplified by CarMax – where the salesperson is really more of an information resource than salesman - helping customers who have most often already done some significant online homework before even coming in. Moving them to buy is really more the art of Dan's ‘attunement’ and ‘clarity’.

That's the end of Part One which should have convinced you that whether you're in 'sales' as an actual defined role, or just in 'non-selling sales', we're all in sales.

Part Two – How to BE

Ok, so you agree, whatever your job or role, you now realize that much of what you spend your time doing is trying to MOVE others. The rest of the book involves some great ways that Dan Pink provides as ways to do that more effectively.

As is customary with all my summaries, from this point on, I will cover some of Dan's key points in detail, but others I will only touch upon lightly – with page references – which will hopefully entice you to want to also have this book in your library, with my summary tucked inside for easy reference.

And speaking of 'references', Dan's book contains hundreds of footnoted research references which I've not included here but which are in the book.

Chapter 4 – Attunement

Dan begins this chapter chronicling a 1992 movie classic, "*Glengarry Glen Ross*", in which Alex Baldwin plays "Blake" – who Pink describes as a '*cold-blooded predator in a well-tailored suit*'. Blake is berating a group of salesmen who have recently had less than spectacular results. At the green chalkboard, Blake writes 3 letters A. . .B. . .C, which he explains with some expletives thrown in for charm, what they stand for – "***Always Be Closing***".

Dan explains that back in the days "*when buyers face[d] minimal choices*" and had limited information, that worked well. But now that we're in the time of '**caveat venditor**' (seller beware) and we are all in sales – armed with equal – sometimes even greater information than the actual salesperson, Pink suggests a new A,B,C's for moving others: **A-Attunement**. . . **B-Buoyancy**. . . **C-Clarity**.

Power, Empathy, and Chameleons

I can't wait to try this experiment with a group of people who have never seen this experiment and you can have fun with it too. Get some dark chalk (something that can write on skin but is easily erased). Then having everyone look straight ahead so they're not watching how anyone else is doing the exercise. Then (and I'm not sure why the fingering snapping is important), Pink instructs: "*First, with your dominant hand, snap your fingers five times as quickly as you can. Then again as quickly as you can, use the forefinger of your dominant hand (or with chalk in dominant hand) to draw a capital "E" on your forehead*".

The two photographs of Dan Pink on page 69 tell it all. Some of the people will draw the E as if they're writing it for themselves to see while others will draw it in 'reverse' so that the person looking at him or her will be able to read it. Go look in the mirror to see way you chose.

This is called the "E Test" and it's long been used to measure "'perspective-taking":

"When confronted with an unusual or complex situation involving other people, how do we make sense of what's going on? Do we examine it from only our own point of view? Or do we have the capability to step outside our own experience and imagine the emotions, perceptions, and motivations of another?"

Pink calls this "**Attunement**" and considers it to be the first essential quality in moving others. He defines it as:

"The ability to bring one's actions and outlook into harmony with other people and with the context you're in. Think of it as operating the dial on a radio. It's the capacity to move up and down the band as circumstances demand, locking in on what's being transmitted, even if those signals aren't immediately clear or obvious."

Dan then describes three principles which will determine the effectiveness of your 'perspective-taking' – attuning yourself with others.

1. Increase your power by reducing it.

This gets a little complex (see pages 71-73 for a more complete explanation) but what made the most sense to me was when Dan referred to this as "**persuasion jujitsu**" – *"using an apparent weakness as an actual strength. Start your encounters with the assumption that you're in a position of lower power. That will help you see the other side's perspective more accurately, which in turn will help you move them."*

2. Use your head as much as your heart.

I found it most interesting and useful when Pink distinguished between "*perspective-taking*" and "*empathy*". He terms "**perspective-taking**" as a 'cognitive capacity' – "*it's mostly about **thinking**, whereas "**empathy**" is an 'emotional response'; it's mostly about **feeling**."* He also considers these two to be "**fraternal twins**".

To support this, Dan details a fascinating research experiment involving a hypothetical sale of a gas station where going in, they knew that the HIGHEST price the buyer was willing to pay was LOWER than the lowest price for which the seller was willing to sell. They were divided into 3 equal groups where one group was instructed to 'imagine' what the other side was '**feeling**'. A second group was instructed to 'imagine' what the other side was '**thinking**', while the third 'control' group was simply given some bland and generic instructions.

While the group who imagined how the other side 'felt' struck more deals than the control group, the group who imagined what the other side was 'thinking' (the 'perspective-takers') did better than either.

And Pink also points out that in some circumstances (doctor-patient relationship) “empathy” results in more satisfied patients, better patient care, and fewer malpractice claims’, BUT, “*When it comes to moving others, perspective-taking is the most effective of these fraternal twins*”.

On page 75, Pink documents a great example of a top Software sales company – Varicent Software – recently acquired by IBM - and how they apply “**Social cartography**” – drawing a mental map of the situation and the players involved in order to get a complete picture. I have already applied this to one unsuccessful ‘sales situation’ in which I was involved and now see how much better it would have been had I applied this tool.

3. Mimic strategically

You probably know this exercise where you cross your arms sitting across from someone or among a group of people and watch how some of them will unconsciously cross theirs.

This ‘chameleon effect’ identified in research by Galinsky and Maddux, along with Stanford University’s Elizabeth Mullen, “*tested whether mimicry deepened attunement and enhanced the ability to move others.*”

While “strategic mimicry” clearly works, the researchers and Pink caution that it has to be subtle and if too obvious, it can exactly have the opposite effect. Instead of increasing trust-building, it can destroy it.

Pink explains this ‘mimicking’ actually has evolutionary roots to it. Referencing research by Galinsky and Maddux:

“Our brains evolved at a time when most of the people around us were those we were related to and therefore could trust. But as the size of groups increased, it required more sophisticated understandings and interactions with people”

Therefore ‘*mimicking*’ became a ‘*cue*’ to determine whom they could trust.

Dan ends this section by adding a first cousin to mimicry – ‘**touching**’.

Did you know that the next time your server in a restaurant either repeats your order ‘word-for word’, or touches you lightly on your arm or shoulder, you will be giving her or him a larger tip? Read page 78 to understand more why this is.

The Ambivert Advantage

So you think that those raving ‘extraverts’ amongst us who Pink characterizes as: “*sociable, assertive, lively, and sensation seeking*”, are going to make the best sales people? Dan points to research that debunks this. And while extreme introversion isn’t necessarily going to make

anyone a great sales success, it turns out that those persons who “are neither overly extraverted nor wildly introverted” are “**Ambiverts**”.

Pink notes that many extreme extraverts actually make the poorest salespeople and often talk themselves out of sales. Here’s what he suggests as a proper balance:

“The answer, though, isn’t to lurch to the opposite side of the spectrum. Introverts have their own, often reverse, challenges. They can be too shy to initiate and too timid to close. The best approach is for people on the ends to emulate those in the center. As some have noted, introverts are ‘geared to inspect’, while extraverts are ‘geared to respond’. Selling of any sort – whether traditional sales or non-sales selling - requires a delicate balance of inspecting responding.”

Another thing I love about this book is the way that Dan Pink gives “Sample Cases” and exercises that reinforce the concepts he has just covered. Pages 87-95 contain a series of these including: “Discover the best way to start a conversation”. . .”Practice strategic mimicry” . . .”Pull up a chair” . . .”Get in touch with your inner ambivert” . . .”Have a conversation with a time traveler” . . .”Map it” . . .”Play ‘Mirror, mirror’ “. . .”Find uncommon commonalities”.

You’ll want to own the book just to have all these to practice, but so you can get a *teaser* flavor of them, here’s one of my favorites, “Pull up a chair”. Dan cites the way that the legendary founder of Amazon.com – Jeff Bezos –created a great ‘attunement exercise’. Like most organizations, Amazon has a lot of meetings, but how many meetings have you been in where in addition to all the persons seated, there’s always ONE extra chair. That “invisible but essential person” is “**the customer**”. It helps the discussion always be focused on “What’s going through her mind?”. . .”What are her desires and concerns?”. . .”What would she think of the ideas we’re putting forward?”

Oh, and in line with “Get in touch with your inner ambivert”, go to:

<http://www.danpink.com/assessment>

where Dan has replicated the assessment that social scientists use to measure introversion and extraversion.

Chapter 5 – Buoyancy

Dan begins this chapter by re-visiting his friend, Norman Hall, the last of the Fuller Brush salesmen, as he is on a sales call. Actually he’s delivering some items previously ordered. But when the two attorneys who ordered them are not there yet, they decide to wait in the break room of the building where the attorneys work. Wanting to demonstrate his typical sales approach to Dan, Norman makes an ‘elevator’ pitch to a woman waiting for her coffee to be perked. And although if you’re like me, you squirm a little bit as he bobs and weaves – sensing her resistance – Norman persists and surprisingly, “. . .the outright **no** becomes a grudgingly maybe, ‘stop by on your way out’.”

Pink uses this story to exemplify the “B” in his A, B, C’s mentioned earlier. “B” stands for ‘buoyancy’:

“Draw a map of the world of selling and the most prominent topographical feature is that deep and menacing ocean. Anyone who sells – whether they’re trying to convince customers to make a purchase or colleagues to make a change – must contend with wave after wave of rebuffs, refusals, and repudiation”. . .”Buoyancy – How to stay afloat amid that ocean of rejection is the second essential quality in moving others.”

Dan then provides three components of ‘buoyancy’ which if applied **before, during, and after** any effort you make to move others – can also be used effectively in your own life.

Before: Interrogative Self-Talk

Once again Dan becomes a contrarian. Citing many of the most well-known ‘positive motivators’ of the past – Og Mandino, Napoleon Hill, “*Think and Grow Rich*”. . . and more recently, Tony Robbins, he suggests that social science suggests there is a better form of ‘self-talk’ than “*Declaring an unshakable belief in your inherent awesomeness*”.

Rather than ‘declarative’ self-talk statements, “*I will be the world’s greatest salesman*” or the newer ‘affirmation’ version, “*I am the world’s greatest salesman*”, Pink recommends that “**Bob the Builder**” [not me] has a better approach which is neither ‘positive’ or ‘declarative’:

“Bob’s self-talk is neither positive nor declarative. Instead to move himself and his team, he asks a question, ‘Can we fix it?’ “

Although other self-help guru’s might take issue with this ‘questioning’ approach, Dan concludes:

“Yes, positive self-talk is generally more effective than negative self-talk. But the most effective self-talk of all doesn’t merely shift emotions. It shifts linguistic categories. It moves from making statements to asking questions.”

Dan references several researchers (page 101 if you want explore this deeper) who confirm the efficacy of “*interrogative self-talk*”. They give two reasons for this. “*First, the interrogative, by its very form, elicits answers – and within those answers are strategies for actually carrying out the task.*” Secondly, interrogative self-talk “*may inspire thoughts about autonomous or intrinsically motivated reasons to pursue a goal.*” And Pink adds, “*As ample research has demonstrated, people are more likely to act, and to perform well, when the motivations come from intrinsic choices rather than from extrinsic pressures.*”

What I personally like about this approach is consistent with how I recommend writing on any topic or even writing a book. Start by just writing as many questions on and around the topic. And when you think you have asked every possible question, don’t stop. . .ask 10 more. Then when you’re positive you’ve thought of every possible one. . .ask 5 more. Then when at every step along the way, you’ve been tempted to start answering (begin writing), still ask just a couple more. You should also find, as I do, that your best questions will be towards the end.

Questioning stimulates the brain to come up with answers and solutions. As Dan concludes this section:

“Declarative self-talk risks bypassing one’s motivations. Questioning self-talk elicits the reasons for doing something and reminds people that many of those reasons come from within.”

During: Positivity Ratios

Dan says that whereas ‘interrogative self-talk’ is effective in **preparing** to move someone (i.e. *girding your loins*), “a golden ratio of positivity – leads to the best results”.

At first I was a little confused by the use of the word ‘ratios’ until he clarified this by explaining that research shows that just as you can ‘under-do’ positivity (i.e. coming across in an emotionally positive manner), you can also ‘over-do’ it. The ratio of ‘negative’ emotions to ‘positive’ emotions needs to at least be ‘3 to 1’ in order to be effective and above ‘11 to 1’ becomes overkill.

Pink cites examples of ‘positive emotions’ to be things like, “*feeling gratitude, interest, or contentment*”, whereas ‘negative emotions’ would be characterized by “*anger, guilt, or embarrassment.*”

Dan, along with some of the research he references on page 108 supports this:

“Some negativity – what Fredrickson and Losado call ‘appropriate negativity’ is essential. Without it ‘behavior patterns calcify’. Negative emotions offer us feedback on our performance, information on what’s working and what’s not, and hints about how to do better.”

After: Explanatory Style

Ok, so you’ve prepared yourself with ‘**interrogative self-talk**’; then you’ve entered your selling situation (actual selling, or non-selling selling - just convincing or cajoling someone) aware of the **appropriate ratio** you want to create of ‘**positive emotions**’ to ‘**negative**’ ones to elicit involvement on other person’s part and to bring reality to the situation (life isn’t all roses).

Dan now turns to the 3rd component of ‘**buoyancy**’ – which I think can best be described as exuding and maintaining a positive mental attitude. I see the difference between the “**Before**” and the “**After**” as the former being about **infusing** the appropriate ratio of positivity emotions to negative emotions into the selling or non-selling situation, whereas Dan’s “**After**” is about your internal emotional attitude and especially how you come across to others.

Dan references work by Martin Seligman from the University of Pennsylvania who originated the concept of “**positive psychology**” which really accentuates the power of ‘**optimism**’.

Ironically, much Seligman’s research in the 70’s involved his pioneering work in the study of what he coined “*learned helplessness*”. Contrary to other behaviorists who “*held that all creatures responded systematically and predictably to external rewards and punishments*”, Seligman’s work, “*demonstrated that after extended experiences in which they were stripped of any control over their environment, some individuals just gave up. Even when conditions returned to normal,*

and they once again possessed the ability to seek gain or avoid pain, they didn't act. They had learned to be helpless."

But in the 90's Seligman decided to look and see if there was a "flip side" to "learned helplessness" and if people with an "upbeat style thrive"? After some extensive research over an extended period of time, "the results were unequivocal". It was a study of life insurance agents and not only did it show that those with an optimistic attitude substantially out-performed the ones who had a more pessimistic outlook, but as you might also guess in a business like life insurance, fraught with 'rejection' (I can attest to that having sold life insurance), "Agents in the most pessimistic quarter were three times as likely to quit as those in the most optimistic 25 percent."

According to Dan, "Optimism, it turns out, isn't a hollow sentiment. It's a catalyst that can stir persistence, steady us during challenges, and stoke the confidence that we can influence our surroundings."

The chapter ends with Dan standing outside the building where he and Norman Hall had met Beth, the lady who begrudgingly had left the break room with a parting invitation for Norman to drop by her office on the way out. As the expected wait time for Norman to meet back with Dan outside the building kept extending. . . you expect Norman needed a little more time to convince Beth, or maybe you thought, once he got his foot in the door. . .the order just kept growing.

As Norman finally exits the building and Dan inquires, "Well?," Norman shakes his head and with a hand motion, slashes his throat with his forefinger: "No Sale". But only maybe 8 steps in silence, Norman turned to Dan and said, "But I think there's going to be a chance to get her next time."

Once again at the end of this chapter Dan provides a **Sample Case** for "Buoyancy" (pages 117-123) with these great exercises: "Be Like Bob: Practice interrogative self-talk" . . ."Monitor your positivity ratio" . . ."Tweak your explanatory style" . . ."Try the 'enumerate and embrace' strategy" . . ."Don't forget to go negative every once in a while" (great concept here on page 122 – "appropriate negativity") . . ."Send yourself a rejection letter".

These are all terrific ways to reinforce Dan's points and another reason to buy the book.

Chapter 6 – Clarity

When this chapter begins, you think you've picked up the wrong book since it starts with the following statement and question: "**Forgive the intrusion into your personal affairs, but let me ask: Are you saving enough for retirement?**"

But you soon remember that Dan Pink often makes his points – like with the Fuller Brush story – with a story or set of facts that would not seem to apply at all to the subject at hand. But the point he makes with these gut-wrenching facts about most Americans being unprepared for

retirement is to examine what causes this kind of procrastination for something so critically important, and secondly, is there anything that can be done about it?

In answer to the first question of why so many don't save for retirement, Dan's explanation reads:

"[it] isn't only our meager ability to weigh present rewards against future ones. It is also the connection – rather, the disconnection - between our present and future selves. Other research has shown that 'thinking about the future self elicits neural activation patterns that are similar to neural activation patterns elicited by thinking about a stranger'."

A fascinating research study cited on page 126 compares the reaction of two groups - one which showed a *representative image* of an aged person at age 70; while the other group was shown an *'age-morphed image'* of themselves at the same age. When given the choice of how each group would allocate a surprise \$1,000 they are given among 4 options: 1) *Buy something nice for someone*; 2) *Invest it in a retirement fund*; 3) *Plan a fun and extravagant occasion*; 4) *Put it into a savings account*, the group who saw the **image of themselves** at age 70 applied over twice the amount of the other group into a retirement account.

This is the way Dan introduces the 3rd quality necessary for moving others:

"Clarity" – the capacity to help others see their situations in fresh and more revealing ways and to identify problems they didn't realize they had."

*"The services of others are far more valuable when I'm mistaken, confused, or completely clueless about my true problem. In those situations, the ability to move others hinges less on problem **solving** than problem **finding**."*

The rest of chapter 6 (pages 128-142) reinforces a quote I think I remember from an Earl Nightengale tape I used to listen to back in the 70's – "A problem well-defined. . . is a problem half-solved."

But on pages 133 – 142, Dan explains with examples, stories, and research how '**framing**' a particular set of facts or circumstances can aid in providing 'clarity' which in turn can help in 'moving' someone to your way of thinking. He offers five different ways to 'frame' an offering, an idea, a product or service, etc. in order to provide more 'clarity': "*The less frame*". . ." *The experience frame*". . ." *The label frame*". . ." *The blemished frame*". . ." *The potential frame*".

They're all good and very useful whether you're an actual salesperson, or a non-sales seller/convincer/cajoler, so buy Dan's book to read them all, but here's my favorite – "**The Potential Frame**". In an experiment with a Facebook ad, testing two ads for a comedian, Kevin Shea, half the ads said, "**He could become the next big thing**." The other half said, "**He is the next big thing**." It was surprising to me that the first ad generated far more click-throughs and likes than the second. The research supports the finding: ". . . the **potential** to be good at something can be preferred over **actually being good** at that very same thing." . . ."People often find potential more interesting than accomplishment because it's more uncertain."

The chapter concludes with the final step in adding '**Clarity**' (the "C" in your a,b,c's of moving others): "***Finding an Off-ramp***". After you have unearthed, discovered, or found a problem, and have properly '*framed*' it, you should "*give people the off-ramp*". At first I was confused by the term Dan uses here, "off ramp" and I was interpreting it to mean, you should give them a way out. But to make it clearer, what he means is to be specific on the path of action you wish people to take. I would add, tell them specifically the 'name' or the 'exit number' of the off-ramp they're supposed to take.

He cites an example of a student food drive where one group – was contacted by letter, addressed personally to each of them. They were given specific instructions on what food to buy, as well as where to drop it off, and a reminder call was also made. The second group received a form letter but not by name and with no specifics other than asking them to make a food donation. There were two groups for each approach – a '*most likely to donate*' group, and a '*least likely*'. The astounding – just kidding – percentage of donors from the '*least likely*' group among the students who received the 'generic' letter and no followup call, was ZERO, and 8% from the 'most likely'.

But among the 'personalized' group who received a 'personalized' letter along with specific (clarified) instructions, as well as a 'reminder call', the percentage donors among the '*least likely to donate*' group was a surprising 25% - 3 times the percent from the 'most likely' group who received the non-specific and un-personalized letter approach.

Dan says the lesson from this is that when you're trying to move someone: "*Clarity on how to think without clarity on how to act can leave people unmoved.*"

As usual, at the end of the chapter there is a sample case with some exercises to reinforce the information from this chapter. He also introduces a fascinating approach you should read for yourself on pages 145-146 "*Clarify others' motives with two 'irrational' questions*".

The other exercises include: "*Try a jolt of the unfamiliar*" (a mini, half, and full jolt). . . "*Become a curator*" (Seek, Sense, Share – (**HINT** – these describe what forming the "Don't Need to Read the Book" book club was all about). . . "*Learn how to ask better Questions*" (**Produce your questions, Improve your questions, Prioritize your questions**). . . "*Read these books*" (Do what Dan suggests and read at least one of these listed on pages 150-151. Who knows maybe one will appear summarized for a future DNTRTB book club"). . . "*Ask the Five Whys*" (this one's pretty obvious) . . . "*Find the one percent*".

Part Three – What to Do

The first two parts of Dan's book are chockfull of great ideas, suggestions, and actions steps needed to move people. Part Three, pages 155-233 contains additional ways to improve your ability to 'move' people with more emphasis on how to do it. I'll only touch upon these but Dan

actually has done much of my work for me here since in the introduction, he gives a great ‘overview’ of each of these three remaining chapters.

Chapter 7 – “Pitch”

“For as long as buildings have had elevators, enterprising individuals have crafted elevator pitches. But today, when attention spans have dwindled (and all the people in the elevator are looking at their phones [or reading the in-elevator scrolling screen]), that technique has become outdated.

In this chapter, you’ll learn an important lesson from ‘**tinseltown**’ on how the best ‘*pitchers*’ (creative artists with the idea for the next “Titanic” or “Star Wars” movie) SELL their idea/concept to the ‘*catchers*’ (the studio executives – sometimes Dan says who are deriding labeled by the pitchers as the ‘suits’). You really need to read pages 157 and 158 because this insight is absolutely priceless. And one hint – it’s all about coming across as ‘**unique and creative**’, and in being able to invite the ‘suit’ to be a ‘collaborator’ in the project, not just the funding source.

He concludes “**Pitch**” with the six successors of the elevator pitch and how and when to deploy them.”: “**The one-word pitch**” (HINT: ‘priceless’ – MasterCard. . . ‘search’ – Google. . . ‘networking’ - NetWeaving). . . “**The question pitch**” (HINT: Ronald Reagan – “Are you better off today than you were 4 years ago?”). . . “**Rhyming pitch**” (HINT: Johnny Cochran “If it [the glove] doesn’t fit, you must acquit”). . . “**The subject-line pitch**” (HINT: raise curiosity) . . . “**The Twitter Pitch**” (HINT: questions are more powerful tweets than statements or about what you had for lunch). . . “**The Pixar pitch**” (HINT: a powerful story template with ‘fill-in-the-blanks’ makes for the ideal plot).

To whet your appetite, here’s my favorite. It’s the approach Pixar used to ‘pitch’ Disney to back “**Finding Nemo**”. The first example is how Dan filled in the blanks about this book. You can do the same for WHO YOU ARE and what you are trying to accomplish. See below what I’ve attempted to do for “**NetWeaving**”.

*“**Once upon a time** only some people were in sales. **Everyday**, they sold stuff, we did stuff, and everyone was happy. **One day** everything changed: All of us ended up in sales – and sales changed from a world of **caveat emptor** to **caveat venditor**. **Because of that**, we had to learn the new ABC’s – attunement, buoyancy, and clarity. **Because of that**, we had to learn some new skills - to pitch, to improvise, and to serve. **Until finally** we realized that selling isn’t some grim accommodation to a brutal marketplace culture. It’s part of who we are – and therefore something we can do better by being more human.”*

Here’s mine:

*“**Once upon a time** people secretly or openly despised traditional ‘networking’. **Everyday**, they would dread thinking about or actually going to their next networking event just to have superficial conversations with too many strangers who were only looking out for their own best*

interests. ***Because of that***, some of the best and brightest people with the most to offer stayed away or when attending, stuck only within their own group of friends and associates. ***Because of that*** potentially wonderful new friendships, as well as possible 'win-win' business relationships never came to fruition. ***Until finally*** a concept called "NetWeaving" came along, and those who were genuine and authentic 'givers' rather than 'takers', as well as many of the best and brightest, with the most 'creative' ideas, were attracted to this concept of helping others first. . .realizing that in nature as well with human beings, what works best are 'symbiotic relationships', and what goes around, truly does come back around. And when these 'givers' were helped by someone else, they also learned that the best way to keep the "NetWeaving" ripples of energy expanding was to 'pay it forward' and find someone(s) else to go help."

Why don't you try your own.

In the introduction Dan provides this brief description of **Chapter 8, "Improvise:**

"Improvise" covers what to do when your perfectly attuned, appropriately buoyant, ultra-clear pitches inevitably go awry. You'll meet a veteran improv artist and see why understanding the rules of improvisational theater can deepen your persuasive powers."

The three rules they teach: 1) *Hear offers*; 2) *Say "Yes and"*; 3) *Make your partner look good*. I'll leave it up to you to improvise and read pages 189 to 198. Much of what you'll learn involves learning to listen at a deeper and more introspective level. . .responding after reflection. . .with a 'yes and', never arguing with your partner (person you're trying to move) but make your counterpart look good.

In the introduction, Dan describes his final chapter this way.

*"Finally comes **Chapter 9, "Serve"**. Here you'll learn the two principles that are essential if sales or non-sales selling are to have any meaning: Make it **personal** and make it **purposeful**."*

Dan tells several stories (pages 207-215) which exemplify what "**Make it Personal**" is all about. But one of them totally shocked me, probably as much as the researcher studying what a difference *making it personal* creates. It involves radiologists whose days – rather than dealing with patients face-to-face - often are spent "*sit[ting] alone in dimly lit rooms or hunched over computers reading X-rays, CT scans, and MRIs.*" In an experiment where they were shown a **photograph** of the patient next to the image they were examining, not only were they more "*meticulous in the way they examined the scan*", but they were much more likely to identify an 'abnormality'.

But an even more amazing result occurred when Yebonatan Turner, the resident physician who ran the experiment, ". . .selected eighty-one of the photo-accompanied scans in which his radiologists had found incidental findings and presented them again to the same group three months later – only this time **without** the picture of the patient". The radiologists were unaware they had examined these same scans previously. An astounding **80% of the abnormalities**, which had previously been identified, were omitted this time. The feelings of greater 'empathy' the radiologists had previously reported was void this time around, without the photograph being there.

As Dan points out,

“And what’s true for doctors is true for the rest of us. Every circumstance in which we try to move others, by definition, involves another human being. Yet in the name of professionalism, we often neglect the human element and adopt a stance that’s abstract and distant. Instead, we should recalibrate our approach so that it’s concrete and personal – and not for soft-hearted reasons but for hardheaded ones.”

So here we are to the end of this great book and the final skill set of ‘moving others’ is one that Dan Pink and I truly share in common – living a more ‘purpose-driven’ life and how it’s so much more natural than most people think:

*“Raising the salience of purpose is one of the most potent – and most overlooked – methods of moving others. While we often assume that human beings are motivated mainly by self-interest, a stack of research has shown that all of us also do things for what social scientists call ‘**prosocial**’ or ‘**self-transcending**’ reasons. That means that not only should we ourselves be serving, but we should also be tapping others’ innate desire to serve. Making it **personal** works better when we also make it **purposeful**.”*

Dan ends the chapter and the book by referencing a **philosophy** created by Robert Greenleaf who at the time was simply a mid-level executive of AT&T. He wrote an essay which in Pink’s words, “launched a movement” – “**Servant Leadership**”. According to Dan, Greenleaf “argued that the most effective leaders weren’t heroic, take-charge commanders but instead were quieter, humbler types whose animating purpose was to serve those nominally beneath them.”

Greenleaf also explained that the order of those two words held the key to its meaning: “The servant-leader is servant first.” He wrote, “Becoming a servant-leader begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.”

Dan continues:

*“The very idea of leaders subordinating themselves to followers, of inverting the traditional pyramid, made many people uncomfortable. But Greenleaf’s philosophy excited many more. Those who embraced it learned to ‘**do no harm**,’ to **respond to any problem by listening first**,’ and to ‘accept and empathize’ rather than reject. Over time, companies as diverse as Starbucks, TD Industries, Southwest Airlines, and Brooks Brothers, integrated Greenleaf’s ideas into their management practices.”*

An organization which was founded in Dallas over a decade ago – “**CEONetweavers**”, with additional chapters now in Atlanta, Houston, and hopefully spreading elsewhere, is all based upon Greenleaf’s ‘Servant Leader’ concept.

Dan stresses, “Greenleaf’s way of leading was more difficult, but it was also more transformative.” Greenleaf wrote:

“The best test, and the most difficult to administer, is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”

Dan proclaims that, “... *the time is ripe for the sales version of Greenleaf’s philosophy. Call it **servant selling**...*”*They serve first and sell later. And the test – which, like Greenleaf’s, is the best and the most difficult to administer is this: If the person you’re selling to agrees to buy, will his or her life improve? When your interaction is over, will the world be a better place than when you began?”*

And guess what, by ending on this note, Dan has given me a new word for “**NetWeaving**” since it’s all about helping others with simply the belief that ‘*what goes around... does come back around*’, and then to make it even more ‘purposeful’, when those you have helped try to turn the table and ask how they can return the favor, you ask that if your actions have inspired them to do the same for someone else, then just ‘pay it forward’ and find someone else to go help. NetWeaving, in its purest sense, is “**servant selling**”.

Dan ends with this phrase:

“Moving others doesn’t require that we neglect these nobler aspects of our nature. Today it demands that we embrace them. It begins and ends by remembering that to sell is human.”