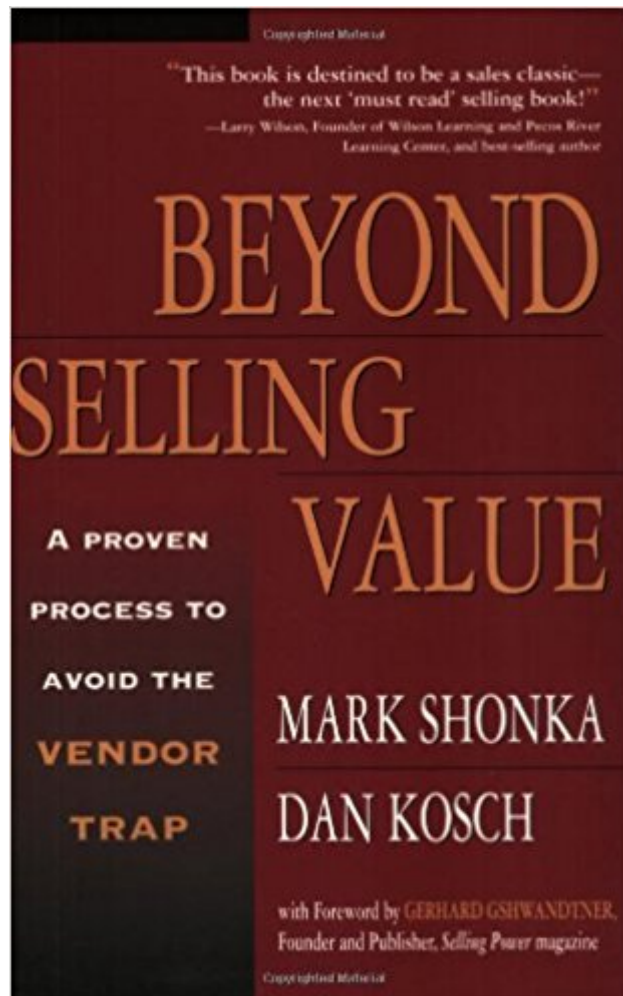




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# Beyond Selling Value: A Proven Process To Avoid The Vendor Trap



## Synopsis

How to sell value, increase margins, make price irrelevant, win executive-level credibility, and create competitive immunity. Selling value is taking on a whole new meaning for sales professionals. Here's a proven process pros can use to address their customer's pressing business issues, position themselves as strategic partners, and recommend solutions that improve the way their customers do business. In *Beyond Selling Value*, top sales consultants Mark Shonka and Dan Kosch share their proven process for becoming a critical partner in their customers' success. From targeting the most promising prospects, to bypassing the gatekeepers, to reaching the decision makers who are empowered to buy, and to closing the deal with a powerful presentation, the authors impart their battle tested secrets to forging long term business relationships. For sales professionals tired of being beaten up on price, here is a new way to leverage their strengths, elevate their sales game, and establish relationships with those who appreciate their value. *Selling Power* magazine calls it "a detailed, street smart roadmap".

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Together, authors and IMPAX Corporation copresidents Mark Shonka and Dan Kosch have tallied more than 40 years experience in direct sales, sales management, and sales consulting and training. IMPAX has worked with thousands of sales professionals throughout North America and abroad at companies including IBM, DuPont, AT&T, Eli Lilly, and Microsoft.

**F O R E W O R D** What makes selling value so difficult today? Salespeople—even those who

are trained to ask the right questions, probe for critical needs, and apply solutions to customers; long-term business challenges; frequently find themselves confronted with buyers who only want to talk about price. Salespeople are told to sell to true decision makers, but are never given the tools to reach the corner offices where these key executives are located. They're told to become sales consultants, only to find that prospects aren't particularly interested in being consulted with. As publisher of the nation's top sales magazine, I hear a familiar refrain over and over again from salespeople in nearly every field, as well as sales managers, VPs of sales, and even CEOs. They tell me that so many buyers are focused on this one issue; price; that salespeople are forced to choose between two unappealing options: lose the deal or abandon selling value. Selling in this environment means that even when you win, you lose. As Shonka and Kosch point out, however, there is another path. Confronted, with this lose-lose scenario, the sales professional's role itself is responding by dividing into two separate tiers. Slowly becoming obsolete are those at the bottom who persist in trying to compete with little more than price, features, and a winning personality to recommend them. At the top are the salespeople willing to fight the tide and break out of the "Vendor Trap" by refusing to sell to buyers who only care about price, by elevating their selling efforts, and by moving beyond traditional notions of what it means to sell value. This path, they argue persuasively, is the future of selling. Admittedly some top sales performers have the innate instincts, ability, and eloquence to rise above the pack and get in front of prospects who are empowered to buy value and close on mutually beneficial business relationships. In this book, the authors clearly demonstrate that what these top performers do by instinct can be systematized into a reproducible process that nearly anyone can follow. I was intrigued to read as the authors provided a master-blueprint to help salespeople:

- Conduct penetrating information-gathering research meetings with key players.
- Cultivate a strong network of coaches who want you to win.
- Go over, around, or through the gatekeepers and "ankle-biters," such as product evaluators and purchasing managers who don't understand the value you offer.
- Gain regular access to the decision makers who are not only able to but also eager to buy into truly value-based solutions.
- Deliver blow-away business presentations to executives you once might have been intimidated even to meet.

And unlike so many sales guides I've read, this is not some academic textbook you can only get through with the help of multiple cups of coffee. The authors are not professors; they're as hands-on as they come. Not only are they operating within breathing distance of top sales professionals, consulting in today's selling trenches with some of the most admired sales organizations in the world, they're also out there on the front lines

themselves, successfully selling in the same price-obsessed marketplace the rest of us face. I was also impressed by the authors' unique approach to the professional selling challenge. Every year I'm confronted with thousands of ideas to help sales professionals improve, yet so much of what passes for new sales ideas are merely the same old tools repackaged. But here you'll find something genuinely different; a perspective and process that take selling value to a new level. This is the level where price objections, controlling gatekeepers, restrictive RFPs, and all the other exasperations of the Vendor Trap fall away until you're allowed to deliver the kind of value solutions that make being a sales professional so rewarding. In addition to showing you how to raise the level of your game, the authors also provide a series of real-life case studies that drive home the critical lessons in an unforgettable way. This book is an enjoyable and fast read. With each page of the manuscript, I became more determined that my own sales team never be caught in the Vendor Trap. Ultimately, 21st-century sales professionals will have to decide whether to be leaders or followers in selling's next generation. Both for individual sales professionals eager to strike out with a fresh plan for attacking the new challenges they face and for managers with sales teams to reinvigorate and redirect, this book offers a detailed, street-smart roadmap to help you leverage your strengths, elevate your selling game, and achieve long-term sales success.

'Gerhard Gschwandtner, Founder and Publisher, Selling Power magazine

Most companies are under incredible pressure to join the herd, and "your product is a commodity" is a mantra on the lips of many of our customers. Beyond Selling Value delivers the tools and processes that your company needs to set it apart from the crowd. Chock-full of stories that illustrate each key concept, this book lays out a step-by-step roadmap that will help you win customers for all the right reasons. Unlike many similar books, Beyond Selling Value has a nice balance of material - conceptual explanations, stories, and clearly-written how-to instructions. You will find this book both readable and useful, if you are in sales (or run a business, as I do). This is just a super book - as I read it, I found myself saying "I can't wait to do this!" Not only are the concepts and processes laid out elegantly, but the highly relevant stories do a great job of supporting the key points. I will definitely be sending copies of this book to my clients! As sales has gotten more and more competitive in my industry, I have found it incredibly useful to use Dan and Mark's process to sell my company's services. Simply put, there is amazing correlation between sales people using these processes and their success in the marketplace. This book has definitely helped put more money on the bottom line for my company!

Just because your company says "We provide value," that doesn't mean that you deliver it! You have to define it and prove it in the Customer's terms. I read this book in a weekend and took copious notes. On Tuesday, I was flying to meet with a new client. I used the book to prepare for my call. The customer was blown away. He actually laughed and said "I have never met a sales guy like you." When I asked what he meant, he said that he expected a salesman to show up with a handful of brochures and push the latest and greatest products. I spent the entire time understanding the challenges facing him, his management, and the company. I walked away establishing my credibility, developing a solid relationship, and I had a very clear understanding of their needs and what they VALUE. I keep the Beyond Selling Value notes in my Daytimer and refer to them for almost every sales call. This essential for anyone who sells value (or thinks that they do!).

When it comes to strategy for research and tips on how to get the information you need for effective Key Account Management and prospecting, this is the book with the most effective game plan. The appendix section providing worksheets and examples is worth the price of the book. It does drift a bit in execution on the presentation section but the overall value of content far outweighs this slight shortcoming. Again, another great recommendation from Jill Konrath in her book "Selling to Big Companies".

Great read.

Great book!

A must read for Account Managers. This should be required reading for any salesman, regardless of your industry. Great Information!

Excellent strategies for selling and presenting. Well written, although you sometimes want to get ahead of yourself and think you know what the author will be saying. Very good conclusions and effective suggestions.

A valuable resource for selling. I'm in Marketing and I've learned quite a few things that help in my job.

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