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## INBOOKS

IS THIS BUSINESS BOOK FOR YOU?

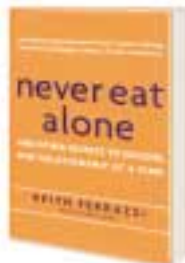
### The Ten Demandments

DETAILS: Hardcover, 320 pages, 2005 | AMAZON.COM PRICE: \$16.47

BY KEITH FERRAZZI (WITH TAHL RAZ)

**IN A NUTSHELL:** From the book jacket: "The ultimate networker reveals how to build a lifelong network of colleagues, contacts, friends and mentors".

**THE KNOWLEDGE:** Keith Ferrazzi was the youngest partner in the history of top consulting company Deloitte, has his own consulting business, and boasts a Rolodex of 5,000 people — all of whom, he says, "will all answer the phone when I call". How does he do it? Well, one piece of advice is revealed in the title. Another is that he uses his Blackberry even while in the bathroom. (Thanks for the imagery, Keith!) For the rest, you'll have to read this innovative, interesting business book. A thoroughly modern networking tome, *Never Eat Alone* is stuffed with the latest lingo — you'll learn about the "deep bump" (building strong relationships in a short time — Bill Clinton was a master of this); "pinging" (reaching out to your network with occasional short emails, phone calls, or voice mails); and the "Johari Window" (basically, a cooler way of referring to the technique of "mirroring" the behavior and speech patterns of someone with whom you're speaking.) Ferrazzi also scores with his discussion of how to make valuable connections at industry (elbows are best) people who live and die by the size of their Rolodexes, Ferrazzi is guilty of the charge of exaggerated name-dropping, with Hillary Clinton, Michael Milken, and Universal Studio chief Jack Valenti among those whose names clunk heavily onto these pages. Impressive, but ... we get the point, Keith. You're more connected than Charlotte to her web. Now get back to serving up the meat. Luckily, there's much valuable and substantial advice to be found here.



**OUR TAKE:** The subject of networking is an important one, but has been covered ad nauseam. Here's a book on the subject that feels fresh — the networking equivalent of Seth Godin's *Purple Cow* and *Free Prize Inside!* Ferrazzi's relationship-building techniques are in tune with the times, and his suggested actions are do-able ... even for the socially challenged. Pick up this book, and you'll no longer eat alone.

## ON SALES

# MEN'S WAY



It's easy to find out what your male customers want, as long as you ask the right questions, says **Shane Decker**.

**YOUR AVERAGE MALE** customer wants to be in your store for 20 minutes. Or less. Most men don't like to shop, and it's even more true when it comes to jewelry. And yet, salespeople often show male customers too much merchandise, too quickly, and men become confused. Indecision and discomfort in any customer can be your worst enemies, so why invite these reactions?

When you gather information before ever showing a piece of jewelry, you can make the sale far more specific. This will increase customer confidence — you *know* what they want. After the initial "meet and greet" period is over, follow the Who-What-When-Where Rule to uncover your client's desire:

"Nice to meet you, Robert. Are you looking for somebody special?"

"Yes, it's for my wife."

"What's her name?"

"Emily."

"And does Emily know you're doing this?"

"No."

"Ah, women *love* surprises!"

This is your first close. Now, you know your customer is married and you know her name — you've got the "who" answered — and you've made a close, reinforcing his decision to buy.

"Is this for a special occasion, Robert?"

"Yes, it's for Christmas."

"The perfect Christmas gift is jewelry under the tree."

WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?  
WHY? AND HOW MUCH???

MY WIFE. A RING. NOW.  
BECAUSE I LOVE HER. ALOT.

Now you know the "when" and the "where," and you've made another close. You could reaffirm the appropriateness of jewelry as a gift for any occasion he names — anniversary, birthday, whatever. "When do you need it?"

"Today."

At this point, don't exclaim "Yee-haw!" or he'll think you've never sold anything. If he's in for an anniversary or birthday

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**HOW TO**

STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS

**HANDLE ANGRY CUSTOMERS**

**AH, THE CUSTOMER** who has blown a gasket — who hasn't had one of these? It's all part of the job, and your only goal is to minimize the damage — not avoid it all together. Customer-service expert Eric Harvey, author of *Walk the Talk*, shares some ideas on how to do this:



- 1 LET THEM VENT.** Don't interrupt. Telling their complete story allows customers to release all that pent-up negative energy. Be sure to pay attention at this time — stay face-to-face, maintain eye contact, and be conscious of the other person's body language. Once their story is told, then you can both calm down and start working on solutions.
- 2 BE AGREEABLE.** Saying "You've got a right to be mad" or "I can understand why you're upset" is one of the quickest ways to soothe the savage customer.
- 3 USE "I" INSTEAD OF "YOU".** Keep the verbal finger pointed at yourself instead of your customer. Don't say, "What do you need?". Instead say: "What can I do to meet your needs?" Don't say "You need to call this number". Instead say, "Let me give you this number."
- 4 ASK PERMISSION.** Help the customer feel in control by asking permission instead of telling them what you're doing. Instead of saying, "I need to put you on hold while I check", say "I'd like to put you on hold so I can check ... okay?"
- 5 NEVER END WITH 'NO'.** "We can't" is another no-no. Always recommend a service or compromise. Unless absolutely unavoidable, say what you can do, not what you can't.

**ASK**

*Continued from Page 58*

gift, you should note the date in your client book for next year (don't forget to include his and his wife's names as well).

"Has Emily told you what she wants?"

"Well, her sister has a princess-shape diamond, and she really likes it."

"Oh, the princess is women's favorite among fancies. She'll love it! Do you know what size?"

"At least one carat."

"I have the exact diamond she wants."

Risky as this statement sounds, you're actually decreasing the risk by showing confidence. Men buy when they have peace of mind and freedom from risk (as opposed to women, who buy because of fashion, style, and sentiment). Show him one diamond, no more. If it's not quite right, put it aside and show him another. Whether he picks the original diamond or not, he's subconsciously taken another step toward the purchase by identifying with a single diamond, and thinking of it as "hers."

You now have the essential information to make a more specific sale. But your information gathering is not over yet ... now you have a chance to deepen your knowledge of what he wants, and in so doing, his confidence. Other questions will include:

- ▶ "What quality of diamond are you looking for?"
- ▶ "How hard is she on her jewelry?"
- ▶ "Will she wear it every day or only on special occasions?"

▶ "Does she want it in yellow or white gold? Or platinum?"

▶ "Is it for her left or her right hand?"

And so on. For every question you ask, the answer can be turned into a close. For example:

"What's her favorite color?"

"Red."

"Women love rubies; it's a great color on the skin."

"What size ring does she wear?"

"Six."

"That's one of our most popular sizes, so we have lots to choose from here in the store."

You can also paraphrase his answer when you're in agreement with him, and give it back to him as a close — just like you did with his request for a princess-shaped diamond.

During the holiday rush, most salespeople assume too much and sell too fast. Total sales may be strong, but you're often losing a greater percentage of sales during December than any other month of the year. Taking the time to ask questions shows you are interested, that you're in agreement, and allows you multiple opportunities to close the sale. Gathering the proper information ensures that you are showing the customer *exactly* what he wants. When you do that consistently, your closing ratio goes up, especially during the busy holiday selling season.

*Shane Decker has provided much sought-after sales training for more than 3,000 stores worldwide. He can be reached at (866) 424-2472.*

*Cheers to Autumn!*

*the Martini Ring*

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