

INSIGHT FOUR

DETACHMENT INCREASES YOUR POWER

OLD THINKING

Yes is good. No is bad. Think it over means there is still a chance.

NEW THINKING

I work my process with conviction and diligence, and expend no energy worrying about outcomes. I am here to find and solve problems—not force behavior.

When I introduce the concept of detachment at my workshops, I get a room full of blank stares. The concept, while powerful, transgresses what we've been trained to believe as salespeople. Moreover, it's inconsistent with what we learned as children. The best way for me to share with you the power of detachment is to tell you the true story of Jill.

Jill came to me as a salaried salesperson for a landscaping company. She was earning \$30,000 a year and happy with herself, but not thrilled about the job. She ended up taking

SAME GAME *NEW RULES*

another sales position in a highly competitive marketplace. After she struggled for a few months, we sat down and talked. What I found was not unusual. Since she had no

Never contend with a man
who has nothing to lose.

BALTASAR GRACIAN

experience in commission sales, she became extremely attached to each deal. The bigger the deal got, the more attached she became. Moreover, the more needy she appeared in front of her prospect, the less risk she was likely to take in the sales process.

She couldn't even bring herself to ask the questions that she had to know prior to proceeding. It was as if she thought every prospect she had was the last one on the planet. Intellectually she knew that wasn't the case, but emotionally, she was unable to detach. When she got so hung up emotionally on whether she made the sale or not, her power would slip. Her manager didn't help much. He placed high-levels of pressure on her when she didn't "get the deal."

We worked for a few months on the condition. It was tough work. It challenged her core thoughts and beliefs about selling and achievement. She had always been taught to hold on tight to everything. But eventually Jill was able to detach. She arrived at a new point where she cared slightly less about making the sale than the customer did about solving the problem. She had a tremendous energy to help people solve their problems, but her new rules dictated that she couldn't care more than they did. The end result? Her income doubled within six months. The last time I spoke with Jill, she was on her way to \$100,000 a year. And she'll tell you the rise in income was due to detachment.

Unfortunately, detachment and the ability to let go are not natural characteristics in any of us. From the time we

were kids we were taught to hang on to what we had. If you have any doubt about that, watch three-year-olds play together. There is a constant tug of war between what one has and what the other one wants. We acquire our identity, in part, by what we possess. And when someone takes something from us that we perceive as being ours, it feels like they're taking part of us.

This is also a cultural dilemma. When we have so much of ourselves tied up in what we own, and our "stuff," then we naturally protect our "stuff" by clutching it.

We learn early that when someone takes a thing from us, we lose and they win. But in sales, this antiquated thinking hurts us. I like Catherine Ponder's many examples in her book *Open Your Mind To Prosperity*. She says:

When you are trying to achieve a result and it has not come, it is often because there is still something in mind, body or affairs . . . that you need to renounce, free, release or eliminate. As long as you put off this elimination process, you put off results. Elimination not only takes something from you, it gives you something.

In sales we hang on to things much too long. We have deals that we work on for months and then we can't figure out why we can't get new deals into our pipeline. The problem begins when we attach ourselves emotionally to the deals we have. It prohibits us from asking the questions we need to ask to preserve our own dignity like, "are we going to do this or not?"

Consequently, for any type of sales professional, detachment is a very difficult attitude to adopt. We're attached to

Absolute detachment is a polar region unfit for human life; but one might well get out of the steaming jungles and come a bit closer to the pole.

CRANE BRINTON

whether we get to work on time, to whether people approve of us, to whether we get an appointment from a prospect and to whether the prospect buys. Then, we go to sales training and are told “you can sell anybody anything if you just sell

Man can learn nothing
except by going from the
known to the unknown.

CLAUDE BERNARD

harder.” Do you see the problem? When your emotional energy is attached to a deal you’re working on, how many prospects are you passing by? How many potential clients are you ignoring because your

sights are set too narrowly on this one prospect—leaving you blind to what’s happening around you? Attachment causes tunnel vision.

In game six of the 1998 NBA Finals, Chicago Bulls Coach Phil Jackson was asked by a reporter what he told his team before the game. He quoted an old Buddhist saying, “I told them to chop wood, carry water.” Considering Jackson’s background in Zen philosophies, his response isn’t surprising. What Jackson meant was this: “We’ll go out and work hard, do the things we need to do, each play our role, and not make it more complicated than it has to be. We chop wood. We carry water. We play the game minute by minute but we detach from the outcomes.”

In sales, what that really means is, do what you can, learn all you can, go out to the marketplace and generate activity. But remember, at the end of the day, the outcome is the outcome. Don’t worry about the outcome.

Practicing Detachment in Business

In the sales game, you should always tell the prospect up front some variation of “It’s OK if you don’t buy from me,” or “It’s OK if you say no.” That portrays detachment. When you approach a prospect from that position, it appears on

the surface that you're giving away control and power, but you are surrendering to outcomes which puts you in a higher state of control—not only of the process but of your own emotions and destiny.

R U L E

Never be a hostage to your emotional needs.

R U L E

Never make your prospect a hostage to those needs either.

Because this is such a different way of thinking and looking at achievement, we need to create a process that automatically engages this thinking in your mind. That's why in Insight 3, you heard us talk about the process. The process acts as a filter *in* which you engage people, and *from* which you cut people. It is the process you create to help you detach from any outcome. If you can engage enough people in enough activity, then you really and truly will not care about the outcome of any one prospect because you have enough people engaged to make your numbers.

Wisdom consists of
passing up nonessentials.

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE

Let's suppose that 80% of the time when you involve the president of a company in your sales process, you close the business and are able to provide the optimum solution for the client. And only 20% of the time when the president is absent do you get the sale. Overall, your odds increase 400% when the president is involved.

Let's also suppose you're now in a process where the VP of Operations has told you right up front that the president will

not be involved in this process. You know that your odds just dropped 400%. You now have a choice to make. Do you continue through the process knowing your odds of closing this will be a fraction of what they could be? Or do you create an environment where you force the prospect to make a decision and if he doesn't want the president involved, you're not willing to go any further? In this respect, the prospect makes the

When I call on a client,
I come by cab and I am sleek
and clean and four square. I
carry myself as though I've
made a quiet killing on the
stock market, and have come to
call more as a public service
than anything else.

KURT VONNEGUT

Welcome to the Monkey House

decision for you. If he still maintains the president doesn't want to get involved, then you kindly, willingly and gently, but assertively, pack up your bags and leave the process.

Now remember, before you tell me that you'd never do that because the chance to close is at least two out of ten, you must believe you have an abundant market. You know you can only work with a cer-

tain number of prospects at one time. So the fact that this one person doesn't want to do anything is OK. You're detached. And you are detached not because you don't care, but because you only want to help people who are willing to engage in your rules.

When you're doing the right things up front in the sales process, the prospect is less likely to let you go because of a minor thing (like the president's involvement). Through your ability to detach from the outcome, the prospect sees your convictions, senses you know what you're doing, and is likely to change their rules accordingly.

The Words to Say

I know this is a stretch for some of you, but stay with me. When you're detached from the outcome in the sales

process, you will instinctively know what to say, how to say it, and when to say it, because you'll be acting from your intuition rather than from your ego. Bear in mind these words may not be exactly how they will come out for you, but hear the concept at work.

When you're detached you can say the following things:

- "I'm not sure if I can help you."
- "It doesn't sound like you really need me. Sounds like you have everything under control."
- "If we can't get the President and Operations Manager involved, I'm not sure there is a point in continuing."
- "I've been sitting for an hour listening to you, and I really don't hear the things that most prospects tell me at this point. Have I missed something?"
- "If you have such a good relationship with your current vendor, why am I here?"

I'm not recommending you say these exact things or say them all at once, I'm only suggesting that you cannot say these if you're attached to a "yes" answer at the end of the sale.

Remember, detachment does not mean cavalier or cocky. Actually it is just the opposite. Your regard for their problem is so high that if you see they care less than you do, you must conserve your energy and walk away, and look for someone who is serious about solving their problem. The caring is not just about you caring for them—it is about *you* caring for *you*. But when you walk—never walk in contempt—never from a place of anger or disdain. A paradox remains—there is a leap of faith that must occur for a salesperson to adopt this approach. Moreover, detachment without the corresponding techniques and strategies that we're putting forth here will be seen as manipulative and ineffective.

SAME GAME *NEW RULES*

The result of detachment is a form of courage. The strength it gives to you actually attracts people at a psychological level. When you come from a place of strength and detachment, more and more prospects see you as something (or someone) they need. More and more clients want to do additional business with you. More sales processes go your way.

Detachment does not mean uncaring. It does not mean you don't want to make quota. It means you're OK either way. You have an ultimate belief in abundance and any lack or shortcoming you experience is only temporary.

A C T I O N I T E M

To change your income and grow, you must constantly be filling your funnel up with bigger and better opportunities. One way to do this is to release some smaller fish. Go through your client list and your funnel. Get rid of the ones that are too small for you or haven't had any positive movement in the last thirty days. Make this a ritual.

Always clean your closet and throw away the dated items. Detach.
