

SPARKING IDEAS AND ACTION IN YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS  
HARMONY COACHING & CONSULTING

## *Hire Slow*

After speaking to a group of employers about hiring practices, one of the attendees approached me and said, “You say hire slow to get the best results, but it doesn’t do us any good. We just end up rushing around trying to hire someone because the job has been open for too long.”

She described her company’s selection process. The average time lapse between receiving the last resume and the first interview was about two months, during which time multiple managers reviewed each resume in an attempt to reach consensus on which applicants to accept, the method to be used to determine who would be selected for on-site interviews and who would manage the process.

There is a difference between a “hire slow” selection process and a broken process that drags. Her company’s process is a good example of the latter.

The phrase “hire slow” is not about taking a long time to invite an applicant in for an interview.

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*Do you have sound hiring practices?*

## *Influencing Skills = Success in Sales*

Whether in a position responsible for selling your company’s product and/or services, or in a position that requires you to sell ideas to your staff or teammates, we are all in sales all of the time. Since we work in an interdependent world (one where we have our own duties to do independently, but we are dependent upon others to do their part) it is imperative that we hone

our Influencing Skills, for we cannot be successful without others.

Your ability to influence others is directly proportional to your ability to succeed in sales, both inside and outside of your organization. Most of us think that to influence another, we must manipulate, cajole, or force them to acquiesce. But this could not be further from the truth; for we know that the opposite is actually true. In order to influence someone, I must first let them influence me.

Philosophers and Psychologists for centuries have studied the human being, and we know that we are creatures of habits. These habits make us efficient in that we can do much throughout our day without thinking about it, such as driving a car, tying our shoes, or typing on this computer. But these habits also cause us to be “Re-Active” beings. We respond to outside stimuli based upon these habits, and it is in understanding this stimuli/response that we can improve our Influencing Skills.

As human beings, we respond well to people who are open to our wants, needs and desires,

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and we will actively resist those who are more concerned about themselves than they are about us.

This becomes very apparent in the sales arena. We have all, no doubt, had buying experiences where the salesperson had all the “Sales” skills down pat; he said and did all the right things, but yet he made your skin crawl. Why? Because he was more concerned with his issues than yours. In this situation you are no longer a person with needs and wants, but rather, you are a target, money, or a quota. And, we all have the ability to sense this.

I am also sure that you have had good buying experiences where the salesperson, once again with appropriate “Sales” skills, made you feel comfortable. What was different? In this case he was concerned with you as a person and saw your needs as equally important to his; not more important, but equally important. By being open to your needs, and being responsive to them, he has now invited you to be open and responsive to him and his product or service.



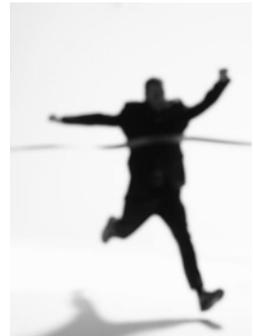
Too often in our coaching we see people who are struggling in sales, or in getting others to commit to ideas. They feel stuck, and it is no surprise that when we investigate the reasons, we find that it is they who are getting in their own way. They are too focused on “Needing to Make the Sale,” or “Do I Look Alright?” or “I Have All These Great Products and Features!” When salespeople are in this place, they cannot focus on the prospect; they are only focused on themselves. They are focused on their own “Doings,” and not on the big picture result – Helping the Client or Customer.

Linda Martin of Resources Associates Corporation once stated, “People don’t like to be sold...but they love to buy.” So true! The determining factor in why someone buys is not product or service superiority, but it is the salesperson’s ability to discover needs,

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create urgency and develop confidence in his or her ability to satisfy those needs better than anyone else.

We coach many new salespeople in the art of being an “Assistant Buyer” rather than a salesperson. The Assistant Buyer is more concerned with the person buying than they are with making the sale. If the product or service I provide is not the best option, an assistant buyer will tell the prospect that, just as they would for their best friend, spouse or child. This is being responsive to their needs, and is the best way to influence them.



You might say that Like Attracts Like; my responsiveness will invite responsiveness in others, whereas my resistance will provoke resistance in others. If I seek to improve my Influencing Skills, I must understand these truths about human stimuli/response. Here are a few tips to remain responsive to your prospect’s needs.

1. Focus on them first – It’s not who talks ... It’s who listens.
2. The best way to get someone to like you is to like them first.
3. The best way to get someone to respect you is to respect them first.
4. The best way to impress someone is to be impressed with them
5. The best way to influence someone is to let them influence you first!

By Jerry Fons, Executive Power, LLC. Visit their web site at: [www.executive-power.com](http://www.executive-power.com)

### **Keep Copies of Paperwork with a Scanner**

You can organize your receipts, proofs-of-purchase, and other paperwork on your hard drive with a scanner and some simple software. This allows you to back them up on a floppy or CD for safekeeping. Scanners are not too expensive, and USB models are easy to install.



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It is about attention to detail at a calculated speed through a well planned and organized process.

**The ‘hire slow’ process involves six steps:**

1. **Plan the process.** Determine the requirements of the position, how will you solicit resumes, who will screen the resumes, who will be responsible for each step of the screening process, and who will be the principles that make up the selection team.
2. **Establish a timeline for each step of the process,** and hold every member of the selection team to his or her assigned responsibilities and deadlines.
3. **Design interview questions by the core competencies.** These competencies should define success in the position. Define hard skills such as the technical requirements of the job. Define soft skills that determine success or failure in the job. These are work behaviors or personality traits such as ability to work in a diverse environment, ability to multi-task, or attention to detail.
4. **Find the importance.** Every position should be filled as if it is the most important job in the organization. A well-placed manager can make the organization more profitable, but a poorly placed clerk may cost you a fortune.
5. **Treat all candidates as if they may someday run the company.** In other words, show respect for every person you interview. Establish a schedule and stick to it. Don’t keep applicants waiting, and don’t allow yourself to be interrupted during the interview.
6. **Follow up.** Assess your progress after each step. The selection team should review the applicant after each interview or by the end of the day if multiple interviews were conducted. Within two weeks you should follow up with the applicant to let them know where they stand, even if it is to report that you have not made a decision yet.



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*I like to think of sales as the ability to gracefully persuade, not manipulate, a person or persons into a win-win situation.*

— Bo Bennett

*Take care of those who work for you and you'll float to greatness on their achievements.*

— H.S.M. Burns



# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## Spot That E-Mail Virus

In case your anti-virus program doesn't catch every E-Mail based Internet worm, try the following tip to be warned if you are infected: Add a fake E-Mail address in your address book and name it with an obvious name (like "virus alert").

If you get infected, the message sent by the worm to that invalid E-Mail account will bounce back to you and you'll see the bounced message warning.





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## Guidelines for Roth IRA Contributions



Taxpayers, confused about whether they can contribute to a Roth IRA, should consider guidelines based on the following categories:

- ♦ **Income Limits** To contribute to a Roth IRA, you must have compensation (e.g., wages, salary, tips, professional fees, bonuses). These limits vary depending on your filing and marital statuses.
- ♦ **Age** There is no age limitation for Roth IRA contributions.
- ♦ **Contribution Limits** In general, if your only IRA is a Roth IRA, the maximum 2005 contribution limit is the lesser of your taxable compensation or \$4,000 (\$4,500 if 50 or older). The maximum contribution limit phases out depending on your modified adjusted gross income.
- ♦ **Spousal Roth IRA** You can make contributions to a Roth IRA for your spouse provided you meet the income requirements.
- ♦ **Time** Contributions to a Roth IRA can be made at any time during the year or by the due date of your return for that year (not including extensions).

Roth IRA contributions are not tax deductible and are not reported on your tax return. On the other hand, you do not include in your gross income, and therefore are not taxed on, any qualified distributions or distributions that are a return of your regular Roth IRA contributions or that are rolled over into another Roth IRA.

For complete information and definitions of terms, get Publication 590, Individual Retirement Arrangements. Visit the IRS Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), or call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) to request a free copy of the publication.

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## Tips for Leading Your former Peers

Leading people who were once your teammates can be a new leader's biggest challenge. The following steps can help if you're having problems:

- ♦ **Talk with the people.** Ask them why they're having problems with you. Are they jealous, disappointed, or just having trouble adjusting? Keep probing them – non-aggressively – until you reach the root of the problem.
- ♦ **Express your understanding of their feelings.** Can you honestly say, "I'd feel the same if I were in your place"? If so, think about the leadership style you'd respond to, and try to lead that way.
- ♦ **Minimize your "power" over them.** Use phrases like "working together" or "working with you." Ask for their help in doing things. Delegate when possible. Don't worry about appearing weak. You'll have all the power you need if you can get your team members solidly behind you.
- ♦ **Ask for their opinions about changes.** Almost everyone likes to be asked for an opinion. Just make sure you follow up by expressing your appreciation and letting them know if their ideas can be implemented.



— *Taking The Step Up To Supervisor*, Geoff Nichols. American Media, 4900 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266.

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**Harmony Coaching & Consulting** is in the business of maximizing human talent for individuals and organizations in various industries. We accomplish this through the analysis, design and implementation of [Human Resource Programs](#), [Professional Development Training](#), [Personal Executive Coaching](#) and [Assessments](#).



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