

**SALES ILLUSTRATED
68 LESSONS FROM EVERYDAY
LIFE**

*By John Carroll
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"I've always felt that "selling" was actually about enabling the buyer to buy. It always seemed to me like a judo move, where you use the other person's natural momentum, not your own countervailing force. Selling is about subtle finesse, not brute strength."

—From the Forward by Alan Weiss, Ph.D.

Organizational development consultant John Carroll has written a great big smile of a book. No doubt inspired by such recent bestsellers as *Everything I Know About Life I Learned in Kindergarten*, the premise is based on the notion that selling reflects life, and that the best sales advice can be gleaned from the best of life's many lessons, from the child's classroom to a hockey game to the family cat. While this approach may sound somewhat precious, Mr. Carroll writes with such an engaging, friendly voice that only the most hard-hearted among us would fail to be charmed.

His homespun advice on salesmanship begins with a brief introduction during which he likens his marriage to "a large sale, with 17 years of customer service in a growing organization". His stated objective is to provide insight into understanding the sales process as compared to everyday living.

The first lesson starts with the first influential person in our lives: Mom. Lessons from Mom include "Wear clean underwear" and "If you cross your eyes, they'll stay that way". Mr. Carroll's special gift lies in drawing the meaningful analogies from the literal message. From a sales perspective, "Wear clean underwear" cautions readers to be prepared for the worst possible situation, and respond in a positive way to whatever the world throws at you. "If you cross your eyes, they'll stay that way" becomes a discourse on the difficulty of breaking bad habits. Often a salesperson finds his or herself settling into poor sales or time management habits. He cautions readers to find a way to change them now, or "they'll stay that way".

Mr. Carroll uses his own children to describe another set of lessons, in "The 10 Ps to Success in Selling Mom and Dad." For anyone with children, or access to neighbors' or relatives' kids, these pointers will resonate. From Planning, Preparation and Poise, through Positive Expectations, Pleasant Tone and Presentation and finishing with Patience and Persistence, children are adept salespeople. From earliest childhood, they must ask for virtually everything they

need and negotiate for the agreement of their "superiors". Readers could do worse than learn the lessons taught by a child focused on an end result.

To further whet the appetite without giving too much away, Ten Lessons from Hockey include "Keep your head up", "Take your shot" and "Stay out of the penalty box". Lessons from the Backyard give us "Seasons change", "Use the proper tools for the job" and "Know when to take a break". And the family cat? She teaches us "Don't be too enthusiastic", "Watch out for dogs" and "Keep things clean". Accompanying each of these gems is a thorough interpretation relating to salesmanship.

It is obvious that John Carroll knows sales, and his book is a good quick read full of sound advice. Compared to the more business-like treatises written on the subject, *Sales Illustrated* offers sales people and managers a refreshing take on the subject. ☺

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