Daniel H. Pink: To Sell Is Human Book Summary

Written Summary

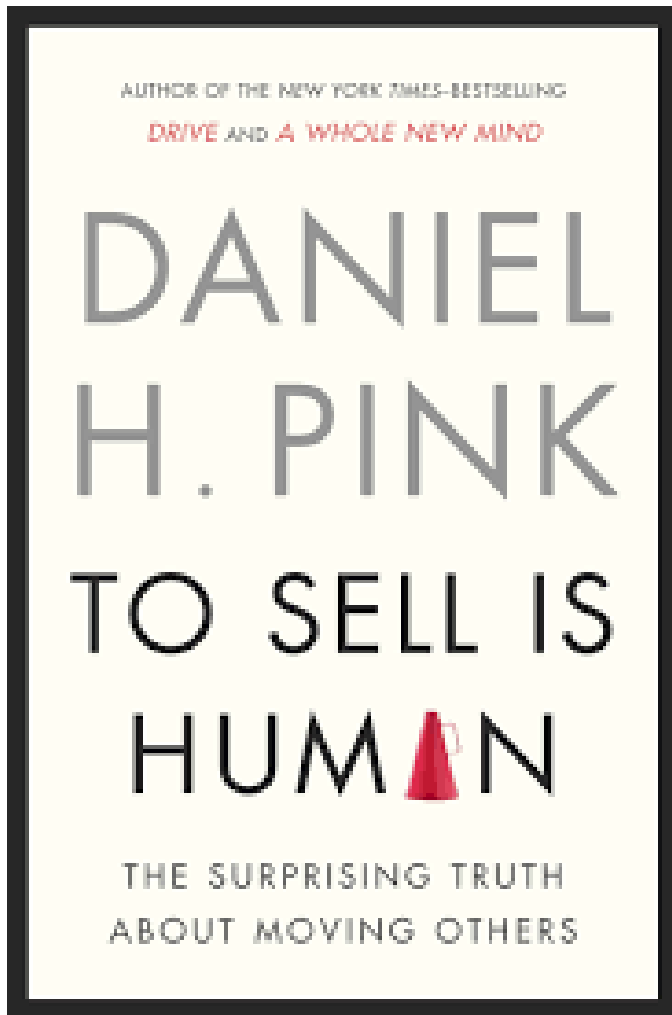http://bestbookbits.com/daniel-h-pink-to-sell-is-human-book-summary/

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- "Like it or not, we're all in sales now".

- "The ability to move others to exchange what they have for what we have is crucial to our survival and our happiness".

- "Whether it's selling's traditional form or its non-sales variation, we're all in sales now".

- "Ferlazzo makes a distinction between 'irritation' and 'agitation'. Irritation, he says, is 'challenging people to do something that we want them to do'. By contrast, 'agitation is challenging them to do something that they want to do'".

- "Those who'd received even a small injection of power became less likely (and perhaps less able) to attune themselves to someone else's point of view".

- "The notion that extraverts are the finest salespeople is so obvious that we've overlooked one teensy flaw. There's almost no evidence that it's actually true".

The three key steps to strategic mimicry:

1. Watch. Observe what the other person is doing.
2. Wait. Once you've observed, don't spring immediately into action. Don't do this too many times, though.
3. Wane. After you've mimicked a little, try to be less conscious of what you're doing.

- "Attuning yourself to others—exiting your own perspective and entering theirs—is essential to moving others".

- "Adam Grant has discovered that the most effective salespeople are ambiverts, those who fall somewhere in the middle of the introversion-extraversion scale".

- "How to stay afloat amid that ocean of rejection is the second essential quality in moving others. I call this quality 'buoyancy'".

Interrogative

Self-Talk

- "The most effective self-talk doesn't merely shift emotions. It shifts linguistic categories. It moves from making statements to asking questions".

- "On average, the self-questioning group solved nearly 50 percent more puzzles than the self-affirming group". (Senay, Albarracín and Noguchi, 2010)

- "People who'd written Will I solved nearly twice as many anagrams as those who'd written I will, Will, or I".

- "[Interrogative self-talk], by its very form, elicits answers—and within those answers are strategies for actually carrying out the task".

- "Researchers say, '[interrogative self-talk] may inspire thoughts about autonomous or intrinsically motivated reasons to pursue a goal'".

- "People are more likely to act, and to perform well, when the motivations come from intrinsic choices rather than from extrinsic pressures".

- "Declarative self-talk risks bypassing one's motivations. Questioning self-talk elicits the reasons for doing something and reminds people that many of those reasons come from within".

- "Those who'd heard the positive-inflected pitch were twice as likely to accept the deal as those who'd heard the negative one—even though the terms were identical".

Explanatory Style

- "In human beings, Seligman observed, learned helplessness was usually a function of people's 'explanatory style'—their habit of explaining negative events to themselves".

- "People who give up easily, who become helpless even in situations where they actually can do something, explain bad events as permanent, pervasive, and personal".

- "Agents who scored in the optimistic half of explanatory style sold 37% more insurance than agents scoring in the pessimistic half. Agents in the top decile sold 88% more insurance than those in the bottom decile".

- "The salespeople with an optimistic explanatory style—who saw rejections as temporary rather than permanent, specific rather than universal, and external rather than personal—sold more insurance and survived in their jobs much longer".

- "[Hall] is not blind optimism but what Seligman calls 'flexible optimism—optimism with its eyes open'".

- Question: "Can I move these people?"

- "Answer it—directly and in writing. List five specific reasons why the answer to your question is yes. These reasons will remind you of the strategies that you'll need to be effective on the task, providing a sturdier and more substantive grounding than mere affirmation".

"When something bad occurs, ask yourself three questions—and come up with an intelligent way to answer each one "no":

1. Is this permanent?
2. Is this pervasive?
3. Is this personal?

- "The more you explain bad events as temporary, specific, and external, the more likely you are to persist even in the face of adversity".

Enumerate and Embrace

- "One way to remain buoyant is to acquire a more realistic sense of what can actually sink you. You can do that by counting your

rejections—and then celebrating them. It's a strategy I call 'enumerate and embrace'".

- Enumerate. "Try actually counting the nos you get during a week. By the end of the week, you might be surprised by just how many nos the world has delivered to your doorstep. However, you might be more surprised by something else: You're still around. Even in that weeklong ocean of rejection, you've still managed to stay afloat. That realization can give you the will to continue and the confidence to do even better the following week".

- Embrace. "'It was my way of showing that I didn't quit', [Goldbery] says. 'I got all these rejections, but kept going'".

- "Allow yourself what [Fredrickson] dubs 'appropriate negativity'—moments of anger, hostility, disgust, and resentment that serve a productive purpose".

- "[Fredrickson's] work has shown that thinking through gloom-and-doom scenarios and mentally preparing for the very worst that can occur helps some people effectively manage their anxieties".

Rejection

- "If this approach sounds useful, present yourself with a series of 'What ifs?' What if everything goes wrong? What if the unthinkable happens? What if this is the worst decision of my life? These questions could prompt answers you didn't expect, which might calm you down and even lift you up".

- "One way to reduce their sting [of rejection], and perhaps even avoid one altogether, is to preempt the rejecter by writing [a rejection] letter yourself.

- "Once the rejection is in writing, its consequences can seem far less dire".

- "More important, by articulating the reasons for turning you down, the letter might reveal soft spots in what you're presenting, which you can then work to strengthen".

Saving

- "Three in four Americans have less than $30,000 saved in their retirement accounts".

- "Our biases point us toward the present. So when given a choice between an immediate reward (say, $1,000 right now) and a reward we have to wait for ($1,150 in two years), we'll often take the former even when it's in our own interest to choose the latter".

- "Those who saw images of their current selves (call them the 'Me Now' group) directed an average of $80 into the retirement account. Those who saw images of their future selves (the 'Me Later' group) allocated more than twice that amount—$172".

- "Those who saw the image of themselves at age seventy saved more than those who'd simply seen a picture of a seventy-year-old". (Hereshfield)

- "The problem we have saving for retirement, these studies showed, isn't only our meager ability to weigh present rewards against future ones. It is also the connection—or rather, the disconnection—between our present and future selves".

- "Envisioning ourselves far into the future is extremely difficult—so difficult, in fact, that we often think of that future self as an entirely different person".

- "This conceptual shift demonstrates the third quality necessary in moving others today: clarity—the capacity to help others see their situations in fresh and more revealing ways and to identify problems they didn't realize they had".

Problem Finding

- "The ability to move others hinges less on problem solving than on problem finding".

- "As Csikszentmihalyi saw it, the first group was trying to solve a problem: How can I produce a good drawing? The second was trying to find a problem: What good drawing can I produce?"

- "When he tabulated the ratings, Csikszentmihalyi discovered that the experts deemed the problem finders' works far more creative than the problem solvers'".

- "In subsequent research, [Csikszentmihalyi] and other scholars found that people most disposed to creative breakthroughs in art, science, or any endeavor tend to be problem finders".

- "You can raise that question by framing your offering in ways that contrast with its alternatives and therefore clarify its virtues".

The following five frames can be useful in providing clarity to those you hope to move.

1. The Less Frame

- "Of the consumers who visited the booth with twenty-four varieties, only 3 percent bought jam. At the booth with a more limited selection, 30 percent made a purchase".

- "Adding an inexpensive item to a product offering can lead to a decline in consumers' willingness to pay."

- "Framing people's options in a way that restricts their choices can help them see those choices more clearly instead of overwhelming them".

2. The Experience Frame

- "Several researchers have shown that people derive much greater satisfaction from purchasing experiences than they do from purchasing goods".

- "Even when people ponder their future purchases, they expect that experiences will leave them more satisfied than physical goods".

- "Framing a sale in experiential terms is more likely to lead to satisfied customers and repeat business".

3. The Label Frame

- "In the Wall Street Game, 33 percent of participants cooperated and went free. But in the Community Game, 66 percent reached that mutually beneficial result".

- "The neatest group by far was the first—the one that had been labeled 'neat'".

- "Merely assigning that positive label—helping the students frame themselves in comparison with others—elevated their behavior".

4. The Blemished Frame

- "Remarkably, in many cases, the people who'd gotten that small dose of negative information were more likely to purchase the boots than those who'd received the exclusively positive information".

- "The researchers dubbed this phenomenon the 'blemishing effect'—where 'adding a minor negative detail in an otherwise positive description of a target can give that description a more positive impact'".

- "But the blemishing effect seems to operate only under two circumstances. First, the people processing the information must be in what the researchers call a 'low effort' state. That is, instead of focusing resolutely on the decision, they're proceeding with a little less effort—perhaps because they're busy or distracted. Second, the negative information must follow the positive information, not the reverse. Once again, the comparison creates clarity. 'The core logic is that when individuals encounter weak negative information after already having received positive

information, the weak negative information ironically highlights or increases the salience of the positive information".

- "If you're making your case to someone who's not intently weighing every single word, list all the positives—but do add a mild negative. Being honest about the existence of a small blemish can enhance your offering's true beauty".

5. The Potential Frame

- "Participants, on average, gave the veteran player with solid numbers a salary of over four million dollars for his sixth year. But they said that for the rookie's sixth season, they'd expect to pay him more than five million dollars".

- "People often find potential more interesting than accomplishment because it's more uncertain, the researchers argue".

- "Next time you're selling yourself, don't fixate only on what you achieved yesterday. Also, emphasize the promise of what you could accomplish tomorrow".

Off-Ramps

- "Once you've found the problem and the proper frame, you have one more step. You need to give people an off-ramp".

- "Among the students in the least likely group who received the less detailed letter, a whopping 0 percent contributed to the food drive. But their counterparts, who were more disposed to giving but who'd received the same letter, didn't exactly wow researchers with their benevolence. Only 8 percent of them made a food donation".

- "However, the letter that gave students details on how to act had a huge effect. Twenty-five percent of students deemed least likely to contribute actually made a contribution when they received the letter with a concrete appeal, a map, and a location for donating".

- "A specific request accompanied by a clear way to get it done ended up with the least likely group donating food at three times the rate of the most likely who hadn't been given a clear path of action".

- "Clarity on how to think without clarity on how to act can leave people unmoved".

Motivational Interviewing

1. "On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 meaning 'not the least bit ready' and 10 meaning 'totally ready,' how ready are you to study?"
2. "Why didn't you pick a lower number?"

- "In the old days, our challenge was accessing information. These days, our challenge is curating it".

The three-step process for curation (Kanter):

1. Seek. Once you've defined the area in which you'd like to curate, put together a list of the best sources of information. Then set aside time to scan those sources regularly (at least fifteen minutes, two times a day). As you scan, gather the most interesting items.
2. Sense. Creating meaning out of the material you've assembled. Make an annotated list of Web links or regularly maintain a blog. Tend to this list of resources every day.
3. Share. You can do this through a regular e-mail or your own newsletter, or by using Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn. As you share, you'll help others see their own situations in a new light and possibly reveal hidden problems that you can solve.

- "The folks at IDEO, the award-winning innovation, and design firm, have taken a lesson from the under-five set in one of the methods they use to find design problems. They call their technique 'Five Whys'".

- "As IDEO explains it, 'This exercise forces people to examine and express the underlying reasons for their behavior and attitudes'".

- "The purpose of a pitch isn't necessarily to move others immediately to adopt your idea. The purpose is to offer something so compelling that it begins a conversation, brings the other person in as a participant, and eventually arrives at an outcome that appeals to both of you".

Dan Pink's six successors to the elevator pitch:

1. The One-Word Pitch

- "The ultimate pitch for an era of short attention spans begins with a single word—and doesn't go any further".

2. The Question Pitch

- "By making people work just a little harder, question pitches prompt people to come up with their own reasons for agreeing (or not). And when people summon their own reasons for believing something, they endorse the belief more strongly and become more likely to act on it".

3. The Rhyming Pitch

- "Participants rated the aphorisms in the left column as far more accurate than those in the right column, even though each pair says essentially the same thing. Yet when the researchers asked people, 'In your opinion, do aphorisms that rhyme describe human behavior more accurately than those that do not rhyme? the overwhelming answer was no".

- "Rhymes boost what linguists and cognitive scientists call 'processing fluency', the ease with which our minds slice, dice, and make sense of stimuli".

- "If you're one of a series of freelancers invited to make a presentation before a big potential client, including a rhyme can enhance the processing fluency of your listeners, allowing your message to stick in their minds when they compare you and your competitors".

4. The Subject-Line Pitch

- "The researchers discovered that participants based their decisions on two factors: utility and curiosity".

- People were quite likely to "read emails that directly affected their work". But they were also likely "to open messages when they had moderate levels of uncertainty about the contents, i.e. they were 'curious' what the messages were about".

- "Utility worked better when recipients had lots of e-mail, but 'curiosity [drove] attention to email under conditions of low demand'".

- "Ample research has shown that trying to add intrinsic motives on top of extrinsic ones often backfires".

- "Along with utility and curiosity is a third principle: specificity".

5. The Twitter Pitch

- "The mark of an effective tweet, like the mark of any effective pitch, is that it engages recipients and encourages them to take the conversation further—by responding, clicking a link, or sharing the tweet with others".

6. The Pixar Pitch

After someone hears your pitch, ask yourself:

1. What do you want them to know?
2. What do you want them to feel?
3. What do you want them to do?

"In those circumstances and many others, you'll do better if you follow three essential rules of improvisational theater: (1) Hear offers. (2) Say 'Yes and'. (3) Make your partner look good".

1. Hear Offers.

- "Once we listen in this new, more intimate way, we begin hearing things we might have missed. And if we listen this way during our efforts to move others, we quickly realize that what seem outwardly like objections are often offers in disguise".

2. Say "Yes and".

- "Instead of swirling downward into frustration, 'Yes and' spirals upward toward possibility. When you stop you've got a set of options, not a sense of futility".

3. Make Your Partner Look Good.

- "Today, if you make people look bad, they can tell the world. But if you make people look good, they can also tell the world".

- "But Grant and Hofmann reveal something equally crucial: 'Our findings suggest that health and safety messages should focus not on the self, but rather on the target group that is perceived as most vulnerable'".

- "Raising the salience of purpose is one of the most potent—and most overlooked—methods of moving others".

- "While we often assume that human beings are motivated mainly by self-interest, a stack of research has shown that all of us also do things for what social scientists call 'prosocial' or 'self-transcending' reasons. That means that not only should we ourselves be serving, but we should also be tapping others' innate desire to serve. Making it personal works better when we also make it purposeful".

- "Merely discussing purpose in one realm (car-sharing) moved people to behave differently in a second realm (recycling)".

Serving Others

- "This is what it means to serve: improving another's life and, in turn, improving the world".

- Greenleaf on "servant leadership": "The best test, and the most difficult to administer, is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"

- "If the person you're selling to agrees to buy, will his or her life improve? When your interaction is over, will the world be a better place than when you began?"

- "Upserving means doing more for the other person than he expects or you initially intended, taking the extra steps that transform a mundane interaction into a memorable experience".

- "Anytime you're tempted to upsell someone else, stop what you're doing and upserve instead. Don't try to increase what they can do for you. Elevate what you can do for them".

Shout out to samuelthomasdavies.com for doing this written summary