

Chapter 1

The Beginnings

ABSTRACT

This chapter traces the roots of selling as a professional activity. Starting with ancient roots of how early mankind exchanged one value for another, it traces the exchange of values to include the use of a legal tender, money. The chapter illustrates how selling changed over time, and continued to change to make the salespersons more successful. The question this chapter raises is why were these changes necessary and were they permanent, or were more changes to come in a continuous process of change? Beginning with the need to sell something, sales is seen as a process that needs to find its way. As commercial sellers, business to business, differentiated from sellers of consumer goods, they developed unique professional skills. Were these skills and requirements permanent or just a bump in the road to an ever-evolving profession? Using critical thinking to evaluate the history of selling we conclude that selling is never satisfied with the current process and continues to change as technology, methods of transportation and commerce change.

ANCIENT ORIGINS

As the sun rises early one fall morning during the Paleolithic period (roughly 2.5 million years ago to 10,000 B.C.), a cave dweller looks out from his cave and searches the horizon for a furry animal to hunt. He lives a simple existence, living off the land and what he can kill. He is seeking the skin of a heavily furred animal to make a warm blanket or wrap to keep him, or his family, snug during the brutish and cold days and nights ahead. He sees

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another cave dweller appear from his cave, across the way, carrying a large animal skin with a full set of fur.

Figure 1. Caveman handshake

Source: Robot100 (2023)



The cave dweller comes out of his home, approaches the other man, and grunts pointing to the fur skin he is carrying. The second cave dweller indicates that this fur skin is an extra one, and he would be willing to give this to the first person who offers him something he can use, something of value. After thinking this over, the cave dweller returns to his cave, grabs a large rack of meat he has stored there, and returns to the outside discussion. He does not need this rack of meat, as his hunt the prior day was very successful, it is surplus, and he has plenty to feed himself and his family. He indicates to the fur bearing cave dweller that he would give the meat in exchange for the fur. Both cave dwellers agree, and the exchange is made. The first cave dweller gains a warm fur skin garment, while the second dweller is now able to feed himself and his family for some time.

A sale was made, and the deal closed!

At that moment, in this story, the concept of money has not arrived. According to a Google source (*when was money invented?* 2022),

In 600 BCE, Lydia's King Alyattes minted what is believed to be the first official currency, the Lydian stater. The coins were made from electrum, a

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