

## THE VALUE OF – **PRECISION** – IN SELLING

The argument has raged for years: is selling an – **art** – or – a **science**? In 1960, **Dave Yoho** made a number of presentations to sales organizations entitled – **Six Sales to a Sale** – arguably this was an introduction to “step selling.” Dave described the science of this selling method with a simple statement – **it’s not about you – it’s all about the prospect.**

*“Closing the Sale  
is the natural  
conclusion to the  
satisfactory  
completion of  
each step in a  
sound sales  
methodology.”*

**Dave Yoho**

In 1962, Dave was invited to speak before an audience of almost one thousand businessmen in the Americana hotel in New York City. He challenged them to develop training systems wherein precision and detail would be taught so that customer reception would improve dramatically. As an example, he demonstrated why it was important to take out a contract making it visible to the prospect – prior to a price being quoted. He demonstrated how this could become an automatic procedure and lead to improved customer/prospect satisfaction.

This small part of the procedure would come in handy when, at the conclusion of the presentation, the salesperson would ask for the order. According to Dave, it is the small, seemingly insignificant parts of a selling procedure that salespeople frequently overlook. In so doing, they often obviate the opportunity to get an order.

Dave’s system of “step selling”, which is based on understanding prospects’ values, is unquestionably a science. It has been adopted by many of the largest and most successful companies in the United States. The principles of the selling system are today called **Power Linguistic<sup>®</sup> Selling** ([www.powerlinguistics.net](http://www.powerlinguistics.net)). Sound selling practices never go out of style, yet they often get overlooked in good times. In a time when companies have become more competitive, prospects are a little scarcer and customers are frequently more reluctant, it is more important than ever that salespeople and sales management understand the “basics” of “step selling”.

In a recent presentation, Dave emphasized how ordinary salespeople frequently become superstars with the application of “step selling”. As a reminder, he told his audience the following story: “In 1958, the New York Giants and the Baltimore Colts met in the first ‘sudden death’ overtime championship game. The Colts won the game by scoring on a running play executed by Alan ‘The Horse’ Ameche.” **However**, Dave pointed out, the “key” plays that got them close to the goal line, enabling them to execute a running play were performed by a “precision player”.

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A recent Sports Illustrated article chronicled it as the “greatest football game ever played.” The article highlighted the precision tactics of a receiver named **Raymond Berry**. Dave encouraged his audience (and we encourage you) to Google the Sports Illustrated article and be reminded of how precision played a major role in this victory.

Here is a story about Raymond Berry that Dave recited. It occurred after Berry's retirement as a player and when he was an assistant coach in Dallas:

On his first day as the Cowboys' receivers coach, the meticulous Raymond Berry demonstrated how to run a sideline route to rookies. Berry made his usual precise numbers of steps, cut toward the sideline and landed – 1 foot out of bounds.

"The field is too narrow, Tom," he announced to Coach Landry.

"No, Raymond," Landry said, "we've been out here forever."

This was the sixth year the Cowboys had practiced on the same field without complaint, yet Berry instinctively found it out of line.

"Either the hash marks aren't right or the field is too narrow," the former Baltimore Colts star receiver insisted. Landry shrugged, called for a tape measure, and field dimensions were plotted to the exact inch.

Berry's sense of precision was validated. The field was 11 inches too narrow.

Raymond Berry was **not** one of the fastest receivers in professional football (not even on the Colt's team). He had to wear special shoes because one leg was shorter than the other and he was impaired by poor eyesight. He additionally suffered from an injury to one of his hands which left one of his fingers bent at an odd angle. Certainly these were drawbacks for a top receiver.

**But** – Raymond Berry ran his routes by precision; always with a given number of steps and was seldom ever out of position when the ball came his way. Modern salespeople could take a cue from this behavior. It's not about who has the best voice, looks or clothing, nor who is the most glib or fast-talking. Selling is a science that can compensate for many short-comings a salesperson may possess.

Salespeople have to be taught the science of selling and the precision by which they execute their presentations. Salespeople, both veterans and recruits, have to use a "step selling" process which is geared towards the way customers feel and think.

**Remember – any shortcut will lead you out of bounds (where you can't score) whether you are in professional football – or – professional selling.**

**Power Linguistic<sup>®</sup>  
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year study of  
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action

Sept 10, 2008

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