

## Praise for #SalesTruth

“Bold. Blunt. Truth. Mike will disrupt your thinking and challenge you with simple sales solutions as only he can. Proceed with caution—powerful insights on every page.”

—**MARK HUNTER**,  
author of *High-Profit Prospecting*

“It is rare that a book speaks a truth so strongly and so clearly that it defines an era. #SalesTruth is that book. Weinberg tells the #SalesTruth in his blunt, inimitable style, delivered with a sense of humor, and heavy on the practical, tactical approach that is his trademark.

—**ANTHONY IANNARINO**,  
author of *Eat Their Lunch:  
Winning Customers Away from Your Competition*

“You likely have never before gasped while reading a sales book, so brace yourself for some real, honest, potentially painful, truths including a debunking of my personal favorite sales myth that ‘everything has changed.’ You will be a better salesperson and sales leader after implementing these #SalesTruths. Do yourself a favor and read this book now.”

—**ANDREA WALTZ**,  
coauthor of *Go for No!*

“Mike Weinberg takes a blowtorch to the trendy sales ‘shiny objects’ and fads, most of which are counterproductive to the fundamental sales activities that always have, and always will, produce results. He offers his no-holds-barred, back-to-reality framework on exactly what TO DO to crush it in sales and prospecting. Entertaining and educational, this book should be part of every salesperson’s toolbox.”

—**ART SOBCZAK**,  
author of *Smart Calling*,  
host of *The Art of Sales* podcast

“Mike Weinberg has done it again. He obliterates all of the latest shiny sales shortcuts and reorients us toward real selling and real results. #SalesTruth will leave you motivated and ready to kick butt. Happy hunting!”

—**EVAN WALDMAN**,  
CEO, Essex Industries

“The #SalesTruth is in this book, and it’s on a short list of the most impactful books about professional selling I’ve ever read. Absolute gems include the ‘Bridge Line’ in chapter 10 and the ‘Money Line’ in chapter 11, and the ‘Not-So-Extraordinary’ keys to success in chapter 15 could alone double your revenue!”

—**JEFF BAJOREK**,  
host of *The Why and the Buy* podcast

“I love this book, and if you or your team are confused or struggling to bring in new business, get #SalesTruth now! While I prefer to have Mike in front of our sales team in person, this book is the next best thing to deliver the straightforward, easy-to-implement, powerful advice you need. #SalesTruth is now required reading for our managers and will be part of our sales reps’ training.”

—**PAGE NAFTEL**,  
President, Ram Tool Construction Supply

“Beware the false prophets who proclaim the death of traditional hard work—prospecting, calendar management, listening before pitching! Business owners, sales executives, and salespeople will find #SalesTruth to be a pragmatic and practical guide to what works in sales with common sense, hard truths, and direct takeaways that debunk the excuses for poor sales performance. Mike’s got great advice and relevant case studies that smart sales reps and their managers will want to implement ASAP.”

—**GINA HOAGLAND**,  
Cofounder, Collaborative Strategies, Inc.,  
and Chairwoman, Triad Bank

“My friend and long-time sales advisor, Mike Weinberg, delivers a bold, blunt call to action for everyone seeking to grow their business! Just like a great golf swing, mastery of fundamentals has a bigger impact on your success than the hottest trend or technology. Ready to improve your sales game? Read this for a solid reminder of the basics, sales lessons from the 2016 election, and examples that will help you improve from the moment you start reading.”

—**MARK PETERMAN**,  
CEO, Cornerstone Solutions Group

“If you liked *New Sales. Simplified.* and *Sales Management. Simplified.*, then you will LOVE #SalesTruth. Mike Weinberg is practical and to the point, and brings clarity to today’s most critical sales issues and challenges. Every sales professional should own this book!”

—**JAMES MUIR**,  
author of *The Perfect Close*

“Buckle up and get ready for an entertaining journey, as Mike Weinberg navigates the tumult created by today’s so-called sales experts. In his unique and engaging style, Mike delivers actionable truth you can start using immediately to close more sales.”

—**JOE TARULLI**,  
General Manager and Sales Leader, Pyrotek

“The sales faculty at Kansas State University are huge Mike Weinberg fans! Thanks to Mike and his great work, our students know how to prospect, articulate value, and create and close new sales opportunities. #SalesTruth delivers even more no-nonsense wisdom and most certainly will be the next reading assignment for K-State sales students. It should be your next reading assignment, too!”

—**DAWN DEETER**,  
Director, National Strategic Selling Institute,  
and professor, Kansas State University

“Packed with piercing honesty, Mike Weinberg’s #SalesTruth is a must-read for winning salespeople who want to win even more! It’s not an exaggeration to say that those who read it and live by these proven principles will double their earning potential.”

—**PENNY QUELLER**,  
Senior VP and General Manager, Monster Worldwide

“Bold, brilliant, and packed with blunt truth! There’s no secret to sales success, and Mike brazenly drills right at the core foundational level, delivering much-needed tough love while laying down the sales gauntlet. Take #SalesTruth to heart because Mike poured his heart and soul into every page.”

—**LARRY LEVINE**,  
author of *Selling from the Heart*

“Highly funded sales-tool vendors and social-selling experts would love to convince modern sellers that everything has changed in sales. Mike proves conclusively with case studies from his clients across all industries that that’s simply not the case. And I love that Mike presents proof that procurement is not omnipotent! #SalesTruth is not for the faint of heart and is the perfect 202 companion to *New Sales. Simplified.*”

—**JUSTIN MICHAEL,**  
VP of Sales, Kochava

“A wonderful reminder that sales is a noble profession and that the most successful sellers have their customer’s best interests at heart and are motivated to deliver a valuable outcome that improves the customer’s condition! #SalesTruth powerfully captures the challenges created when we chase the ‘secret sales sauce’ instead of executing the basics that drive results.”

—**TRACEY CRAIK,**  
Regional Sales Director, TEC Equipment, Inc.

“Execute the basics, utilize every tool, listen to your customers, and deliver value on time, every time. No one distills the truth about the dignity and hard work of sales professionals—from every walk, industry, and corner of the world—better than Mike Weinberg! He raises the game of both sellers and sales leaders, and delivers #SalesTruth that is helping our team drive results.”

—**DAN GRANT,**  
VP of Sales and Business Development, Skyline Champion

“Mike’s previous books *New Sales. Simplified.* and *Sales Management. Simplified.* improved our team’s approach to selling and managing. #SalesTruth continues the trend, providing fabulous content for our sales coaches to have candid conversations around creating opportunities, rather than chasing them!”

—**SCOTT COUP,**  
Director of Commercial Sales, Enterprise Bank & Trust

“Mike is vulnerable and pushes the limits with #SalesTruth. Written in his familiar straightforward and anecdotal style, he debunks myths, speaks honestly, and will convict those who insist on searching for the silver sales bullet.”

—**TODD HOLCOMBE,**  
Director of Training, Ram Tool Construction Supply



# #SalesTruth

*Debunk the Myths.*

*Apply Powerful Principles.*

*Win More New Sales.*

**MIKE WEINBERG**



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LEADERSHIP

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*#SalesTruth* is dedicated to the warrior sellers and sales leaders who drive results and create value for their customers, their companies, and themselves.



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# Foreword

There has never been a greater need for a book on the truth about what it takes to succeed in sales. Over the past decade, those of us in sales have been bombarded with a glut of ideas and opinions about sales, much of them coming from people who lack the knowledge and experience to offer sales advice. A good portion of the offered advice was contrarian only to gain attention and to create a dominant narrative: “Everything in sales has changed. And irrevocably.”

These contrarian, ill-formed, and ill-conceived opinions argued against reality. In fact, the fundamentals hadn’t changed. A practice becomes fundamental through its ability to produce sustained results over time. Fundamentals are what you might also call #SalesTruths.

A few of us found the new experts’ words and ideas insufferable. While the rest of the industry acquiesced to the notion that the social tools spelled doom for the fundamentals of effective selling, a small few of us fought to hold back the tide—and the damage it inflicted on salespeople and sales organizations. The new “sales experts”’ lies were only exceeded by the number of proponents sharing them. They said things like, “Never cold call again,” and “Connect with people on the platforms and engage

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them there,” promising companies more new opportunities without any real effort on the part of the salesperson.

If promises of every sales rep being able to succeed in sales weren't enough to cause sales managers and sales leaders to acquiesce, the new “sales experts” would frighten them into “developing” the “modern salesperson,” one who was social and connected, just like the experts they followed. Sales leaders were told that if they weren't training their people to use the new social platforms, their business would be irreparably harmed by their stubborn adherence to “the old ways.” They were told that the traditional “sales role” was now irrelevant because buyers were on the internet and had access to all the information they needed, with the salesperson unable to create any real value outside of being a servile errand boy or girl.

One of the few who “stood athwart history yelling stop” is the author of the book you hold in your hands (or are listening to between sales calls or on an airplane en route to see a client). The author of this book is a dear friend and co-conspirator. At the very height of “social selling,” he published his first book, *New Sales. Simplified: The Essential Handbook for Prospecting and New Business Development*, a book that implored salespeople to “select targets,” “sharpen their sales weapons,” and “block time to pick up the phone” to schedule meetings. If these timeless fundamentals of selling weren't so compelling, NSS wouldn't have close to 600 reviews on Amazon.com with the average review being five stars. If Mike Weinberg were incorrect in his advice, he wouldn't be one of the most sought-after speakers and consultants in sales today.

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### **Starving for Truth in a Post-Truth World**

To those of us close to him, Mike Weinberg is “the Honey Badger.” He is devastatingly blunt, brutally honest, and inexhaustibly determined to tell the truth: #SalesTruth. In this book, Mike shares with you what the new “sales experts” suggest you should do to be successful in sales now, using their own words. The duty to prepare you for what you are going to read falls to me, but I am in some ways inadequate; you are likely to doubt that anyone would dare write anything so ridiculous as what Mike documents here. There isn’t a better person to repudiate their poor ideas and “advice,” and to do so with a sense of humor that drives home the truth (while making you laugh out loud, and maybe tear up a little).

In the first four chapters, Mike dispels the myths and eliminates the lies, all the while providing you an understanding as to why these false ideas exist and the motives of the false teachers. My promise here is that you are going to be outraged by what passes for sales advice and entertained by Mike’s assessment.

In part II, Mike provides you with the truth about selling effectively now (and deep into the future). If you don’t have a step-by-step guide for winning more deals, creating new opportunities, taking back your calendar, and calling your shots by targeting your dream clients, you will have all of this accomplished by the end of chapter 9. If you are not sure how to improve your prospecting because you need better messaging, in two succinct and powerful chapters, you will have the confidence to book new meetings without hesitation.

It’s hard for me to play favorites, but in a single chapter on selling at a higher price, you will understand more about how to embrace your differentiation and the competitive advantage it provides you. If you want to know what the top 10 percent of

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salespeople do that place them on that lofty perch at the top of the stack ranking, chapter 15 will give you two case studies that are remarkably unremarkable in that the best reps in the world are the best at the fundamentals.

If you want the truth, unfiltered, unadulterated, and made practical and tactical, you will find just that between the cover of this book. Embrace the truth, follow Mike's advice, and make many more new sales!

Anthony Iannarino,  
author of *Eat Their Lunch: Winning  
Customers Away from Your Competition*

# Acknowledgments

I am beyond blessed by all the support I received during the planning and writing of this book. My first expression of gratitude goes directly to my talented new friend and senior editor at HarperCollins Leadership, Tim Burgard. His excitement about this project and his guidance were invaluable.

No one paid a greater price for this book than Katie, my bride and best friend. She was incredibly gracious as I wrote this manuscript while attempting to juggle my client workload and crazy travel schedule. Huge thanks to my beautiful and patient wife, without whom I'd be lost or worse, and double thanks for her excellent early stage editing and suggestions.

To the three greatest young adult children on Earth—Kurt, Haley, and Corey—thank you for all your encouragement, amusement, and opinions as I dove deep into this project. It is a joy to see each of you thriving; I could not be more proud of you. And deep gratitude to my parents, who still find ways to cheer on and inspire their fifty-one-year-old son. You are loved and appreciated.

To my mastermind group and partners in the OutBound Conference—Jeb Blount, Mark Hunter, and Anthony Iannarino—thank you for your boldness, ideas, inspiration, truth-telling, and transparency. You have made me a better consultant and speaker, and you three are making a huge dent in the sales

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

community at large. To my wise, mature (and aging), dearest friends and advisors—Shane Johnston, Rob Morton, and Mark Peterman—I thank you again for your wisdom and for never letting me settle or get complacent. And to Mary Oliver, who keeps the trains running on the tracks and my head from exploding, thank you for how you care for, support, and protect me. I could not do this without you.

Finally, to my clients who have entrusted me to help create healthy, high-performance sales cultures, effective sales leaders, and drive more New Sales, thank you not only for your confidence but for allowing me to do what I love.

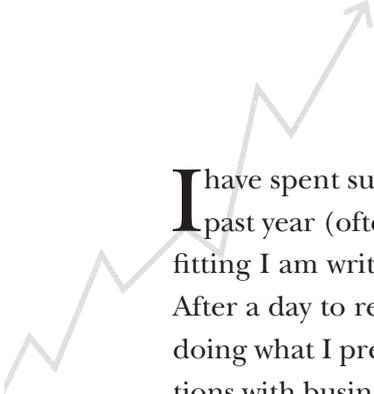
• PART I •

# The #Truth About the “Experts”





# Truth, What Is Truth?



I have spent such a ridiculous amount of time on airplanes this past year (often mulling over ideas for this book) that it's only fitting I am writing the first chapter on a flight to South Africa. After a day to recover from this twenty-four-hour journey, I'll be doing what I pretty much do every week—sharing blunt observations with business leaders, executives, sales managers, and salespeople about why they are not winning as many New Sales as they'd like, and then providing simple, practical, powerful fixes to help them create a healthy, high-performance sales culture and close more new business. Said differently, I tell them the truth about sales.

It's an honor and a privilege and seems to have become my calling—speaking #SalesTruth to sales leaders and salespeople.

• • •

## Who Are You to Declare What's True?

I get it. It's nervy and could certainly be perceived as self-righteous to declare that you've got the corner on *the truth* about something as big and important as sales. Please hear me on this: I don't have the corner on the truth and would never claim I did. When I observe, consult, or coach an executive or salesperson, or facilitate a workshop or training session, I learn something new Every. Single. Day. That is why I absolutely love what I do. I am always learning, and I get to experience firsthand what is working in sales and sales management, and what is not. Then I get to share those observations with my readers and clients.

Those who know me, read my books and blog, or follow me on Twitter and LinkedIn are keenly aware (and even appreciate) that I simply call it like I see it. Yes, on occasion, I speak and write in extremes to make a point, often in an attempt to deliver a wake-up call, hoping to swing the pendulum back toward the center, and that is *exactly* my hope in writing this book.

The amount of noise and flat-out disinformation about sales and sales management are at an all-time high. It was bad seven years ago, so bad—particularly surrounding prospecting and developing new business—that I was motivated to write my first book, *New Sales. Simplified*. And, amazingly, as hard as it is to believe, the confusion and chaos are even worse today.

There has never been more confusion, frankly, because there have never been more theories and opinions and so many (free) channels to broadcast this disinformation. Self-proclaimed sales “experts” and “thought leaders” have sprung up everywhere—many of whom have amassed significant followings by preaching popular nonsense that tickles the ears of sales leaders and sellers craving an easy-button or magic fix. Point out the stupidity, inaccuracy, and inconsistency of what these “experts” are posting, and

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they are quick to reply defensively, pointing to the number of “likes” their articles receive. To quote my friend and author of *High-Profit Prospecting*, Mark Hunter, “Salespeople cannot take likes and clicks to the bank.” And I have joked that the credibility of many of today’s faux sales improvement gurus is inversely proportional to the number of people who “like” their posts. Translation: Popularity does not equate to the helpfulness/usefulness/effectiveness of the information presented. In fact, it’s often quite the opposite.

### Everything Has Not Changed

Many of today’s nouveau “experts” love to tell us that *everything* has changed. It’s a dangerous new world and all the rules have changed, they claim. Nothing that used to work in sales or sales management still works today. *Nothing*. Traditional approaches, techniques, and methodologies are no longer effective. In fact, they proffer that if you dare even try to deploy old-school, traditional methods, you’re not just an idiot bound to fail but also a Luddite from the Dark Ages who deserves to be ridiculed. And if you think that I might be exaggerating even a bit here, see the examples in the next chapter.

What’s so amusing and so irritating to me is that I see the exact opposite. The. Exact. Opposite.

The most effective executives, sales managers, and salespeople I observe are masters at the basics. They have perfected old-school, traditional approaches. Instead of constantly entertaining themselves by shopping for the latest, greatest, and trendiest new tool, toy, or trick, they stay with the tried-and-true, proven fundamentals of sales and sales leadership. Not sexy, but incredibly effective.

## SALES TRUTH

Let me make that point again from a different angle, because I desperately want you to digest this truth: Despite what you hear and read from today's trendiest, self-proclaimed thought leaders, I have *never* seen a salesperson or sales team fail because they lack a recently invented sales tool, or because they had not yet adopted a newly created sales process.

I don't know how to make this next point graciously or without coming across as arrogant, so I am just going to say it in abject frustration because I am so tired of the half-truths and false promises giving false hope to salespeople and managers: You would be hard-pressed to find a sales consultant/trainer/speaker who's been on more airplanes and in more companies than I have the past few years. I have been around the globe helping sales teams in every industry—from mortgages to machinery, from plastics and polymers to payroll services, from defense to distribution, from big data to big trucks, and from SaaS (software as a service) to trash. And I can emphatically and unequivocally state that, regardless of what the so-called experts are writing on LinkedIn or quoting in their "studies," it's not their beloved, new-found tool or process that's missing—it's a solid execution of the basics. They can wax eloquently about their theories, brag about how many people "like" their posts, speak for free at the online virtual sales conferences, and cite supposedly valid research to their hearts' content. I know what I am seeing and hearing with my own eyes and ears: The sales world is desperate for rigor and discipline around the fundamentals, not fancy new tricks.

Almost every week, I speak with leaders of struggling sales organizations who have spent crazy amounts of money and time buying into and then attempting to implement new tools and methods because they (wrongly or sadly) believed that the promised panacea would solve all that ails their sales. Well, the fact that they're calling for help *after* spending (wasting) all those dollars,

## TRUTH, WHAT IS TRUTH?

all that time, and all that energy chasing the shiny new [fill in this month's hot sales topic here] sure says a lot, doesn't it?

Let me make sure you are not reading more into this than I am writing. I am not declaring that you and your sales team don't need tools, processes, or technology. Of course, you do. What I am most definitely stating is that the people winning big in sales today are doing so because they have mastered the basics, and those who are struggling, particularly in the area of developing new business and winning New Sales, are flailing because they are not executing the basics well. Despite loud protestations from many "experts," the flat-out truth is that what has worked exceedingly well in sales and sales management for the past couple decades is still the (not so) secret to sales success today. As crazy as it may sound, if I introduced you to the top-performing salesperson at each of my clients across that eclectic mix of industries listed, you would see these top producers deploying the very same mindset, approaches, behaviors, and disciplines that I observed in top-producing salespeople five years ago, ten years ago, and fifteen years ago. #SalesTruth. The best sellers and the best leaders excel at the fundamentals of their job. They are masters at their craft, because they have mastered the basics.

Before we unpack these critical fundamentals in part II ("The #Truth About Winning More New Sales"), please indulge me a bit further as we take a look at the hypocrisy and nonsense preached by these dangerous, disingenuous "experts" who I believe are actually hurting, not helping, the sales community.