Company of the Month: Dale Carnegie

How to Win Friends and Influence People

This month, we are not examining a particular company, businessperson or industry, we are celebrating the 70th birthday of one of the most important books in the history of business “How to Win Friends and Influence People” by Dale Carnegie.

This was the first and most famous of the “self-help” books on a par with Dr Benjamin Spock’s Baby and Child Care [1945] which offered advice to parents on how to look after their children.

The 1929 collapse of the Wall Street Stock Market triggered the start of the Great Depression in the American economy. Millions of workers were made unemployed, large corporations collapsed. There was great poverty throughout the United States’ agriculture and manufacturing industry which led to similar problems around the world.

When Dale Carnegie published How to Win Friends and Influence People in 1936, US business was climbing out of the Great Depression. This book, in which Carnegie outlined his principles of successful selling, helped American industry to get back on its feet.

Background

Dale Carnegie was born in Missouri in 1888, the son of a poor farmer. He used to wake up at 4 a.m. every morning to milk his father’s cows. He was educated at the State Teachers’ College. After leaving college he started selling correspondence courses to local ranchers. Then he moved on to selling bacon, soap, and lard for Armour & Company. He was so successful, his sales territory, southern Omaha, became the national leader for the firm.

Later, he used his experience as a salesman and his training as a teacher, to start training courses in public speaking. He became a very successful trainer both in courses and in the new medium of radio. How to win Friends and Influence People was published in 1936 and was an immediate success. Since then 12 million copies have been sold.

Carnegie’s message was a very simple one: People like to do business with people they like. Carnegie taught America to smile.
The Sales relationship

Carnegie changed the focus of selling from products to people. He argued that sales staff should be proud of their work, not because they were earning money, but because they were helping their customers to have happier and fuller lives. Sales people should not be aggressive. They should be warm and friendly.

An eager want

After creating a warm relationship with the customer, the salesperson begins to create the desire to buy. ‘Arouse in the other person an eager want.’ But Carnegie does not concentrate on the product he is selling. ‘Let the other person do a great deal of the talking. Let the other person feel the idea to buy is his or hers.’ In this way, the salesperson’s job is to praise and reinforce the customer’s decision to purchase.

This is Dale Carnegie’s own summary of the principles presented in How to Win Friends and Influence People.

1 Fundamental Techniques in Handling People

1. Don't criticize, condemn or complain.
2. Give honest and sincere appreciation.
3. Arouse in the other person an eager want.

2 Six ways to make people like you

1. Become genuinely interested in other people.
2. Smile.
3. Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language.
4. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
5. Talk in terms of the other person's interests.
6. Make the other person feel important - and do it sincerely.
3  Win people to your way of thinking

1. The only way to get the best of an argument is to avoid it.
2. Show respect for the other person's opinions. Never say, "You're wrong."
3. If you are wrong, admit it quickly and emphatically.
5. Get the other person saying "yes, yes" immediately.
6. Let the other person do a great deal of the talking.
7. Let the other person feel that the idea is his or hers.
8. Try honestly to see things from the other person's point of view.
9. Be sympathetic with the other person's ideas and desires.
10. Appeal to the nobler motives.
11. Dramatize your ideas.
12. Throw down a challenge.

4  Be a Leader: How to Change People Without Giving Offence or Arousing Resentment

A leader's job often includes changing your people's attitudes and behaviour. Some suggestions to accomplish this:

1. Begin with praise and honest appreciation.
2. Call attention to people's mistakes indirectly.
3. Talk about your own mistakes before criticizing the other person.
4. Ask questions instead of giving direct orders.
5. Let the other person save face.
6. Praise the slightest improvement and praise every improvement. Be "hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise."
7. Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.
8. Use encouragement. Make the fault seem easy to correct.
9. Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.
Carnegie Exercises

Vocabulary
Find the words in the text which have these meanings. Complete the words.

1. *v* to make you become interested, expect something  
   - ar______c

2. *n* slices of salted (and often smoked) pork meat.  
   - b______n

3. *v* to say that you are not satisfied or unhappy about something or someone.  
   - c______p______n

4. *v* to express disapproval, opposite of *praise*  
   - c______c______c______

5. *n* People who raise cattle or other livestock on large farms.  
   - r______s______s

6. *n* an area that a person is responsible for.  
   - t______i______y

7. *v* (past tense) made something happen.  
   - t______n______ed

8. *adv* showing your real and sincere feelings.  
   - g______u______ly

9. *exp* equivalent to  
   - o______ with

10. *v* to give someone or something a lot of love, praise etc.  
    - l______h

Comprehension
Mark these statements TRUE or FALSE according to the text.

1. *How to Win Friends and Influence People* is now 70 years old.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

2. The Great Depression led to the Wall Street crash in 1929.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

   - TRUE/FALSE

4. Carnegie said sales people should focus on the profits they are earning.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

5. Carnegie said sales people should not be aggressive.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

6. Carnegie grew up on a farm in Mississippi.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

7. Carnegie’s first job was selling soap and meat products.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

8. Carnegie taught public speaking on television in the 1930s.  
   - TRUE/FALSE

   - TRUE/FALSE

10. The book has been translated into many different languages.  
    - TRUE/FALSE
Carnegie's advice

Read Carnegie’s summary of How to Win Friends and Influence people. Complete the sentences with should or shouldn’t.

1. Sales people _________ show respect for the other person’s opinions.
2. Sales people _________ do most of the talking.
3. Sales people _________ avoid arguments.
4. Sales people _________ try to understand the customer’s point of view.
5. Sales people _________ get angry.
6. Sales people _________ concentrate on the positive features of the product.
7. Sales people _________ appeal to the customer’s desire to get a cheap price.
8. Sales people _________ apologise when the customer is wrong.
9. Sales people _________ make the customer want to buy your product.
10. Sales people _________ value the customer’s opinions.

Roleplay

In pairs, try to sell one of the products or services in the box to your partner, using Carnegie’s techniques.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A course in successful public speaking</th>
<th>A diaper laundering service with home collection and delivery</th>
<th>A day visit to a local safari park.</th>
<th>A personal I-Pod style music player.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 14 day luxury cruise visiting islands on the coast of Greece and Turkey.</td>
<td>A machine for measuring your own blood pressure.</td>
<td>A valuable Chinese vase from the Ming dynasty.</td>
<td>A course of lessons in South American dancing.</td>
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</tbody>
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