

## Adventures in Global Selling



Adventures  
in  
Global Selling

Gayle Hickok  
and  
Bill Wilson



RED ANVIL BOOKS

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## **A Note to the Reader**

This book is Gayle Hickok's story.  
We have written it in the first person.

## **Introduction**

The book you are about to read began a few years ago. One evening Gayle and Bill and some friends were enjoying a meal and a night out at a restaurant near La Paz on Mexico's beautiful Baja peninsula.

Gayle asked Bill, "How would you like to collaborate on a book about my adventures, a book that would also include lessons from my experiences?" Bill replied, "Let's do it, the idea's a great one." That's how this book began. Bill's interviews with Gayle form the book's backbone. It's fleshed out here and there with other sources, but the judgments are always Gayle's. We think we've achieved a nice balance between recounting Gayle's amazing adventures and drawing sales and marketing methods from them.

Each of us takes full responsibility for what you find here. That doesn't mean we could have done the book on our own. We had a lot of help from others and we want to thank them for it.

Thanks to Kitty Wilson for her editorial skills.

Thanks to Sukey Janes for drawing that "gate selling" diagram.

Special thanks to Jess Kellogg for giving us a lot to write about.

Thanks to Dave St. John and the staff at Elderberry Press.

Thanks to everyone else who made it all happen.

Gayle Hickok  
Bill Wilson

*Adventures in Global Selling*



## **Chapter One**

### **Introducing This Book**

It was a bright, sunny day in July 1974. I was driving my new Maserati from my Toronto office east to the one in Montreal with my daughter Lisa, then a pert twelve year old but, you know, mentally going on thirty. We were cruising comfortably at a steady 100 mph, when I began a lecture on one of the several subjects that we single dads and their growing daughters have to deal with. The theme of my lectures was almost always the same, how growing daughters should benefit from the accumulated wisdom of their dads.

Lisa knew we were strapped in and she had no place of escape for at least three hours. I'd just launched my lecture when she interrupted.

"Hold it, hold it," she commanded. "Wait a minute. I need to make you a deal."

"What do you mean, make me a deal," I asked. "I'm the boss here."

"Well," she went on, "you can just tell me the end of your lecture and I'll let you know if I need to hear the beginning and the middle." She was right, I admit, because she'd heard precisely the same thing many times before. After that, we had only condensed versions of our little talks, with an emphasis on fast forwarding to the focus of our discussion.

That conversation in my speeding coupe was just one more proof of the fact that we adults learn from our children, as I certainly have from all five of mine. Now I'm learning from my grandkids. I'm going to apply some of that knowledge by making three points with you.

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## *Adventures in Global Selling*

First point: In keeping with Lisa's concept, I'm going to begin my story with the ending, at least as my life has developed so far. I hope from that you'll decide to explore the beginning and the middle with me.

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Second point: I'm a professional salesman, through and through, and damn proud of it. Oh, yes, I've been the manager, owner, vice-president, even president of various business ventures, but the highest compliment you can pay me is "You sure are a good salesman." I've had fun selling. I love selling because it has opened me to new and exciting experiences.

Another thing. I highly respect sales people of both genders, but please excuse me for not referring to folks in our profession as "salespersons." I love women. They are some of the best in the business. But "salesperson" is a clumsy word. After all, Arthur Miller didn't name his famous play "Death of a Salesperson." Sometimes "person" just doesn't apply. I remember how the town of Woonsocket, Rhode Island was ridiculed after it renamed manholes "personholes" and manhole covers "personhole covers." So I'll refer to "people in sales" or "sales people" at times but always to myself as a "salesman."

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Third point: Throughout my story I've sprinkled anecdotes and incidents which I hope will entertain you. Often I'll be describing sales situations which illustrate an important lesson that I've learned, either from others or through my own experiences. Don't worry, this isn't another one of those hundreds of "how-to" volumes or "salesmanship" workbooks. My purpose is to stimulate, inform, and inspire you, and if I do those things, I'll be really pleased that together we've accomplished something meaningful and worthwhile.

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