

The New ABCs of Successful Selling

By Arnold Tilden

August 2021

My name is Dr. Arnold Tilden, the founder of Tilden & Associates. In this brief video, we will illustrate the ABCs of successful selling.

We often kick off introductory sales training with a sanitized version of the opening scene of the film *Glengarry Glenn Ross*. This is the now-famous piece where Alec Baldwin's character (Blake) demands that Shelly "The Machine" Levine (played by Jack Lemon):

"Put that coffee down! Coffee is for closers."

Blake goes onto assert that selling is as easy as ABC:

A - Always

B - Be

C - Closing

We concur that ABC is a good summary for traditional approaches to successful selling. But in our enlightened approach ABC has a starkly different meaning:

A - Always

B - Be

C - Creating Value

That film was released nearly 30 years ago. Still, the neanderthal thinking it features has survived in many quarters, especially in financial services. Perhaps the most striking example is the Wells Fargo scandal that came to light in 2016. Due to top-down pressure to sell as many products as possible, customers began to notice fees for accounts they never agreed to open. This resulted in an initial \$185 million fine and illegal activity on part of the bank is still being investigated.

My partner, Russ Brooks, has served as a credit union CEO and taught selling at Smeal College of Business at Penn State University. He has been a leader in the credit union movement's approach to selling.

In our consulting and training, Russ and I have encountered many refugees coming to credit unions to escape Wells Fargo-like pressure. The irony is the old ABC, emphasizing closing and product pushing, does not work in the long term. Always creating value for your clients does.

The full selling and sales leadership curriculum we offer is built on the foundation of Always Be Creating Value (www.tildensst.com) It is particularly a good fit for credit unions where clients are not considered prospects to be hunted but valued members to help with financial solutions to meet their evolving life needs.

We hope you will shoot us an email or give us a call to start a dialogue.