

SELLING POINTS

Knowledge is everywhere — use it!

Despite having taught many, many classes on sales and customer service, one of the constants I've noted is that the participants who are most involved are already some of the most successful and competent in their profession. This isn't limited to one profession or one industry — I've seen it in sales people, executives, receptionists and customer service representatives. They all want to be the best they can be.

Some professions — like physicians, accountants and attorneys — have a strong institutional emphasis on continuing education. But other professions also need continuing education. A lot of people mistakenly believe that knowledge acquisition ends when one finishes school. But the truth is that we can — and should — learn our entire professional lives.

Some ideas on how to do that:

- One's own experiences and education
- Master Mind groups
- Colleges and universities
- Books
- Online research
- Trade magazines
- Seminars and specialized training
- Tapes and newsletters on self improvement

A parting thought from success guru Napoleon Hill: "Knowledge paves the road to riches — when you know which road to take."

A father's best legacy is his daughter's love

by Connie Brubaker

I never met my birth father. An Air Force Pilot, he was killed in Korea before he even knew my mother was pregnant.

When I was four years old, my mother remarried and I was adopted. My birth certificate actually lists his name, Conard Thompson, as my father — and from that point on, he was. Years later, friends told me they



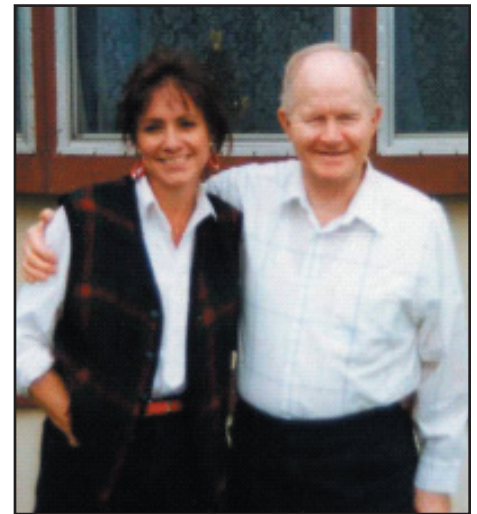
Connie's Comments

thought it was destiny because our names, Connie and Conard, were so similar.

At some level, I knew that he was not *my dad* but it was never, ever discussed in our home. In fact, the only lie I ever remember him telling was when he reminisced about holding me as a tiny baby, looking up at him with big brown eyes. I think he really wished that he had been able to do just that.

He and my mother had two more daughters, but never once did he show any partiality. He always treated me like his special princess, making me feel cherished and protected. Because of that example, when I later married a man with a son, I vowed to love my new stepson just as fully as I did my own daughter. And even though Warren's father is now deceased, my son and I are very close.

When I was a teenager, my father



became a salesperson. He began devouring books on self-development, and since I was an avid reader, he encouraged me to read books from his library. Thanks to him, I was introduced to Dale Carnegie, Norman Vincent Peale and Clement Stone — authors who helped mold my attitude and approach to life.

I think Dad liked to embarrass me by pitching his latest product to my friends, causing me to roll my eyes and clench my jaw. But I was also aware that he was honest, only sold products he believed in and took care of his customers. And he loved what he did — my father was in sales until his dying day.

In his 60s, he became legally blind. He still loved to read, so he received a reading machine from the Commission for the Blind that could magnify

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Father's example helped lead the way to sales success

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print 100 times its original size. When he passed away 10 years ago, I inherited the books he loved so much and that played so important a role in his lifelong quest for new knowledge and success.

More importantly, I inherited that same passion for growth and self-improvement. The library continues to grow, and the search for excellence he inspired in me will never cease.

Sadly, I didn't enter the world of sales until after his death. I could have

learned so much more from him. And I would have loved for him to have attended one of my sales seminars. We could have discussed handling objections, overcoming cold call reluctance, understanding the needs of clients, showing appreciation and so much more. I know without a doubt that he would be proud of my second career choice.

A few years before his death, I sat down with my father to have a conversation about my adoption. I thanked him for his gift of acceptance and love, and for making such a difference in my life. I even told him about how I loved the fabricated story of holding me for the first time. He chuckled and finally told the truth about our first meeting.

He said that I sat on his lap and looked up at him with my big brown eyes, curly dark hair and four-year-

old smile, and asked, "Will you be my Daddy?" I am so blessed that his answer was yes.

CONARD & CONNIE'S FAVORITE BOOKS:

How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie

The Success System that Never Fails by W. Clement Stone

Enthusiasm Makes the Difference by Norman Vincent Peale

The Power of Positive Thinking by Norman Vincent Peale

Success Through a Positive Mental Attitude by Napoleon Hill & W. Clement Stone

WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR SALES TO WOMEN? Sign up for one of Connie's informative, insightful and fun workshops on *Women's Role in the New World Market*. Choose from:

- *The Difference Between Men & Women and How They Buy*
- *Marketing to Women*
- *Selling to Women*

Connie Brubaker is a certified Integrity Systems® business consultant and professional speaker who focuses on sales, customer service and leadership.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Any man can be a father, but it takes a special person to be a dad."

— Anonymous