

“In an age of ever increasing fickleness and lack of focus, *The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side* is a timely journey that brings us back to the fundamental path to becoming an elite salesperson. Jon Markwardt is a powerhouse salesperson and a world-class sales leader. He is able to combine real-world business experience with an inspiring travel tale to show us there are lessons around us everyday; whether at our desks or jumping off cliffs. This is a book that every salesperson should have on their shelf.”

—Steven Weidman, SVP of Sales at ZOZI

“*The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side* is an absolute must-read for anyone in sales. This book is told in a unique and engaging way, providing strong applications to key sales methodologies that will elevate any sales professional to new levels of success. As the lead trainer of a large company, I'd highly recommend this book to anyone in and outside our organization.”

—Tom Riley, Senior Manager of Training, Fortune 1000 Company

“There are no bigger sales calls than those made by police officers. I know this well and was able to relate to having a sales position by reading this book. During this time in America, *The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side* should be a must read for everyone wearing the blue.”

—Brendan Bligh, Police Officer Northern California

“I've worked for Jon at two different Fortune 1000 companies. His book portrays sales concepts in an entertaining fashion that have become a part of my day-to-day business and have dramatically affected my career. I'm honored to be one of his many success stories!”

—Crystal Cozad, Fortune 1000 Sales Professional

“Whether your goal is to be the top agent in real estate sales or to climb Mount Everest, *The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side* will encourage you to keep your chin up and amplify all of the opportunities around you. Cheers to Jon for penning a positive guide to becoming your best-selling self.”

—April Kelly, Entrepreneur,
Author of *Gratitude at Work* and *Spaghetti on the Wall*

“If you want successful transformation in business and in life, *The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side* teaches us that success is an inside job. You will learn to improve your mindset, develop your skillset, and be given the right tools to propel you towards your dreams, aspirations, and goals. Jon will help you get there faster and better than anyone I know.”

—Miguel A. de Jesus, Western Area VP Sales
& Regional Manager Paychex, Inc. (Retired),
Speaker, Author, Coach, Transformational Change
Agent & Facilitator, Instructor of Emotional Intelligence

“I was able to identify with numerous concepts in this book that are already assisting me in my profession. As a pediatric ICU nurse, I am constantly having to sell parents on trusting me with the care of their child. I am grateful that this book has taught me new ways to improve my ability to make this sale, which in turn improves the care of the child and the well-being of the parents.”

—Jessica Montgomery, Registered Nurse

“There is a reason why elite athletes still need to report for training camp before each season. They need ongoing reinforcement of the very fundamentals that make them successful, while adding updates to their playbook to stay current with new trends. *The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side* is the elite sales professional’s playbook for today. This book will provide sales professionals with fundamentals and updates to elevate their sales careers to new heights.”

—Tom Zgainer
CEO, America’s Best 401k

How to Grow into an Elite Sales Professional

The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side

▶ SALES EDITION ◀

JON MARKWARDT

 KNIGHT
BUSINESS PRESS

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THE GRASS IS BROWNER ON THE OTHER SIDE ®

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To Ken Markwardt

My grandfather once told me when making a career decision to do two things:

1. Calculate your worst-case scenario and determine if you are fine with the result.
2. Look at your personal life and decide if the timing is right.

Upon telling my grandfather that I wanted to write a book on how to become elite in sales, he challenged me on who would read it. My grandfather provided me with my worst-case scenario, and I was fine with it. It is possible that only my closest friends and family members will read this book. The concept of writing this book and having just one person grow their career and become an elite sales professional was all I needed. The right timing in my life provided me with the opportunity to dedicate this book to my grandfather. I thank him for providing me with the confidence to expand my sales career as an author.

Contents



The Traveling Salesman.....	1
1. The Magic Sales Potion.....	7
2. A Bed For My Backpack.....	15
3. Crying Creates Obligation	29
4. If You're Not Getting Better, You're Dead	51
5. You Jump, I Jump	71
6. Building Your Referral Army	83
7. Just Say No	99
8. The Front Line of Your Referral Army	115
9. Your Fallen Soldiers	129
10. The Negotiation Battle.....	145
11. The Sales Science Experiment	169
12. You Are Legend	183
13. The Ice Cream Man.....	193
14. ABN: Always Be Networking	209
15. Grow Your Author's Beard.....	223
16. Three, Two, One, Fun!	235
17. Your Grass Is Green	247
Acknowledgments	251
About the Author	255



The Traveling Salesman

The cabin lights are off. Most of the people on my flight are sleeping. Some are watching movies. The lady in front of me is reading a gossip magazine. And before I catch some rest, I decided the introduction to my story needed to start midflight.

I would not be on this plane without my aunt, Lissa. She encouraged me to follow my dream of sharing my sales skills in a most unusual way. Her husband and my uncle, Gary Markwardt, passed away while I was in high school. He had worked for a Fortune 500 company for nearly twenty years.

As he diligently planned his life dreams for post-retirement, he fell ill to a brain tumor that never allowed those dreams to occur. Losing her husband had a profound effect on my aunt. She has since become a life coach and in doing so passionately keeps his memory alive. She has coached numerous people to take chances and achieve their dreams now. Whether it's becoming an elite sales professional or traveling as you write a book, she'll encourage you to do it now.

My destination resulted from my close friend, Steve Weidman. He recommended Cyprus, and I instantly responded that I would go there. Keeping the real reason to myself, I started to tell friends and family that I would be traveling to Cyprus. I then called my aunt to let her know, and she “reminded” me that many years ago my uncle had lived in Nicosia, Cyprus, for three years. As a tribute to my uncle and a thank you to my aunt, I knew Cyprus was the right destination to live and write this book.

I have always had a strong belief that sales are a part of everything we do. No matter what career you choose and no matter where you go, there is always a sales element. These sales lessons are taught to us every day, but whether or not you notice them is up to you. As human beings, we make countless transactions that occur due to some type of psychological impact or inherent need. These decisions can be positive or negative for our health, family, or general well-being.

Throughout my years of coaching sales, it has become my passion to teach sales lessons through unusual stories. In my quest to grow elite sales representatives, I wrote this book as my sales pitch to you. My goal is to sell you on becoming elite.

Most people can relate to traveling, along with the adventures and problems that occur on the way. Sales is a big part of my traveling, whether I want it to be present or not; I just happen to recognize it everywhere I go. I am aware that no matter where I go, I am a salesman. My goal was to narrow in on this portion of my personality and share my story as I adventure and stumble on sales concepts for this book. The result of my travels created an “accidental learning” situation. As you read through my unusual stories, you’ll be surprised to find that there is a sales lesson in each one.

I will be systematic in my approach. I will be repetitive. I will excitedly sell you on the concepts in this book at an elite level. However, I will be explicit in how I do so. I have a passion for helping people take their careers to new levels, and at this exact moment, as you read this book, you are my top priority. I’m talking directly to you and gaining your buy-in so that you will embrace these concepts and accelerate your sales career with your current company. You’ll learn that it is far easier to grow and care for the green grass beneath you than it is to look for green grass elsewhere—you never know what’s on the other side of your fence.

My first lesson in becoming elite is letting you know that you need to stop looking at your neighbor’s grass. I can’t help you have a green yard if you are constantly moving to a new lawn or peering over the fence with envy. If you are entertaining other job offers, not completely happy in your career, hate your boss, or don’t like your commute, you’re going to need to solve those problems first.

Everyone needs to be dedicated to their company and their proverbial grass underfoot in order to tackle the challenges of becoming an elite sales representative. It is also vital that you have an honest and ethical product or service, or you could start to cultivate weeds instead of green grass. If you’re not completely sure about your situation, you get to make a choice. At any moment you want in life, you can decide to be confident and move full speed ahead in any direction you choose. You get to choose to show up when you want and where you want.

If you want to show up with your current opportunity, you have your yard and it’s time to have the greenest grass on the block. You can show up each day to water your grass and accelerate your career. Or you can partake in the cultural

epidemic of continually looking for something better every moment of every day.

I'm here to tell you the grass is browner on the other side. My goal is for everyone who reads this book to make strides in their careers by choosing to do so every day with their current company. Your consistent hard work and dedication required each day will be the hardest part of joining the elite. But it's also the best news that I could ever give you. If you want to show up to become an elite sales representative, you can. This book will make sure you have the tools to do so.

Being elite comes with great reward, but it always requires work and effort. Watering and fertilizing your own lawn will provide you with more than just monetary reward. You will be proud to have grown the greenest grass on the block.

As an elite sales professional, you will represent the top two percent of your sales organization. Your colleagues will look to you as the standard for setting the best practices. Your company executives will seek your insight and call upon you to affect change throughout the organization.

Becoming elite is not about getting really good at one aspect of sales. Many successful sales individuals have done so one-dimensionally. You can be successful by mastering the art of networking. You can even be successful by being disciplined and proficient at telemarketing. But to be elite is a process of having a systematic and calculated approach for everything you do. Everyone is given the same amount of hours in a day. The difference is what you do with them.

Throughout this book, you'll be given specific word tracks and power statements that you can use effectively and immediately to help you grow in your career. They will be fill-in-the-blank exercises, so you can input your industry,

company, value proposition, and even your own name. Please do so and start using the word tracks and power statements right away. They only work if you use them. Use them with confidence and start selling more today.

For those interested in adding your own personal touch to the word tracks, I encourage you to do so. Your creative and innovative nature will feed and expedite your growth. My word tracks work, but your word tracks will work too. Understanding the concepts is more important than memorizing the exact statements. It's crucial that you sound like yourself and come across as genuine. The ideas and the concepts are what will effectively increase your sales.

As for me, I don't want my new office to be on an airplane. Why does this girl keep looking at my computer screen? Yes, I'm talking to you, seat 30E. Go back to sleep.