

Ep #261: How to Sell Without Being Sleazy



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Tobi Fairley

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Ep #261: How to Sell Without Being Sleazy

You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 261.

Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. A show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth and joy, here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hey, friends, I'm back as promised this week with an episode all about non-sleazy selling to follow our great marketing episode last week. So if you didn't hear that one, head back and listen to episode 260. Okay, but let's get into this episode about selling. We're going to cover a lot of the reasons that you aren't selling and then how to do it without being sleazy. So selling is something that I coach on all the time in our *Design You* coaching program.

It's so fascinating how many people think they are bad at selling, that selling feels awful, that selling is not fun and that they're not good at it. So here is what I want you to know. Continually thinking all of those thoughts about selling is making them all true for you. It's making this a self-fulfilling prophecy. And the problem with that is that we want more money in our design and creative businesses like we talked about on episode 259. We all want more money. We all want better clients. And we all want more time back in our schedule.

And if you're not selling, you're not going to be getting all of those things. If you're not showing up and talking to those people that need your services, you're definitely not going to be making more money. And if we're thinking all these awful thoughts about selling, we for sure won't sell. We will procrastinate and hide from selling. And when we do finally sell we do it in a very insecure way often as if we are harming the other person or taking advantage of them or at the very least, bothering them. Like, really I've got to go bother people and ask them to give me money.

So let's start right there. Selling is not you taking something from another person. You are not a thief unless you don't provide the service or good that they pay for. So stop acting like and believing that by you making an

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offer and another person accepting it. That you're the winner and they're the loser. In fact if you're great at what you do, I would say that they are the big winner. And since you are able to make money and hopefully provide the service or goods that you enjoy then that's a win for you too so let's call that a win/win.

Also selling is not you asking someone for a favor. How many times do I hear that people are like, "I hate to go ask them to do this thing for me." It's not for you. You're not a kid selling chocolate bars door to door to fund a school trip. You're a businessperson and again you're exchanging for their money. They're not doing you a favor. You're giving them something and they're giving you something. It's like a trade. And a lot of times I assume that if I'm really good at what I do and I'm really good at delivering it that they're getting more for their money than they actually paid for. That's my goal anyway.

So also please stop acting like and believing that you have to feel uncomfortable because you're asking a person to do something for you that they don't want to do. And now they feel obligated to do it. Yeah, you may feel obligated to give money to that kid at the door with the chocolate bar to help with their school, you're like, "Okay."

But when we're selling, this is not an obligation. And in fact if we're only going to people that just feel obligated and don't really want our services we're going to the wrong people. But you are not asking for a favor, you're simply asking them if they want or need what it is that you provide. And it's on them to decide. They're not obligated, they have a choice. They always have a choice.

So when you walk into a grocery store, let's think about this analogy, when you walk into a grocery store and buy a carton of milk, you're not buying that as a favor to the grocery store owner, are you? You needed milk. I mean if it's a local grocery store and you buy local and you're like, "I like to do this for this person because they do need the money instead of giving it to the big chain." Okay, fine. and maybe your customers feel that way about you too, but you're still buying the milk because you need milk.

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And a client or a customer isn't buying your interior design service, especially an expensive high end design service or draperies or lamps or anything or else, because they're doing you a favor. They're doing it because they want to or need, believe they need the thing that you're selling. Now, next, selling is not bothering another person unless they choose to be bothered by your selling.

Let's think about this for a minute. You can ask one person if they want to work with you and they're like, "Oh my gosh, thank you. I have been looking for you or someone to help me and you're the perfect person." That didn't bother them. And you can ask the next person and they're like, "Why does this person keep asking me?" That's on them, not you. So it depends on their desire for your product, but you don't know a lot of times until you ask if a person desires your product.

And you don't want to make the assumption that they don't desire it because they may and they may just not know that it's something you offer. So let's think of another analogy. Even if you were selling a lifesaving cancer drug instead of interior design, if you keep calling a person who doesn't have cancer, might they be bothered by your phone calls? Of course, if they choose to be. They're like, "No, I don't need it, stop calling me", which is totally fine.

Because you don't know whether they need it or not unless you offer it. And what if they did need it and you didn't call them, that could be a lifesaving situation. And because you didn't want to bother somebody, you didn't save their life. Now, let's say you did call the person five times who didn't need the cancer drug and then suddenly they or someone they love needs the cancer drug. Then even if they were bothered by all those other five times they might suddenly be grateful that you had called them because they remembered you calling. And now they know where to get the thing they need.

So sort of like it was worth it to you and them that you bothered them for a while because now they need something badly and they know where to get it. Now, I'm not saying we creatives are necessarily saving lives. We're not

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curing cancer at least most of the time that I know of. But I also think that we do diminish the value of our work and its powers when we say things like, “We’re not curing cancer over here or this is not heart surgery or this is not brain surgery.” Because sometimes our work is very powerful with its ability to nurture or even heal our clients.

So saving lives is not the only thing out in the world with value. There's a lot of other things with value. Joy changes lives. Organization changes lives. Beauty changes lives. Creating non-toxic spaces changes lives, non-toxic in a million ways, maybe because they're uncluttered or maybe because you took out literally things that were toxic off gassing in space. So all of that changes lives. Increasing function changes lives. Decreasing stress in the home changes lives. Decreasing stress in the home renovation process or homebuilding process changes lives.

So we actually do change lives. And if we're only willing to sell as long as it doesn't bother someone, think of all the people that could have their lives changed by our services for the better that will never know about us or what we do. Because we aren't willing to risk temporarily 'bothering' some people by sharing what we have to offer. To me, that's sort of like hoping to marry Prince Charming or Princess Charming without being willing to go on a bunch of dates, maybe even a few dates that bothered you.

I remember some pretty bad dates back in the day, but if we didn't go on them, we wouldn't have been able to find a mate, a person that we want to spend our life with and marry them potentially. So it just doesn't work that way, that if you're not willing to put yourself out there, that you can't really have the opportunity to match up with people that are going to be a good fit. So it may not be completely possible to sell without taking the risk of being a bother, in fact I would say it's not possible.

Someone, yes, you're right, is probably always going to be bothered, but some other people are going to be elated. And other people are going to feel like you were a lifesaver to them and that you came in exactly the right moment. And the bothering people is a risk you have to be willing to take if

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you're going to get the benefit of the other side of the coin, the life changing, the connection, the finding the perfect match for your clients.

And I want to reframe this even a little bit more because so many of you say that you really, really, really want and really, really, really need more money and that you will do anything to succeed in your dream business. I hear it all the time, "Tobi, I will do anything. I'll work day and night. I'll do all the things." Except you aren't even willing to risk bothering people on a daily or weekly basis to get that money or to build that dream business, you're not, you're quitting.

So in a sense I would say that you're lying to yourself because you're not really willing to do whatever it takes, in fact, you quit pretty easily if bothering somebody is where you draw the line. So just remember that a person being bothered is their choice. They can just as easily not be bothered even if you're making them an offer that they don't need. And just because someone is bothered it still doesn't mean that your sales tactics are sleazy or icky or that you're a problem or that you shouldn't be selling. In fact, I would say those things are mutually exclusive.

I like to remember that I `bother' my teenager all the time for things as simple as breathing or chewing. I know you've been there if you have kids, especially if you have teenagers. Sometimes I bother her just because I exist. And just because she's bothered does not mean I shouldn't breathe or shouldn't chew or shouldn't exist. So keep this in mind. It may even be important to your willingness to drop into the shoes of the person who is bothered so you can see why they're bothered.

I want you to think about this. Go into their space and think about why they're bothered because there are many reasons I think that people get bothered. But most of the time I think when we feel bothered because someone is selling to us, it's usually one of two things. One, we either don't feel like we have the time to take their call or their email or whatever. And number two, which I think is one of the biggest reasons that people feel 'bothered or annoyed' is that people feel guilty saying no to other people, no matter what they're saying no to.

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So it's a very common situation especially in America that people think saying no is mean. And most of us want to be nice and we want to be liked. So we prefer people pleasing over saying no because people pleasing requires us to say yes to other people's requests. So many people feel annoyed at the person who is selling to us or making an offer to us because we think and maybe it's even subconscious.

But somewhere in there there's a thought that goes something like, well, if you wouldn't have asked me then I wouldn't have to say no because no makes me feel bad or uncomfortable or awkward so now I'm bothered that you even ask me." Do you see this? I know, it's true and I know it's been true for you in many instances. So here's what I want you to think about. Instead of not selling, how about we start checking our people pleasing and get comfortable and confident saying no to things we don't want or need with a smile, because you all, there is nothing wrong with saying no.

We believe no is a dirty word and it is not. It's just an expression of our needs at any moment or a preference at any moment, something that we don't need, we don't want, we're not willing to take at this moment. There's nothing wrong with that. In fact it's very, very important to be good at saying no for a lot of reasons. So I think that no is amazing. It is our way of expressing exactly what we prefer or don't at any given moment, that's it.

But we load up all this baggage on the word no, all kinds of baggage, all kinds of emotion and all of that is completely unnecessary because no is not a bad word, it's not a dirty word, it's not a four letter word, it's genius, it's beautiful and very needed. And so we can feel comfortable saying no and not make it mean anything about us. And we don't have to think a thought that makes no be followed by guilt.

So it's really important for you to remember that on the other side of the coin when you come to selling, come to this situation of selling, that's exactly what's happening over there. That's why people feel bothered a lot of times because they're 'either too busy' or they're really just kind of mad, maybe even secretly that they have to tell you no because they don't like

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feeling uncomfortable when they say no. A lot of you also on the side of selling that's receiving the no think that no is also a bad thing.

You don't want to have to say no to other people, but you also don't want anyone saying no to you. So why is this? Because this is a huge piece of developing the skill set of selling is being willing and okay to hear no. So why do we not want to hear no? Well, we don't like rejection. We make it mean something about us like we're stupid or our offer or service is stupid or that some part of us or our offer isn't good enough or that we did something wrong.

And I need you to know that the number one key to being a good successful and skilled salesperson is to get comfortable hearing no and to not make it mean anything other than that person was not a fit for this particular thing at this particular moment, that's it. They currently don't need it or don't want it or don't have the money for it or whatever their side of that story is, but it doesn't mean that they might not even need it in the future. Or it doesn't mean that they might not even want it right now and wish they could pay for it, but they don't have the funds to pay for it.

And none of that is anything about you or your offer. It's totally fine. And it's not even for them to be embarrassed. I mean you can hold space for a no and make people feel good about it. I totally get it, thank you so much for considering it. I loved meeting with you, you know where to find me. It would be so fun to work with you in the future and I hope you have a great day. Literally it can be that simple. But you've got to get good at hearing no's because selling is a numbers game.

And we're going to get far more no's than we get yeses if we're being successful. In fact, our job is to figure out exactly how many no's on average, it won't be the same every time, but on average that we have to get before we get a yes. Do we typically get one yes out of every five offers, so one yes to four no's? Or do we typically get one yes for this particular thing out of every 50 offers, so one yes to 49 no's? Or do we usually get one out of every 500 offers, one yes to 499 no's?

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We need that information, but most of us don't ever get there because we don't even like to get past those first three or four no's, much less, 499 of them. And there's no set number for every person. It depends on a lot of factors, especially the price of a particular offer and what the offer includes. So it's individual to the person and the thing you're selling. And typically the higher the price of the thing the fewer yeses you're going to get compared to no's. So let's think about this.

Let's say you are a very, very skilled interior designer, if you offer yourself at \$50 an hour, do you think you'll get more yeses compared to if you're \$500 per hour compared to if you're \$1500 an hour? Which one of those people do you think is going to get the most yeses, even if they're not that good, who is going to get the most yeses? Probably the \$50 an hour person. It depends on some other factors but if they're all say equally skilled and they're selling just as often, they're showing up and selling, which one of those people would get the most yeses? Probably the \$50 an hour thing.

Now, that doesn't mean you need to be working at \$50 an hour, that's not the point here, but the math is that more people will be able to afford or even potentially value your services probably at \$50 an hour compared to 500 or 1500. So that doesn't mean you should be super affordable, you can if you want to or if you decide that works for your business. Doesn't mean you should set your rate at \$50. Most of us don't want to work for the clients that we attract at \$50 an hour in interior design.

We know what type of client and budget usually is going to come with that, nothing against that budget, but working one-on-one for \$50 an hour is a whole lot of work and it's hard to run your business at that price. But when we start pricing our offers or raising our prices and getting a higher price per hour or per flat fee or however you charge, then we're going to start to get a lot more no's. And most of us don't then assume when we've raised our price, we don't usually have the thought, perfect, my pricing is working perfectly. It's repelling lots of people that I don't want to work with.

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Most of us don't think that, unless we've gotten really good and skilled with this process. Instead, most of us think, I must be too expensive, I just got a no. Or I even got three no's or five no's recently, nobody's paying for the price I want. I knew I shouldn't have raised my price, I know I went too high. So instead of deciding that it feels good to get a no which is exactly what I think when I repel people that are not fit for me. Typically most people make it mean something negative like something's wrong with us or something's wrong with our pricing.

But I want you to understand that no's don't have to feel bad. Again, just like the customer chooses whether or not to be bothered by your offer, you choose whether or not to feel bad about a no. Again, our feelings are completely our choice. We can choose to believe that every no is a positive because it's one step closer to a yes, but you have to really believe it, not just tell yourself that that's true.

Because if you don't really believe it and if somewhere inside you're like, I know I'm going to tell myself that all those no's are closer to a yes. But secretly and in my brain I'm spinning thoughts about how I must be too expensive and I'm going to go broke and how I'm going to make payroll. You all, if we move back to those thoughts and don't really believe it's one step closer to a yes then we won't keep selling and we probably won't even keep our price at that rate, we'll probably lower it.

And if you stop selling every time you get a no, it's going to be a problem. So I want you to check in with yourself about this right now as we're talking about this. How many no's are you willing to get before you quit selling or before you lower your price or change your price or change your offer or throw some more stuff into it? How many of you are even willing to get before you start worrying or second guessing your pricing? Maybe you haven't even changed it yet but do you immediately start worrying and second guessing with just one no?

Because I want you to really get honest with yourself. Are you willing to get five no's before you get a yes? Are you willing to get 50 no's before you get a yes? And are you willing to get 500 no's before you get a yes? Now,

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again, it depends on the price. I probably don't want to get 500 no's at \$50 an hour but you're probably not going to. So it kind of works itself out, but on my services and my offers that cost thousands and thousands or even hundreds of thousands of dollars, I'm going to expect quite a few no's.

So remember, you said you were willing to do anything to make your business a success, but here I am telling you that if you're not willing to get 50 or 500 no's or maybe even get 50 no's before you get one yes then you're not really willing to do whatever it takes. Now, there's another part to this because since it's a numbers game, you've got to get in front of more people. So if you're getting 50 no's but it's taking you 50 years to get those no's, you're for sure going to be out of business.

So it just kind of shows us that if we need 50 no's to get a yes then how quickly can we get in front of 50 of the right people? That's part of the process. But I want you to go back to this question of are you willing to get five no's or 50 no's or 500 no's? Does the thought of any of those make you cringe? If so, we want to increase your skill or your willingness to get a no. And that's really increasing your skill or your willingness to feel the feeling of rejection which sounds awful, but feelings are just vibrations in our body.

So if we feel rejection it's kind of, for me it's in the pit of my stomach, feels kind of like butterflies but a little ickier but that's all it is. I can survive it, it doesn't kill me and I can build resilience to this feeling. I can let it flow through me. I can be like, "Yeah, I know and believe and truly do believe that this is one step closer to a yes but I'm going to feel this weird awkwardness for a little while, this tingly feeling and then it's going to go away. I'm going to let it flow through me and I'm not going to make it mean anything." It's really important.

If you look at the most successful people in any industry when it comes to selling you will find that they are willing to fail, which a no, we would consider 'a fail', not a huge fail but we would put it in that fail category. And so the most successful people are willing to fail hundreds or even thousands of times more than average people.

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Babe Ruth struck out more than any other person playing baseball at the time he was playing but he also had the most home runs of anyone. So yeah, does swing for the fences more than anybody else and a lot those he was going to get out or it wasn't going to go his way. But because he was willing to get all those outs he was also able to get all those home runs. So it's true in every aspect of life and business including sales.

If you're willing to fail at something more than anyone else, in other words get more no's than anyone else then you'll also be more successful than anyone else. Because if you're getting the most no's, you're probably also getting the most yeses. And you're for sure getting in front of the most people. And if you're getting the most no's at any given period of time, part of the game can become how many no's can I get more quickly? If last year it took me 90 days to get the no's before I got a yes, how could I get all those no's in 30 days instead?

And that's going to be the game of how do I get in front of more people and more qualified people? Which is a totally different thing than being unwilling to get rejected. And that's when it gets really, really fun. A few years ago I heard life coach, Brooke Castillo, who I learned life coaching from, say that she had made at the time about \$40 million a year that year. She's made way more than a year now, but in that moment a couple, probably two or three years ago she was talking about in particular how many no's it takes her to get yeses.

And so she was using the example of that particular year or the last 12 months where she had made \$40 million as a life coach and owning The Life Coach School. You all, the average life coach salary at that time and probably still now is about \$40,000 which is not unlike the average interior design salary. So she made 40 million instead of 40,000. I think that math is 1,000 times more than that average life coach. And so she in particular was talking about what she did to make \$40 million. And she did the math on her and her company. It's not just her always, there's people.

There's ads running. There's Instagram offers. There's her and other people making one-on-one offers to work with people for various of her

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products and services. But she said to hit \$40 million that they got about 200,000 no's from customers across all their products and they got about 5,000 yeses for their various offerings. So 5,000 compared to 200,000, that's 50 times more no than yeses. That's 50 no's for every one yes, but it equaled \$40 million, you all.

So part of this equation is not only their willingness to get no's 50 times more than yeses, it's also that they were willing to make over 200,000 offers in a year. If you are only pitching yourself to 10 or 20 clients a year and wondering why you never make enough money or never get enough yeses, part of the problem is that you aren't even getting in front of near enough prospects to begin with. And then another problem is probably that you aren't willing to get as many no's as it takes to get you a yes.

So now let's talk about the sleazy part, because we've touched on it in some ways, the bothering and all that stuff but I want to recap just a second to make sure you aren't conflating sleazy selling and the way that makes you feel. Which is uncomfortable, with the uncomfortable feeling that comes with getting a no or feeling like you're bothering someone because I suspect you're conflating the two. In fact, I suspect you're not even being sleazy at all. Most of you I don't find to be sleazy people, those of you that I know.

And I don't think your tactics are probably sleazy either most of the time, but I want you to check-in for a second and get really clear on this because it's really important. So are you using the excuse of I'm worried about being sleazy? Because I kind of doubt you're being sleazy, when you really mean that you just haven't built up your skill of getting good at being told no and every time you get a no it feels so icky for you. And so that is what you're really trying to avoid. And so instead of saying, "I don't want to be sleazy", because it feels sleazy, the icky feeling.

What you really are saying is, "I don't want to feel rejection." Is that what you're trying to avoid? Because I suspect it is and I hope this makes sense because it is very normal for us humans to feel rejected. And you can build the muscle of being willing to get no's with practice so that it feels less icky,

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you get more used to it. You can start to practice believing it's just a person expressing their preference right this moment. And not that they might not even change their mind later.

But just in case you were to fall into sleazy selling, let's cover a little bit of how not to do that because I want you to be confident that you're not coming across as a used car salesman. So let's separate these two things. What you've been trying to avoid was probably really not being sleazy because I doubt you are. You've been trying to avoid feeling rejection and you've been trying to avoid feeling like you're bothering people. Two totally different things than being sleazy.

But here's the thing. In your mind, your dream clients completely understand the value of your creativity and your services. And they happily pay the price that you want them to or that you're offering for your services, that's your hope, it's all of our hope. And yes, there are some people out in the world that will fit that description and we are so excited when we find them. We're like, "That was easy. I told them what I offered, they wanted it. They were willing to pay it and it was all wonderful." And we want that to happen all the time.

So yes, it's helpful to figure out what that person, who they are, what their characteristics are, all of those things, find out who they are and why they were such a match. Because you're going to be super passionate about selling to and working with those people which that makes sense. Here's a little insight I want to give you. Oftentimes our best clients, those people that we're talking about are a reflection of us at least in some ways. So our best clients didn't just happen upon us and happen to be a perfect fit for us typically.

They usually gravitate to us for a reason or several reasons. And a lot of times those reasons are that we have shared values or shared interest or shared or similar life experiences. And so yes for creatives like us they usually see and love our work also, but there's a lot of other people doing beautiful work in the world. It's not just that, there's many, many creatives

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that they could match with, but there's something about you in particular that is similar enough that makes a connection with them.

So here's what I want to point out to you. If your best clients are a reflection of you then the more you understand yourself, the more you're clear on your values, the more you understand your passions, the more you're clear on your skill sets. The more you really get your zone of genius and what lights you up, the more excited you can be to share those things out in the world which will attract more of your people to you. We think that our best clients are so different from us, but they're really not.

So don't confuse all the clients that happen to say yes as your best clients. You may decide to work with them anyway, but they're not necessarily your best clients. They may not be like you at all and you may not even like working with them, but you may feel obligated because they're saying yes for some reason. So what does this have to do with non-sleazy selling? Well, for non-sleazy selling, I want you to be willing to show up and talk about what you love and what you care about and what lights you up and how the things you're offering for sale are aligned with those things.

And also for non-sleazy selling I want you to truly believe and be in love with your offers and your services because it's not sleazy at all to share about something that you truly love and believe in. I mean think about it, do you find it's sleazy when you fall in love with a skincare product or a set of sheets or a boutique hotel and then you go tell everybody how great it is? And not that you're selling it yourself but you just love it, you absolutely love the thing.

When you tell somebody else are you like, "That was sleazy, I shouldn't have told them about that fabulous skincare product." Or, "That was so sleazy, I should not have shared my love of that boutique hotel or that restaurant with the delicious dessert." Of course not, you're excited and you want them to experience it too. So why then do you suddenly make it feel sleazy for you to believe in your own products or services that much? It's not, it's amazing. In fact, it's required I believe if you're really going to be good at selling those things.

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But the problem that many of you have is you don't believe in your own offers that much and you don't believe in the price of them either because you think that they're expensive. And you think thoughts like, well, I wouldn't pay that much for this but I need to sell it for this much. So that does feel sleazy and I agree with you. You also think things like, well, if I weren't me, I couldn't afford me and I get that. But all those thoughts are the things that are making you doubt your offers. So you don't have to just get better at faking it till you make it, in fact, I don't want you to.

You need to not fake it. You need to be absolutely committed to loving your offers. And if you don't, then let's make some changes to the way you work so that your offers are worth the hype and are worth the price. That they are so good that you believe in them so much and you do know that they're going to change lives and that they're going to be totally transformational. And that it would actually be more cruel and unhelpful for you to not share your offers. That's how I want you to feel about your own offers.

I want you to be like, "Well, I could keep this a secret because I don't want to bother people but that would be so mean of me because their life is going to be truly better if they have this thing." So if you are truly great at what you do, why would you want to keep others from the joy of those products or services that you offer? That's kind of mean girl. You know of something that could help them change their life or their existence or their daily experience in some way for the better and you don't offer it to them. You've got to help a sister out. Don't keep that to yourself.

I mean here's really what it comes down to. At the end of the day you're probably going to get somewhere between one or 10 yeses out of every 100 people that you talk to, not exactly, yours may be a little different or a little more, but one to 10, so 1% to 10% of your sales or your conversations will convert. So for every 100 people you're out talking to in the world that actually have the problem that your business solves, not just people who don't need design. For sure you're not going to get those.

But if you're talking to 100 people that actually have the problem that you can solve, about one to 10 of those people will potentially say yes on

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average. Now, notice as I didn't say out of every 100 people you talk to, period, but every 100 people who need what you're selling. So even if they need it it's still true that for most companies, 90 to 99 people out of every 100 are still going to be a no unless you're offering your services way too cheap.

So if you're like, "I get a yes to every person that comes to the door." Well, yeah, if you're super cheap and you don't vet them and you don't require any sort of commitment to a certain amount of product to buy or a large retainer, of course you're going to get yeses. If all they have to do is say, "Okay, I'm good with your \$125 an hour, let's go." Yeah, you're going to get 100% of those. But that falls into the category of offering your services way too cheap. So when you really get your services at a price that is sustainable for your business you're going to get a lot of no's.

So for me I would say out of the really qualified leads, the ones that make it all the way to talking to me. So we've vetted them all the way to do they get to get on the phone with Tobi for a full service interior design client. At that point I get about 19 no's out of every 20 people. And that's after we've already ruled out all the inquiries that come in that we already know aren't a fit and they don't even make it all the way through the process of talking to me. So the third level of the process for us.

If you're thinking about an interview, all the way to getting to interview with me, 19 out of 20 are a no and that makes perfect sense to me and I'm good with that. And I expect that, but that one that sticks out of those 20 that's made it all the way through our process, man, will they ever be a great client, man, will they align with us in so many ways. And their budget will be right and I'll be able to go do my best creative work. So also remember that selling is really just building relationships. And you're out building relationships with those 100 people and building relationships takes time.

And here's what happens to us in our selling process, we don't take the time to build relationships. We move too fast and we try to close the sale when we haven't even taken the time to build a relationship with a person. And usually this is because we don't go try to find the people until we need

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the money. So it's kind of like trying to get married on the first date. And think about how many people that would run off that you're dating. So here's what I want you to remember. Selling does not happen in a day or an hour or right when you need money.

Selling should be something that's happening all the time in your business. Because you want to be willing to court a client for a while and maybe even a long time to make sure that you're right for them and they're right for you before you expect them to convert into an offer, especially your highest end offers. The less expensive, yeah, it might not be as long of a time. If somebody's going to buy a \$9 or a 99 cents eBook from me, they could probably find it this afternoon and say yes.

If somebody's going to do a \$1 million interior design project, that's a pretty long relationship build that needs to happen. So as we wrap this up, I want to recap my 10 requirements for getting great at really effective non-sleazy selling. Okay, so here's the 10 things that we've talked about today that you didn't even know necessarily were 10 things, that you're going to need to do to get really good at this.

Okay, so number one, you're going to have to check all your fears about bothering people. And you might even need to get coached or get some therapy or do some journaling. You've got to figure out what's coming up and why you're believing you're bothering people when you ask them if they want your services. So that's number one.

Number two, you've got to remind yourself that you're not asking people for a favor. You're just making what you do available for them to consider. So maybe leave yourself post-it notes on your computer or your phone or wherever you're going to be selling to people that says, 'I'm not asking for a favor, I'm making an offer'. They're two totally different things.

Number three, you've got to check your willingness to hear no's. And again, you may need coaching on this. We coach on this all the time in *Design You* because people haven't built up that skill set, they haven't honed their

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craft at hearing a no. They haven't exercised that muscle to get good at it. So you've got to get good at hearing no.

Number four, you've got to be willing to sell anyway even while you're feeling uncomfortable or ick, knowing that it's not because you're sleazy or that you're doing anything wrong but that you just haven't gotten good at hearing no yet. So it's very normal that you're going to feel uncomfortable until you get more used to this process. But if you stop every time you feel uncomfortable and you don't move forward, you're never going to sell anything.

So early on and even for a while you've got to be willing to feel uncomfortable and still sell, reminding yourself that you've also done a bunch of other hard shit in your life and your business that felt really uncomfortable until you got over the feeling of uncomfortable and now you're so glad you did it. You can look back and be like, "Okay, that was horrible but, man, did it pay off and I'm so glad I did it.

And that's the same thing that you're going to be doing, not to dismiss feelings that are important, but to remember the ick is coming from all those thoughts like I'm bothering them or I'm asking for a favor. And once you practice this more and more and more, that feeling is going to become less and less and less.

Okay, number five, you have to approach every conversation with curiosity. People can tell when you're genuinely curious, which is the opposite of being salesy. So I want you to think about this, if you're willing to build relationships for a while with people, that's part of the selling process, you're not even trying to close the sale yet. You're just hearing what their needs are and being fully engaged with them and listening and making eye contact and being truly interested in them and curious about whether you're the right person to help them. Okay, really important.

Number six, the next piece of that is then you want to practice understanding the problem that the person's trying to fix without needing to solve it yet. So a lot of us already immediately feel like I have to solve

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something. In fact, we're giving away free advice like when we're standing in their house at a free consult if we don't charge for our consultations, because we feel obligated to solve their problem right then. I want you to release all attachment to proving to other people how great you are and that you can fix this.

And I also want you to release the attachment of closing the sale yet because that attachment to wanting to win this person over is kind of like they were trying to get married on the first date. It feels very pushy to them and even to you. And you've got to be willing to spend some time just exploring what they're saying, understanding the problem and just wondering and figuring out if you're even the right fit. And that's not the same as having all the answers yet. You'll need the answers if they hire you but you don't need them yet.

And I want you to remember, this still may be like the first date or the second date with this potential client. It's not time to get married.

Number seven, be willing to share your values and your interest and your passions and what lights you up openly and often in emails, on social media, in organic conversations, not in a weird contrived way. Just get used to talking about the things you love so that the right people will be attracted to you and you can make offers to those people who are more likely to understand you and understand your value and understand the work you're doing in the world.

Number eight, make sure your offer is worth the hype and that you truly believe in it at the price you're selling it for. If not, if you're like, "It's really great, but it's really expensive." You're not there yet. So if you don't believe that your offer is a 1,000% worth the hype, worth way more than the hype really, and that it's a 1,000% worth the price you're selling it for, then you've got to work on your offer or work on your services or work on your mindset about both before you're going to be confident in selling those offers. Because if you don't believe in it then why would anybody else believe in it?

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And if you believe your offers are overpriced that is the very moment you're going to start to feel like you're taking advantage of someone or that you're asking them for a favor. So this is really important to be in alignment.

Number nine, just be willing to hear no a millions times, a million, million times, not just like getting better, like we said, number three, of hearing no and getting coaching on it, but make it a practice. How many no's did I hear this week? Did I hear more this week than last week? Because that means that you're not only getting good at hearing no's, like number three was, but that you're practicing going out and getting them.

And then number 10, which kind of goes along with that is that how many no's can you actually get? Not just that I've gotten 10 or 20, but to take yourself to that place in your brain that says Brooke Castillo got 200,000 no's and made \$40 million. Now, you're not maybe trying to make \$40 million, you might be trying to make a lot less, maybe you're trying to make a million, 500,000, 200,000. But you've got to be willing to get a lot more no's than what you're currently getting if you're not even close to those revenue or profit numbers that you're dreaming of.

So not only, number three was to get good and get coached on getting no's. Number nine is get in the habit of hearing lots of no's because of the conversations you're having. And number 10 is to figure out what it would take to get those no's up beyond what you could imagine. Get into that category, for Brooke was at 200,000, maybe it's for you 2,000 or 20,000. But to really stretch yourself and say, "What would it look like to get in front of so many people that we got that many no's?"

Okay, so that's it, 10 things to being a great non-sleazy salesperson, mark this podcast down, you're going to want to listen to it again and again. This is one of those that's going to go up, I hope as one of the greatest hits of *The Design You Podcast* because this is really, really important. And a lot of these things you may have kind of known but not been as clear as we've made them today, but it's all about developing the skill set of being a salesperson.

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It's not something you're born with. It's not something that just comes naturally to people. Some people may seem that way, but I promise you, if they're really good at it they're also practicing it often. So you can totally do this. And you can not only do it, you don't have to do it white knuckling. You can decide to enjoy it and make selling fun because selling is not really optional in a business. So you might as well get good at it and you might as well have fun in the process.

Okay, friends, that's what I have for you today. Now, get out and get to selling. And remember, selling is just one part of a great design business. So if you haven't already, head to tobifairley.com/betterbusiness, that's tobifairley.com/betterbusiness and get my Build a Better Business design guide. Because it's sort of like an eBook. It's really robust. It's many pages long. You can set aside some time to go through it. It's got exercises, but it's going to really help you stop that feast or famine cycle in your business and build a sustainable and profitable business.

And when you go through all the exercises and get really clear about how to build a better business then you can come back with these selling skills and sell the heck out of the offers that you have fallen in love with. Okay, friends, that's what I have for you now today, bye for now. I'll see you next week.

Thank you so much for listening to *The Design You Podcast*, and if you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model, there has never been a more important time than right now. So, join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my *Design You* coaching program today. You can get all the details at TobiFairley.com.