

ERIC BARON

AUTHOR OF *SELLING IS A TEAM SPORT*

INNOVATIVE TEAM SELLING

HOW TO LEVERAGE YOUR
RESOURCES AND MAKE
TEAM SELLING
WORK



WILEY

Praise for *Innovative Team Selling*

"I have worked with Eric Baron for more than 25 years—as a colleague, as a client of his, and as a co-consultant. The insights in this book are extremely valuable—in particular in the current world, where team selling of complex customer propositions becomes both more central and more challenging at the same time. Bringing together an understanding of consultative selling, team dynamics, and leadership is a powerful combination that will help many teams to dramatically enhance their effectiveness. This book is a powerful tool for anyone who seeks to enhance the effectiveness of selling in today's environment."

—David A. Nadler, PhD

Vice Chairman

Marsh & McLennan Companies

(Author of *Champions of Change* and *Building Better Boards*)

"Fully leveraging sales resources is critical for businesses to succeed in today's dynamic, global economy. Eric Baron explains, in *Innovative Team Selling*, how sales teams can collaborate to derive innovative solutions to help their clients solve their business problems."

—R. Glenn Hubbard

Dean and Russell L. Carson Professor of Finance

and Economics

Columbia Business School

"Individuals can obviously do great work, but high-performing teams consistently produce better results. *Innovative Team Selling* explores how sales teams can collaborate to develop innovative solutions for their clients. We've successfully worked with Eric Baron and his team to deliver these concepts to our client-facing professionals. I'd encourage any organization that believes in team selling to consider what Eric has to say."

—Karen Peetz

President

BNY Mellon

"Eric Baron and his team have helped me dramatically change cultures at Bankers Trust, Bank One, Citigroup, and AmSouth. Training sales teams to collaborate, leverage each other's expertise, and tap into their creativity will impact any sales organization and help them perform beyond their expectations. It is in your interest to learn how to apply the concepts outlined in *Innovative Team Selling*."

—Geoffrey von Kuhn

Managing Director of a large New England family office
and former Head of U.S. Private Bank, Citicorp

"As Worldwide Training Director at Ogilvy & Mather, I relied on Eric Baron and his team to train our people around the world in collaboration, innovation, creative problem solving, and consultative selling. I am delighted to see him combine all this in *Innovative Team Selling*. This book's how-to skills and the understanding that supports them are practical, relevant, and often unique. If you work with clients, you'll benefit from reading this book."

—Fred Lamparter

former Worldwide Training Director, Ogilvy & Mather

"I have worked with Eric Baron for over 25 years and seen firsthand how powerful his approach is. Collaboration and teamwork are the pillars that support successful sales organizations. *Innovative Team Selling* is a must read for professionals in virtually any customer focused business."

—Chuck Sulerzyski

President & CEO

Peoples Bank

Marietta, Ohio

"Sales professionals in the biopharmaceutical industry must collaborate with their internal resources every day. Innovation and teamwork must become the norm. The skills, techniques, and approaches outlined in *Innovative Team Selling* are very applicable to our industry and others. Eric Baron and his team have a solid understanding of what it takes to make team selling work. Anyone in sales or sales support can benefit from this book."

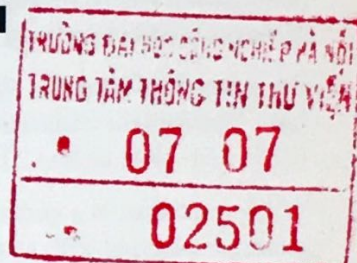
—Chuck Bucklar

Vice President, North American Commercial Operations

BioMarin Pharmaceutical, Inc.

INNOVATIVE TEAM SELLING

**HOW TO LEVERAGE YOUR
RESOURCES AND MAKE
TEAM SELLING
WORK**



ERIC BARON



WILEY

Contents

Introduction	xi
1 The Celebration, or Why We Need Sales Teams	1
2 Meetings, Bloody Meetings	13
3 Easy to Say; Hard to Do . . . Very Hard	25
4 So Who Does What and When?	39
5 Now, Let's Get Creative	53
6 Adding Structure to the Process	65
7 Getting Our Acts Together	79
8 It's All About Connecting	89
9 You Mean We Have to Sell, Too?	103
10 Positioning . . . A Key Ingredient in Understanding Needs	119
11 Just One More Question (or Ten), If You Will, Please	131
12 Are They Sales Teams or Needs Development Teams?	145
13 Is Anybody Listening?	159
14 The Big Day	173
15 Okay, So How Do We Do All That?	185
16 What Do You Mean You Don't Like It?	201
17 Bringing Home the Bacon	217
18 One Last Time: It's All About Differentiation	229

x Contents

About the Author	241
About The Baron Group	243
Acknowledgments	245
Index	247

Introduction

My first book, *Selling Is a Team Sport*, was published more than 10 years ago. The world has undergone monumental changes since its publication as technology, globalization, and unparalleled competition have made succeeding in business so much more difficult. Innovation is no longer a luxury; it's a necessity for every organization if they want to stay in the game and ahead of their competition. Effective sales teams who understand how to leverage their resources can contribute significantly to any organization as they address the challenges they encounter in this competitive environment.

Organizations are comprised of intelligent, talented, committed, and effective people. We all know that individuals can do great work. But teams outperform individuals. We know that intuitively, and there is tons of research to back that statement up. Of course, there are situations where an individual might outperform a team when given a specific task. But nobody is smart enough to always assign a task to the one right individual who will outperform the team. It just doesn't work that way. Teams do better than individuals, and when they work together well they can accomplish great things.

This is a book about how effective team selling works. Our emphasis is on innovation, collaboration, teamwork, differentiation, and leveraging resources. Sales teams have the potential to do remarkable things. They just need to learn how to reach their potential. The intent of this book is to provide the reader with skills, techniques, methodologies, and approaches that will enable their teams to work together more effectively and derive innovative solutions for their customers.

The process of successful team selling is essentially comprised of three distinct components. First is the dynamic of how the sales team works together internally to develop strategies, recommendations, and solutions that address their clients' needs. They must learn how to conduct outstanding meetings. To do this they need to understand concepts like meeting dynamics, facilitation, roles and responsibilities, generating and

developing ideas, leveraging each other's expertise, managing conflict, and gaining commitment. The first half of the book focuses on this *internal component* of team selling.

Second is how a sales team works together to make outstanding team calls. This is the *external component*. Whether it's two people meeting a prospective client early in the process, several colleagues making a formal presentation, or many members of the sales team participating in a Finalist Presentation, they need to do this in a customer-focused way that is both memorable and unique. How sales teams present themselves, how they connect with their customers, how they work together, how they demonstrate understanding of the client's situation, how they tell their story, and how they build upon each other's comments all contribute to the impression they make. These factors significantly impact the likelihood of their success. The skills required to make outstanding team calls are what the second half of the book explores.

There is an important third overarching component that impacts the entire team selling process: the *planning and coordination* required in day-to-day interactions. Sales teams can't just come together when it's time to strategize or when it's time to visit the client. They need to consistently collaborate. They need to communicate on a daily basis. They need to be thinking about the customer all the time. When they get together, they need to review each member's understanding of the customer's needs and look for unique ways to address those needs. The teams have to consistently leverage the collective expertise of the organization. They need to listen to different points of view. They need to plan and rehearse prior to their client visits. And they must always be held accountable—to the customer, to the organization, and to each other. This, too, will be discussed throughout the book.

This book is about improving the process behind selling as a team. You will see, as we investigate innovative team selling, that process refers primarily to *how* individuals work together. Whether it's with your colleagues, your teammates, your customers, your friends, or your children, how you interact greatly impacts whatever you hope to accomplish. What you have to say, or what you suggest, or even what you think is often dwarfed by the way you interact. Most of the information about team selling that is currently in the marketplace discusses what teams need to do, how they are comprised, and what their goals and objectives should address. That is important information. But there isn't much out there about *how* they do it. That's what we will explore together.