



RETAIL STAR



## Living and Breathing Sales: Louis Lautman

[By Mary Waldron]

Sales trainer Louis Lautman has been in the sales game for nearly his entire life.

Once he was able to prove himself as an eager 20-year-old salesman in New York, Lautman was on his way to the top of the sales-training industry. Since then, he has taken all of his experiences and combined them with the genius teachings of sales gurus like Tony Robbins and Tom Hopkins to develop his own training program.

Today, as the owner of his own sales-training company, International Sales University, Lautman continues to share his urgent sales messages and secrets throughout the world.

"I've been in sales all my life!" he said. "From when I was a child walking around with my red wagon selling things door-to-door to my paper route to electronics sales."

During college, Lautman worked in telemarketing, which many would agree is one of the most difficult branches of sales. He graduated from Baltimore's Towson University with a degree in marketing, but by the time he was 20 years old, in the late 1990s, Lautman had already snagged a professional sales job in New York City at a telecommunications-services company called Allegiance Telecom. The telecom industry was booming at this time because high-speed Internet was starting to gain popularity.

At Allegiance, Lautman began to cut his chops in the sales industry with a little guidance from his boss. He explained, "One

day, my boss said to me, 'Lou, you want to make \$100,000 this year?' I was a young guy, very excited, and I said, 'Absolutely.' He said to go out and knock on 50 doors a day, telling people what I did. And I said, 'Okay.' Then he said, 'What are you waiting for? Go out and do it.' And that was my sales training."



"I was a foot soldier. I was at the front lines of finding business," Lautman said of his early years at Allegiance Telecom. "I didn't know about sleeping in until 11:00 a.m., I

didn't know about leaving work at 3:00 p.m., I didn't know about three- to four-hour lunches. I'd never experienced it. My mom told me to do well, and I listened to my boss. And I found success."

With some additional guidance on his way up, Lautman became very successful at the company, making it onto the sales-management team after two years and, eventually, onto the company's sales-training team. Around this time, after becoming number four in his company, Lautman was given the opportunity to open its offices in Tampa, FL. As a native of New Jersey who yearned for the glow of the warm beach sun, he snatched up the offer.

Soon after his transfer to Tampa, Lautman became even more interested in sales training, which led him to focus on sales training exclusively. He went on to work for various sales-training companies, such as Anthony Robbins Companies and Tom Hopkins International.

Approximately four years ago, Lautman finally came to the point he had been working toward throughout his career: he was able to start his own company, a sales-training company called International Sales University.

"It's who I am. It's what I do," he said of his passion for sales. "I love sharing what I've learned. I'm not better or smarter than anyone else. I just have different

**Q. What do you do for fun?**

**A.** I love working out, reading, socializing, and dancing.

**Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?**

**A.** It's probably some electronic or trance music or an audio book.

**Q. What is the last magazine you read?**

**A.** Probably *Selling Power*.

**Q. What is your favorite TV show?**

**A.** I love *The Simpsons*.

**Q. Who is your role model?**

**A.** My mother and father.



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distinctions—things I’ve learned along the way, what works and what doesn’t.”



Much of what Lautman teaches his groups today is based on the individual seller, not the entire sales industry, per se.

“80% of sales is selling yourself,” he said. “If you’re not sold on your product or service, chances are your prospect won’t be sold on it.”

Dealing with identity, mindset, beliefs, psychology, and presentation is the “internal” perspective on selling, according to Lautman. The greatness of any salesperson comes from what that person has instilled within himself or herself. The “external” aspect deals with the types of things salespeople say to buyers.

“I can give you scripts, but if you’re not aligned with your message, you’re not going to be very powerful or effective. I can give you all the rebuttals and ways to overcome objections, but if you don’t believe it, people are going to sense it,” he said.

Lautman knows that the only way to become a stellar salesperson is to learn from your experiences—good and bad.

“Every time you have an interaction, you have an opportunity to look back on that and analyze,” he said. “What did I do right? What was right? How was it right? How did it affect the outcome? What did I do wrong? What could I have done differently? What was the cost of me doing that wrong?”

Keeping a diary of lessons learned every day in sales is a wise idea, according to Lautman.

“I started doing that 12 years ago, and as a result, I’ve produced four books,” he said.

Lautman has released three sales books and is currently preparing another to be released in the coming months. His books already in print include *31 Days to Awaken Your Sales Genius*, *Michael Lyons’ Domain*, and *Louis Lautman’s Universal Secrets*.

Lautman credits some of his colleagues from Allegiance Telecom with teaching him some of the basics of his sales outlook and style. Kevin Cowan, Adam Park, and Vince Pausi were some of the mentors Lautman had in the early stages of his career.

Since then, he has come to embrace the teachings of Tony Robbins, Marshall Sylver, and Tom Hopkins. Robbins taught Lautman about belief systems, mindset, and strategies. Sylver taught him about the human-nature principles that are the keys to sales. Hopkins focused a lot on the “external” principles that Lautman has taken with him.

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