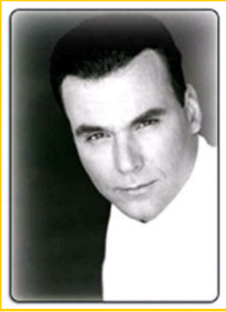


SALES STAR



# The World's Greatest Hypnotist...or Salesman: Marshall Sylver

[By Mary Waldron]

When you think of hypnotism, do you get a little nervous? Do you imagine some powerful evil force taking over your mind and body, forcing you to do the unthinkable? Well, you shouldn't because hypnotism is simply influencing someone to do something-or, in our case, buy something. Period. In fact, sales is the exact same thing as hypnotism. You don't believe me? Then just ask one of the experts: Marshall Sylver.

Before Sylver found success as a hypnotist, he came from one of the humblest beginnings that most people have ever heard of. A native of Michigan, Sylver, along with his mother and his nine siblings, lived on a meager farm with no running water, electricity, or telephone service.

On a couple of occasions during those years, Sylver and his family were even homeless. His mother worked three jobs to provide for her family.

"My mom's idea of creating more money was to see if she could sleep one hour less so that she could work one hour more to take care of her kids. An amazing woman," he said.

Despite the rough times, the young and ambitious Sylver managed to get going in the world of sales before he was even 10 years old! Witnessing the struggle in his home as a child made Sylver want to succeed that much more.

"I had a real sense that money created, if not happiness, peace of mind," he said.

"It was very enlightening times," Sylver added. "When you grow up with those dire circumstances, you figure out really early on that if you're going to get anything, you're going to have to get it yourself."

Sylver started selling Christmas cards and other similar items from *Boy's Life* magazine door to door when he was seven years old.

He noted his favorite time to sell was when it was rainy outside. Why? Even as a small child, Sylver knew how to work his audience. He would cunningly lug around his cards in a plastic garbage bag and wear another bag as a poncho, making sure to drench himself at the rain gutter before ringing a doorbell.



At the age of seven, Sylver began to practice magic-a hobby that would soon become a career for him. His first paying gig came in 1972 when he was 10. Sylver placed an ad for his services in the local newspaper for 50 cents. Since he had no phone at home, Sylver promised the local pharmacist, who had a phone, 10% of his profits for each show

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

A. I love theater and traveling.

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

A. I currently have a Seal CD in my car.

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

A. *Fast Company*.

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

A. *Law & Order*.

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

A. I have so many. One of my favorite role models was Walt Disney, though.

he booked for him. Sylver's rate was \$5 per half hour of entertainment.



When Sylver was 14 years old, his family trekked to San Diego, where his grandmother lived, in order to escape from the bitter cold weather of Michigan. Almost immediately after the move, Sylver landed a job in retail sales. Every day after school, Sylver would go to the retail store and work until 11:00 p.m. at night.

It was here that Sylver met one of his life's mentors, Chuck Martinez. Martinez had come from a very similar background with a financially struggling family and a mother he loved and admired very much. As Sylver worked for the young entrepreneur, he watched him and was inspired by his drive to succeed to make his mom's life easier. Once Martinez had acquired millionaire status, Sylver thought to himself, "If he can do it, I can do it."



Pretty soon, Sylver moved out on his own,

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and retail-sales earnings were just not cutting it for him anymore. At 17 years old, Sylver took a job as a gas-station attendant- a decision that would pay off more than he could have ever imagined.

Around this time, gas stations began to convert many full-service pumps to self-service pumps, and the self-service pumps became a lot busier than the full-service ones. When there were no customers at the full-service pumps, Sylver would usually go and serve those who were at the self-service pumps. This began to build customer loyalty with the people for whom Sylver went the extra mile, and he also made more in tips than his hourly wage paid.

One day, one of Sylver’s regulars approached him and asked if he had ever considered a job in broadcasting. “I am if you’re offering,” said the young and eager Sylver. This man, a program director for the radio station 104 KJOY-FM in San Diego, did not have a job for Sylver, but he allowed him to sit in and intern for him, fetching news, coffee, and the like.



Sylver accepted and patiently served his time until he was finally offered a chance to go on the radio. His opportunity came one evening when the night DJ called in drunk. Once Sylver’s smooth and relaxing voice hit the airwaves, he was made a regular DJ on the station. Sylver’s experience on the radio helped him create and develop his voice, semantics- and tone-wise. From here, the sky was the limit for Sylver.

Today, Sylver has combined all of his life experiences and lessons to form his career as a motivational speaker and hypnotist. His background in magic, sales, and speaking

and influencing listeners on the radio has led him directly to the work he does today.

Known by many as the greatest hypnotist of all time, Sylver has performed for many groups and companies throughout the world.

“Hypnosis is just influence. It’s not magic; it’s not a spell over somebody else. It’s just the ability to shift someone’s reference to a more effective state so they can get what they want,” he said. This means that hypnosis and sales are identical, according to Sylver.



In Sylver’s seminars, he teaches his clients to reprogram their outlooks. They must truly believe in the products they are selling- so much so that they have moral and ethical obligations to sell them. If a salesperson does not feel this, he or she should not be selling the product. According to Sylver, selling is not about trying to convince someone to buy something. When you believe in what you’re selling, you’re doing your customer a favor by sharing the product with him or her.

Last year, Sylver did something unique when he wrote and executive produced a movie called *Tranced*. *Tranced* is not your everyday flick; the movie is set up to actually hypnotize its viewers to feel the way the main character feels. The main character, Annie Bodie, is hypnotized in the movie, so the audience is supposed to feel all the things that she does. Sylver stars in the film as billionaire philanthropist Sterling Wynns, who ultimately helps Annie Bodie realize that happiness is attainable in life. The movie’s worldwide distribution is currently being negotiated.

In order to be a person of influence, according to Sylver, a person, or salesperson, needs to follow the steps below:



**1. Create self-mastery.** Take complete control of the 1,500 words per minute that go through the brain. “We choose every thought we think, and every thought expands,” said Sylver.

**2. Learn the tools for the task at hand.** In influence, there are very specific language patterns that experts have been teaching for decades that cause people to feel emotionally hooked to items being sold to them.

**3. Take consistent action in the present moment toward what you want.** Like Wayne Gretzky said, “You miss every single shot you don’t take.”

[Click here](#) to listen to Sylver’s free gift to SellingCrossing readers: Subconscious Reprogramming for Selling Excellence

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