

**THE MIND OF THE
BUYER; A PSYCHOLOGY
OF SELLING**

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The mind of the buyer; a psychology of selling by Harry Dexter Kitson

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THE MIND OF THE BUYER

A PSYCHOLOGY OF SELLING

BY

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PREFACE

This book is written for the progressive salesman, advertiser, sales correspondent—for every one who is engaged in influencing men to buy. It does not deal with the *technique* of selling; each form of selling has its own technique which must be separately acquired. Rather it deals with principles. It recognizes that certain elements are common to all forms of selling. These elements are certain occurrences within the mind of the buyer. Whether directed by word of mouth, by pen or by picture, the mind must perforce pass through certain stages *en route* to the act of purchase. It is to describe these mental processes that the book is written.

Such a work must necessarily deal with profound psychological questions. Such mental processes as attention, interest, desire, and confidence require voluminous treatment in the literature of theoretical psychology. The author has endeavored in this presentation, however, to rob them of their forbidding

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dryness by stripping away technical terms and substituting words of current business usage.

Two outstanding ideals have governed the preparation of the work: (1) To show the reader how to take the psychological point of view toward the business of selling; (2) to teach that in investigating the sale psychologically we must employ the methods of scientific measurement. By repetition and example the author has emphasized these two ideals. If he shall have made them clear he will have accomplished his chief aim whether he teaches a great amount of psychological fact or not.

The psychologist-reader will discern a studied avoidance of the spiritistic conception of mind. The mind is here conceived as an organic unity. Though exposition of this point of view is withheld, as unseemly in a book of this kind, still the phraseology will be found to fit it, without at the same time affrighting the non-psychological reader unfamiliar with the controversies about the mind-body relation. This avoidance of metaphysical disputations is further helped by the consistent emphasis upon the buyer's behavior. Objective descriptions are largely

used. And since our objective psychological nomenclature is not cluttered with spiritistic connotations, the aim of being scientific and at the same time understandable is more easily achieved.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to J. B. Lippincott Company for permission to use certain passages and cuts from the author's "Manual for the Study of the Psychology of Advertising and Selling," with which this may be used as a text; to the editor of *The Scientific Monthly* for permission to reprint portions of Chapter XIII; to the editor of *Western Advertising* for permission to reprint portions of Chapter V; to Professor W. F. Book for reading the manuscript and making helpful suggestions; and to the many students at The University of Chicago and at Indiana University, who by their keen interest and their scientific zeal have stimulated the author to prosecute his quest towards a scientific approach to the mind of the buyer.

H. D. K.

June, 1921.

