



Profiting From Fusion Marketing Partnerships

How to implement a five-step process to cultivate repeat referral relationships, with superior centers of influence that will send you a steady stream of qualified referrals.

Fu – sion, [fyoo-zhuh n] - noun: “the joining of two nuclei with the simultaneous release of massive energy.”

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In cooperation with
The CPE Forum

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 By the Steady Sales Group

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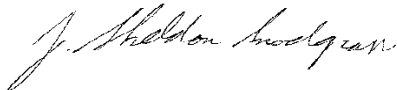
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J. Sheldon Snodgrass, President, The Steady Sales Group



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Learning Objectives

By completing this workbook you will be able to plan and implement one of the most powerful marketing tactics in the guerrilla marketing arsenal; Fusion Marketing.

You will also be introduced to some deceptively simple yet powerful concepts applicable to all aspects of your business life.

You will:

1. Understand how Guerrilla Marketing is different from traditional marketing.
2. Draft a seven sentence marketing plan.
3. Understand why fusion marketing is among the most powerful guerrilla marketing tools.
4. Adopt the mindset required for successful fusion marketing.
5. Develop a fusion marketing action strategy to help you close more sales, make more money and worry less.

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Manage Your Mindset.

The irrefutable seed of manifestation

“Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny.”

Mahatma Gandhi (1869- 1948)

Mahatma Gandhi? Destiny? Heavy stuff to begin a workbook on fusion marketing. Heavy indeed, but take 30 seconds and reflect on the roots of your past successes. No doubt they were born of your mindset. The same is true of the things that hold you back.

Let's face it; many of us hold assumptions, limiting beliefs, expectations, or fears that impede our ability to manifest desired results. Muscling through, applying more effort, or gutting it out rarely works. And when it does it is never sustainable; at least not if you want to be healthy too.

Fusion marketing is simple, fun, cost effective and, when done right, very powerful. But fusion marketing requires that you think big, take some risk, present a compelling case (i.e. sell), be creative, partner with other business owners, and be giving even if you feel like you don't have a lot to give.

Whoa! There's a limiting mindset: "I don't have a lot to give."

You've heard the clichés before: "Attitude is everything." "You reap what you sow." "If you think you can, you can. And if you think you can't, you're right."

Wait a minute. At one time these clichés weren't cliché at all, but rather were beautiful expressions of a powerful thought. People heard the words and were moved. Now we yawn.

What will you do? I suggest an attitude check to be sure you are ready for fusion marketing.

Action Item. Give yourself an attitude by answering these questions:

1. I'm optimistic, hopeful, and think abundantly. YES NO
2. I get scared easily and talk myself out of good ideas. YES NO
3. I'm eager to try new things to improve my effectiveness. YES NO
4. I think sales techniques are really manipulation in disguise. YES NO
5. I believe a good product or service will really sell itself. YES NO
6. I have tried fusion marketing before and it doesn't work. YES NO

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- 7. Every good idea I have takes more money than I have. YES NO
- 8. I can't start until I have every piece in place. YES NO
- 9. I am eager to collaborate with other business owners. YES NO
- 10. I can easily compile a list, with complete contact information, of all the targeted referral sources I'd like to cultivate. YES NO
- 11. Of the targeted referral sources I'd like to cultivate, this percent of them already know me.
 <25% 25% to 50% 50% to 75% >75%
- 12. I actively cultivate, through a variety of means, the relationships I have with referral sources that already know me. YES NO

Action Item. Review your answers. Do you need an attitude adjustment? If so, reflect on the questions this handy little acronym offers: P.T.F.A.R. You needn't compose. Just toss out the first adjectives that come to mind.

P.T.F.A.R. = are (My Programming affects my Thoughts. My Thoughts affect my Feelings. My Feelings affect my Actions. My Actions affect my Results.)

What is my **programming** or belief system about marketing or partnering with other businesses?

What **thoughts** about myself, my business or my opportunities arise when I reflect on my programming?

What **feelings** come over me as I consider thoughts about myself, my business or my opportunities?

How are my feelings influencing the **actions** I take in pursuit of my business goals? _____



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Action Item. If you feel empowered after this exercise, great! If you feel deflated, you're not alone. Try this profound but simple, six-part exercise developed by Byron Katie (www.thework.com)¹, to help you change a negative mindset. This works in every facet of your life, by the way.

FIRST. Write one negative thought that is holding you back. For example, "Marketing takes more money than I have."

SECOND. Ask yourself: "Is this thought true?" Answer yes or no.

YES NO

THIRD. Ask yourself: "Can I absolutely know it's true?" Answer yes or no.

YES NO

FOURTH. Ask yourself: "How do I react when I think that thought?" Refer to the P.T.F.A.R. exercise you just completed.

FIFTH. Ask yourself: "Who would I be without that thought?" In other words, how would your results change? How would things be different?

SIXTH. State the converse of your original thought. That is, turn your original thought, around. (My example, "Marketing takes more money than I have" would turn around to: "Marketing doesn't take more money than I have" OR "I have enough money for marketing" OR "I don't need more money for marketing.")

This is liberating work. Ask yourself if the turnaround thought is as true or more true than your original statement. The likely outcome is a loosened attachment to your original, limiting belief. You may see new options or new opportunities. Certainly new choices will emerge about what thoughts you choose to hold onto, and which you choose to release. We are, after all, infinite choice makers.

¹ Adapted from the work of Byron Katie, <http://www.thework.com/thework.asp>

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The Seven Sentence Marketing Plan.

The complete workbook on developing a seven sentence marketing plan is available as a free download on the homepage of www.steadySales.com.

For the purpose of developing your fusion marketing campaign, only a cursory introduction of the seven sentences is required. I will refer to these sentences and the concepts they represent later in the workbook.

Action Item. Use the spaces below to capture your initial thoughts only. The deceptively simple, seven sentence marketing plan requires careful consideration. Remember what Shakespeare said about brevity? "It is the soul of wit."

1. Your Objective. You can set a macro-objective for your business over the next quarter, or six months, or year. Or you can set a micro-objective for a particular campaign. I recommend short-term, campaign specific objectives. Just be sure that whatever you choose to do, it's S.M.A.R.T. E.g. Specific, Measurable, Acceptable,² Realistic, Time-bound?

2. Your Benefit. What's your unique sales/value proposition? What makes you special? Why should anyone care? This is where you craft your elevator pitch, or the benefits of a particular campaign, if you are writing a micro level plan.

3. Your Target. Who are you ideal customers? Whom do you wish to attract? This sentence will inform sentence five as you consider places and methods to touch your ideal customers.

² What the letter "A" stands for in S.M.A.R.T. is in dispute. Some people say attainable, others say actionable. I say it doesn't matter. I choose the word acceptable because whatever we do, we need internal buy-in or the buy-in of people we work with.

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4. Your Niche. What do you want your reputation to be? How do you want to be known? Is there a small slice of the business sector or consumer sector where you could stake your claim? For example, instead of being a destination for out-of-town visitors, could you be a destination for out-of-town visitors with children or singles or seniors?

5. Your Tools. What specific tactics will you use? There are hundreds of marketing tools at your disposal, many of them free. (The downloadable workbook at www.steadySales.com contains a listing of 100 such tools.) Not coincidentally, fusion marketing combines several of them.

6. Your Identity. What experience do you want customers to have? Do you look and act like you mean it? Your identity is more than a logo or service mark; it is your brand, and brand is another word for reputation.

7. Your Budget. Because a guerrilla marketer first spends time, energy, and creativity before spending money, I encourage you first to budget your time. This is also an important means of accountability.



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Fusion Marketing in Action

Nuclear fusion is the joining of two nuclei with the simultaneous release of massive energy. So it stands to reason that fusion marketing is the joining of two businesses, to generate a marketing impact greater than either of them could do alone.




The chiropractor fuses with a massage therapist. The caterer fuses with a wedding photographer. The sporting goods store fuses with the ski area. The day spa fuses with the hair salon.

Don't get confused by the term. Fusion marketing is known by lots of other names such as: Tie-ins, collaborative marketing, marketing partnerships, cross promotion, marketing alliances. Frankly, what you call fusion marketing doesn't matter. What matters is that you start to think big and creatively about potential fusion marketing partners, and how you'll collaborate.

Your fusion marketing partnership can be as simple as sharing mailing lists, or placing brochures at each other's checkout stands. It can also be as complex as a long-term relationship involving shared revenues, joint ventures, or sharing customer lists.

Perhaps your fusion marketing partnership goes no further than cultivating a trusting relationship with a superior center of influence (e.g. referral source), that repeatedly sends you qualified referrals simply because they know you, like you, and trust you'll bring value to their clients. Because you do a good job nurturing the relationship, your referral source expects nothing from you in terms of direct exchange. Imagine that; a referral source that gives with no expectation of recompense!

Action Item. Before you undertake your first step in the **5-step process**, get your creative juices flowing so you can expand your scope of what's possible. Write what each company gave and got in these exchanges.³

		
What did this company give and get?		What did this company give and get?

³ floor space, branding platform, interior and exterior signage, shared costs, captive audiences, good will.



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What did this company give and get?

What did this company give and get?



What did this company give and get?

What did this company give and get?



What did this company give and get?

What did this company give and get?



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Five Step Fusion Marketing Plan

Creating profitable fusion marketing partnerships is very simple, really. After setting your intention (step-1), you need only complete four other steps that you've likely already thought of or even started: **pick your partner** (step-2), **connect** (step-3), **ask for what you want** (step-4), and **stay in touch** (step-5). Easy, right?

Don't confuse simple with easy. Getting married has three simple steps too: Find a partner, fall in love and propose marriage, live together until death do you part. Easy, right?

Certain things come easily to some people, and with difficulty to others. In cultivating repeat referral relationships, you may struggle with approaching strangers but shine at staying in touch in meaningful and memorable ways. For other people, the opposite may be true.

Some people have deep networks of acquaintances they can tap for introductions to their target referral sources, and therefore, never need to approach a stranger. You may not have such a network, and will therefore need to introduce yourself directly.

You may be able to easily craft a short, compelling introductory letter. Others will struggle to turn a phrase. Without falling into analysis paralysis, look beneath the surface of each step in this workbook to identify the places you most need to sharpen skills or strengthen attitude.

Who exactly will you approach? What will you say? Why should they accept your overture? How will you handle any resistance? Think carefully about your answers to the questions following each step. Brainstorm. Be open to whacky ideas: Could a bus line or transit authority be your partner? Absolutely.

Step 1: Set Your Intention.

Energy follows intention. The more focused your intention, the more power you'll bring to bear in your efforts. What's your intention in creating a Fusion Marketing Partnership? For example:

- Is it a one-time occurrence such as a joint promotion or special event?
- Is it an event, or mailing you'd like to do on a regular basis, like quarterly or monthly?
- Is it the creation of a lead exchange or revenue sharing agreement?
- Is it the cultivation of one, or a few, referral relationships that send a steady stream of qualified referrals simply because you are the trusted "go-to" resource?



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Action Item. Pick from the list above or draw on your own ideas to write, specifically, what you intend to do. The more detail the better.

Step 1a: Set a deeper intention.

Action Item. Think of a service provider, or product that you would, or do, consistently recommend. Now answer these questions:

- How would you characterize the person or product? (E.g. reliable, friendly, trusted, etc.)

- How do you feel about the person or product? (E.g. I'd never use anyone/thing else. I really like him/her.)

Your answers to the above questions are likely the reasons you feel comfortable, indeed happy, to make the referral. If that's what you require to make a referral, do you think the sources you hope to cultivate expect the same? You bet they do.

Action Item. Describe the ways and frequency with which you currently engender such qualities in your targeted referral sources. In other words, write down how you cultivate the very qualities you expect in the people to whom you refer business.

(If you don't actively cultivate any referral relationships now, write down a few ways that you could imagine yourself doing so. For example, birthday or anniversary cards, seasonal cards, article clippings, thank you notes, etc. Good news - this process will jump-start step-5.)



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Step 2: Pick your power partners.

With whom might you have synergies? What other businesses have an interest in or connection to your target market and niche? (Remember sentence three and four of your seven sentence marketing plan?)

Don't get stifled if you don't have a connection. Go first to your "people I know" list, and see if you can find someone who knows someone at the place you want to partner. If you don't have a "people I know list", create one now. This list also serves as a stimulant to get you thinking about potential fusion partners.

Who is your child's scout leader?	From your old neighborhood?
Who is in your Rotary Club, Lions Club, Kiwanis, or...?	From your civic activities?
Who lives next door or across the street?	From your PTO
Who is your dentist?	Who enjoys your same hobbies or sports?
Who cuts your hair?	Who redecorated your home?
Who sells you furniture?	Where do you buy your clothing?
Who replaced your windows?	Who cleans your rugs?
Who is your chiropractor?	Who is your child's orthodontist?
From your school or college?	From your chamber of commerce?
Who sells you sporting goods?	Who books your travel plans?
Who moved your household goods?	Who sold you your car?
Where did you buy your spouse a jewelry item?	Who sold you your kitchen appliances?
Who do you order flowers from?	From the gym or spa?
From your synagogue or church?	Who is your veterinarian?
Through your spouse, family or children?	From your old job?
From your fraternity or club?	The list goes on and on and on and on...

If you don't know somebody who knows somebody don't worry. Once you finish the next step, you'll be brimming with enthusiasm and eager to turn strangers into partners with your win-win proposition.

Action Item. Now that you are thinking big and creatively, write the names of multiple fusion marketing partners that you could approach. (You won't approach them all, but you need a backup plan in case your first choice doesn't work out. You also want to create many opportunities to forge different partnerships.)

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Step 3: Approach and plant a seed.

Now that you have your target partners (e.g. referral sources) in mind, you've got to start a conversation to explore the potential for fit between you.

If you've been introduced by a mutual acquaintance you likely don't have to overcome any *strangeritus* or struggle with cold-call reluctance. You simply make a call and request a meeting. But you still need to be precise and concise with your language, more so if you've targeted a stranger (despite your best efforts to secure an introduction from any quarter of your life.)

What, precisely, you say is where this step may present a challenge.

Action Item. Write EXACTLY what you would say when the prospect, in a friendly way, asks you, "What would you like to meet about?" (HINT: You are not trying to sell or fully explain your ideas. You are trying to schedule a brief conversation to explore the potential for a fit between your businesses. Say as much.)

Action Item. Since voice mail is ubiquitous, next write exactly what you would say in a 30-second voice mail to the same person. (Good news: You will use this same script, albeit slightly modified, to send a letter or e-mail.)

At this step, you don't need to have your idea fully formulated because your partner may want to contribute his or her ideas. Still, you should come to the table prepared with good forethought.

What can you give? What can you get? Again, think big and creatively. Fusion marketing trades can be simple references to each other's services, such as on a web site or brochure rack. But that's mini-guerrilla. You should be able to go much deeper in crafting a mutually beneficial exchange. For example:



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A computer repair and support shop might be content to have discount coupons displayed at the local office supply store. While the store is content to have PC technicians distribute special offers during service calls. But that is just the tip of the iceberg. Might these two fusion marketing partners also share:

- Mentions in each other's newsletters
- Joint promotional offers, such as: "Tune up your computer with us, and receive a free ____, or ____% discount, or a chance to win ____ at the office supply store."
- Mutual frequent shopper programs
- A joint seminar
- Shared direct- mail campaign costs
- Cooperative advertising
- Reciprocal web site links
- Joint e-mail announcements
- Mail stuffers with monthly invoices
- A special event such as "Free walk-in, computer tune-up and training day" at the office supply store. This would drive foot traffic to the store, build mutual customer goodwill, expand customer databases, and drive sales - assuming each partner was clever about up selling and cross-selling (i.e. "Would you like to supersize that for \$.50 more?" And "Do you want fries with that Coke?")

If you don't have a big customer list, or a retail location, or a web site, or whatever; don't worry. Can you give money, time, labor, supplies, trades, or personnel?

If what you have to give feels skimpy in terms of tangible value compared to what you're asking of your partner, ask yourself: "Do I have a product or service that would add value to the customers of my fusion partner?" In other words, would your partner's customers be grateful he/she brought you to their attention because they'll benefit from knowing you.

Action Item. Use the space below to capture all the **things you could give** in the relationship

Action Item. Use the space below to capture all the things **you could ask for** in the relationship. Don't hold back. If you'd be satisfied with one thing, think how delighted you will be with two or three or four things.



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Action Item. Use the space below to capture ideas about a special event, or promotion that you could implement with your fusion marketing partner.

Step 4: Ask for what you want – think leverage.

This step is so obvious it's often overlooked. Get this: In study after study the main reason most sales people fail to win business is they fail to ask for it. Here is your chance to ask, and perhaps also get multiple flowers from one seed.

From your mailing lists, to your press contacts, to your various customer touch points, it's important to think about capturing every opportunity for leveraging your efforts.

For instance, in the example described in step-3, it makes sense that one of the partners call the local newspaper to pitch a story idea. Certainly a free computer troubleshooting day at the local office supply store would make a good human interest or business story.

I also hinted at the up-sell and cross-sell opportunities available to each partner if they were clever. How much additional effort would it take for the store owner to arrange a display of computer-related merchandise with various special offers? After all, on the day of the event, he or she will have a lot of visitors in the store likely to accept such offers. The computer technicians could handout special coupons of their own.

And if that's not enough leverage for you, wouldn't it also make sense to capture the names and contact information of all the customers who visit the store that day. What a perfect way to build one's customer and prospect database.

The beauty of this step is that it increases the power of your partnership exponentially. It's likely your original objective will grow. You'll see greater opportunities to capture revenue, customer data, build awareness, and deepen relationships. You will set your sights higher.



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Action Item. Review your answer to the last action item in step -3 (idea for your special event or promotion.) Expand upon it, and describe how you would apply leverage to get more out of your ideas.

Next, you must get clear about who does what, when and how. If your fusion marketing partner is a relative stranger, or you are bringing less tangible benefits to the relationship, then don't be afraid to do more of the heavy lifting. Nor should you be afraid to ask anything of them. After all, if you don't ask you don't get.

Action Item. Write the list of activities, accountabilities, timelines, and requirements in the partnership. If you have generated lots of ideas, and potential partners, now is the time to focus on just one.

Promotional Tip.

You must package your event, or special offer, or direct mail piece, or advertisement, or whatever it is you chose to do in your fusion marketing partnership. Package the product, sell the package.

Revisit sentence-two of your seven-sentence marketing plan: benefits. Use that sentence to inform your writing.

Good writing and design is an area of expertise unto itself. Don't be deterred by a lack of confidence in this step. If you can't hire a professional, remember these fundamentals:

- Tune in to everybody's favorite radio station: WIIFM. (What's In It for Me?)
- Be generous. Nobody gets excited about 10% off, and they barely raise an eyebrow at 20% off. **WARNING:** Don't get stuck thinking you have to offer a conventional discount. Doing so erodes



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profits, and profit should be one of your objectives. When you are developing your special offer think, “high perceived value to the customer and low cost to you.”

- Remember this acronym: A.I.D.A. (Attention. Interest. Desire. Action.) There is a maxim among copywriters that asks three questions. What is the purpose of the headline? Answer: to get them to read the sub headline. What is the purpose of the sub headline? Answer: to get them to read the body. And what is the purpose of the body? Answer: to get them to take action.

Action Item. Write the first draft of a promotional message for your flyer, or coupon, or advertisement, or postcard, or letter, or phone script, or billboard. You get the idea.

Step 5: Cultivate the relationship – think follow up

Remember the action item in Step 1-b (set a deeper intention)? If you completed that step, you already started what is arguably the most important step in this whole process; imprinting yourself in a meaningful and memorable way.

Think about the words “Cultivate a Relationship.” Whether you are considering your customers, or fusion marketing partners, both of those words require two important ingredients: time and attention.

Action Item. Revisit the cultivation ideas you generated in step-1, and add to that list here. (Birthday or anniversary cards, seasonal cards, article clippings, thank you notes, periodic phone calls, etc.)



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Review the action items in steps three and four to identify each customer touch point before, during and after your fusion marketing campaign, (no matter what the campaign is.) How will you make it easy for people to sign up, to buy, to take the next step, or refer others to do the same? Write your answers here.

Wow! You've got a lot on your plate. How will you manage the activity to which you've committed? What, precisely, will you do, and how often will you do it? (E.g. Will you send a thank you note immediately after your first meeting? Thereafter, will you connect weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly?)

Your final action item is to make a commitment to automating as many tasks as possible, especially the reminders that some relationship nurturing activity is due. Computerized contact management tools like ACT, or MS Outlook, or Goldmine, or even an excel spreadsheet are vital to this commitment.

Action Item. Describe your current state of affairs with respect to data capture and automation.

Action Item. Next, write down where you want to be in one year with respect to automation.



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Your Commitment to Action

- I know that I can be successful by spending time, energy, and creativity before spending money. The lack of money needn't kill my vision for a big, bold alliance.

YES NO

- I remain optimistic and energized because I know that boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.

YES NO

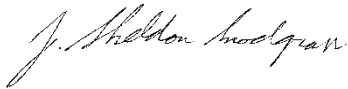
- I will take action immediately, because I know that action is the only bridge between the ideas I have and the results I want.

YES NO

- I will call Sheldon for a free consultation to see how he might help me execute.

YES NO

Have fun, make more money, and worry less.



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About the Author



I launched my professional career out of a Military cargo plane at the US Army Airborne School in 1987. After four years as an Army officer, I advanced through various professional roles in the sales and marketing arena. I cut my teeth as a commission-only sales representative in Boston where my street level success led to a promotion as a sales trainer for the world's third largest travel franchise company (Uniglobe Travel).

I then moved my young family to Western Massachusetts where I spearheaded the strategic marketing efforts of a spin-off entity for the largest utility company in New England (Northeast Utilities). I was then recruited to the technology sector, working first to create a sales organization in a boutique software company (REMI), then as an account executive for a global information technology consultancy (Covansys, stock ticker: cvns). When Covansys moved its Springfield branch to NYC, I remained in the Pioneer Valley, where I had discovered boundless opportunities to provide "big business" sales and marketing know-how to small companies.

Along the way I earned an MBA from UMass Amherst, and became a certified Entrepreneurial Business Planning Instructor through the NxLevel Educational Foundation. I'm also a Certified Guerrilla Marketing Coach, a designation earned in the only program of its kind endorsed by world famous Author, Jay Conrad Levinson, the creator of the Guerrilla Marketing series of books.

In 2002 I launched The Steady Sales Group. I now specialize in helping people close more sales, make more money and worry less.

To keep me focused on matters of the heart, I play constantly with my two young daughters, dog, and wonderful wife. I am also a PSIA Level II certified ski instructor and a white water rafting guide. I volunteer often when I am asked, and monthly act as a support group facilitator for the [Men's Resource Center of Western Massachusetts](#).

I look forward to giving you my best. Be well!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Sheldon Snodgrass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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If you have completed this workbook, congratulations! I encourage you now to schedule a date in your calendar two weeks hence so you can review what you have written. If you have not completed this workbook, schedule two hours in the next week and get started. Remember:

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit."
Aristotle

I wish you steady sales.



J. Sheldon Snodgrass, MBA & Certified Guerrilla Marketing Coach

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Sheldon Snodgrass".

Helping you worry less about closing more sales so you can make more money.