

# The Weekly Sales Beast

## The Devil is in the “Deal Tales”.

At 72, Tommy Goodwin, better known in our neighborhood as “Suntan Tommy” or “Tommy Rocker” received a slice of the fruit he earned from a sale he made almost 40 years ago. There is nothing to suggest that Tommy has ever been a salesperson and yet he has spent his life selling. He sells himself as a musician. And it’s an easy sell. His humility is only exceeded by his extraordinary talent for composing, playing and producing music. Not just any music. Rock music.

I’d known Tommy for five years before my wife and I actually went to see a performance that wasn’t by a fire on our beach in Nassau. The first sign that something was a little amiss was when the band began playing without a drummer tapping the sticks, yet the boys began in precise unison. The second was the 60 minutes of constant guitar shredding that was world class. And why not? It turns out that Tommy has played with a few quasi notables like Santana and Eric Clapton. Yeah, *THAT* Santana and Eric Clapton.

So, back in the day, Tommy was spending his time *selling* his sound to record producers and music executives at every turn. All of us who sell top-notch products can relate to the frustration of being a bridesmaid too many times. To help catapult a young Tommy, Eric Clapton recorded *Greyhound Bus*, music and lyrics-Tommy Goodwin, for inclusion on his next album. Tommy enthusiastically inked his first record deal. Clapton recorded sixteen tracks for a twelve-track album and *Greyhound Bus* hit the cutting room floor, thus reducing any hopes of Tommy seeing his face on the cover of The Rolling Stone.

Well, things like that happen and Tommy went on to have a long and prosperous career doing what he loves. Besides, at the time, no one would have expected Clapton would still be relevant this many years later, well no one except smart music executives. Last year, someone got the bright idea of digging up a bunch of tunes recorded, but not released by Clapton and put a record together, including *Greyhound Bus*.

After decades of collecting dust, Tommy got the satisfaction of listening to his creation played by the world-renowned Eric Clapton on the radio. That’s the little sliver of fruit I talked about earlier, because the main fruit, the royalty fruit, cometh not. Tommy got caught in the same web many of us get caught in, the details. I’ve sat around with enough salespeople to know everyone has a “Deal Tale” story, and for Tommy, it was the relinquishing his rights to the music.

When we’ve worked really hard for a piece of business, put in significant time investments and waited through those agonizing decision cycles, hearing the words “Yes, let’s move forward” is like a forty ton pressure valve being released. We all know that feeling, it’s euphoric. And we want to keep it forever. But now it’s details time; the terms and conditions, the “oh, one small thing Harvey”, the buyer’s last pivot.

With the sale squarely in your hands and the competitor pressure gone, guards get let down at a most vulnerable time. As hard as this might be to fathom, some buyers actually plan this event. It's the time when seemingly small amounts of putty get spread over the cracks of the deal, and almost never to your advantage. You can remove the word "almost" from the last sentence.

There is an odd transitional period between the elimination of competitors and agreeing on the finer deal points, and the sudden realization that not accepting the little add-ons or seemingly small points could submarine the whole proposal. So there is an over compensation to accommodate almost anything that will ensure the conclusion is reached with you in the drivers seat.

This is the exact moment in which your confidence and strength need to be at their peak. A good way to look at this aspect of the last dangling negotiations is to reinforce your company mission and the long approach you have to your customer relationships. Last minute customer maneuvers often cause, not just hurdles and nervous feeling, they can cause future resentments. And that likely doesn't fit well into your long-view customer strategy. But what an opportune time to layout your vision to the customer and cement your companies value premise.

This is the perfect moment to take control and reiterate the mutual benefits which company and customer will share into the future of this relationship. It's a reality check that establishes, and can ensure, full prosperity in this transaction and beyond.

The only thing worse than losing a deal after a basic agreement has been reached, is getting a deal that erodes the relationship.

"Deal Tales", should have happy endings.



**Please Note:**

The samples provided are intended to give a representation of the style and presentation of the learning points that comprise The Weekly Sales Beast Program. Their use is for the determination of the potential effectiveness this program would have on either yourself or your company sales force.