

# HMA

**HIDDEN MARKETING ASSETS**

# University

INTERVIEW SERIES

**How to Get More Clients For  
Your Business Or Practice In Days**

*Michael Senoff Interviews Consulting Expert Barry Maher*

 Michael Senoff's  
**HardToFind Seminars.com**

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://HardToFindSeminars.com).

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

*Michael Senoff*

Founder & CEO: [www.hardtfindseminars.com](http://www.hardtfindseminars.com)

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Any perceived slights of specific people or organizations is unintentional.

Barry: I would say this to any HMA consultant in the marketing field. You have the information. You have far more information than contacts and you can help this people and they desperately need your help. It's hard to get started, but it does work and it can work really well for you, and it can be a great service for your client.

## MUSIC

*Hi, this is Michael Senoff, and to all the HMA consultants here's an incredible interview I did with a gentleman named Barry Maher. Barry first made his mark as a world class salesperson. Then, as a manager and sales consultant helping improve clients productivity often dramatically. Selling Power Magazine declared Barry, "...to his powerful and famous client, Barry Maher is simply the best sales trainer in the business." His client lists range from ABC, Capital Cities and the American Management Association to Fuji Film and the National Lottery of Ireland to Verizon, not to mention Ameritech, Bell South and SBC. He's been featured in USA Today, the New York Times, Business Week, Success, the Wall Street Journal. Barry Maher is a sales pro who will show you how to turn your negatives into positive selling points, and even bragging points using entertaining, enlightening and even humorous examples and case studies. This is a two part recording enjoy*

Michael: Hey Barry, Mike Senoff here.

Barry: Hi Mike.

Michael: How did you first get started in business?

Barry: Actually, I first started out in business, I had my own advertising specialties company. It was just like a one man shop. Then, basically what I did was I went around selling, selling advertising specialties to anybody I could talk into buying them.

Michael: Were you an entrepreneurial nature?

Barry: It was my own business. We started up the business – myself and my partner. We ended up covering the entire state of California, then we spun out to another states. Then, I made the mistake of selling the business, and from then I went into the Yellow Pages as a Yellow Page consultant and a management consultant and a marketing consultant because that was my background.

Michael: You've got a consulting practice right now, right?

Barry: Yes.

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- Michael: How long have you been consulting for?
- Barry: Since 1986.
- Michael: Can we talk about your process of how you generate clients?
- Barry: Sure.
- Michael: How do you generate clients for your consulting? Are you still out there marketing yourself?
- Barry: Absolutely, much of what I do now is in the speaking business. So, I do seminars and workshops which means I'm hired by corporations and associations to come in. And, we do everything we can to get my name out there as much as possible. I mean, I've got these books – No Lies, Selling Brass, Legend, the book on Yellow Page Advertising. I've got those out there. We generate articles from those books, and I've gotten a system to send these out and get them placed in various publications all over the place, get them placed all over the Internet. We get my name out there as much as possible. Get as many interviews as possible like this one – video, TV. Whatever we can do to get my name out there. But, we're talking about speaking engagements, my assistant is also making a certain amount of phone calls every single day. When he gets spare time he's on the phone making those calls.
- Michael: You charge for these speaking engagements.
- Barry: Oh, yeah.
- Michael: What do you charge for these?
- Barry: Speakers make a very good livings. I make more money from the speaking than I make from writing.
- Michael: How about comparing consulting and speaking?
- Barry: Well, there part and parcel the same thing. Sometimes it's hard to tell if it's a speaking engagement or a consultation because it's the same thing. If I'm going in there and I'm doing an extended sales or marketing training, I might be in the company for a day, two days, three days, a week, several weeks. It's really hard to say whether that's a consultation or a speech or I might be in there and do a one hour keynote, and also do a follow-up consultation.

Michael: You can charge for the speaking engagements, and those speaking engagements – it’s a product in itself, but it’s also a lead generator for your consulting practice.

Barry: It’s a product for itself. Sometimes the consultations are a lead generator for the speaking engagements. They work hand in hand.

Michael: So, give me an example of how you landed a good consulting contract from a speaking engagement.

Barry: Well, I have a client who I’ve worked with a number of times over the years, and they called me at one point and he had saw an article that I had written in a publication probably in the late 90s. I probably written this article in the late ‘80s. People clip these things. They hang onto them, and they had tracked me down because in those days it wasn’t as easy to find people as it is now with the Internet and called me up and said, “Could you come in and do a seminar on advertising for my advertisers?” And, that seminar led to extended consulting. I’ve been consulting with them ever since. I’m on a retainer with them right now.

Michael: If you have someone interested in your consulting they say, “Barry I want you as my consultant.” Can you take us through how you structure the deal, how you charge for your services, fee versus retainer or contingency? Do you do any contingency as well?

Barry: No, I don’t do contingency. In fact, I never did do contingency.

Michael: Is there a reason why?

Barry: I don’t need to. I can charge, and I can get my fees, and I’ve never found a need for that. Now, if what I did didn’t work, we couldn’t do it for very long, but I have the expertise being an author on whatever the subject they call me in, they usually found out that I have this expertise to begin with. They’ve seen me in USA Today or New York Times or something like that, or if we’ve done a cold call we’ve made sure that they found about the fact that I was in USA Today or New York Times or whatever it is to establish the expertise. So, I can usually get my fee.

I’m not ashamed of my fee, and I don’t really mouse around them. People ask me if I’m expensive – absolutely! And, why do I charge so much? Because I can.

Michael: Can I ask you what you charge for a good size client?

Barry: It depends on the situation. These are all negotiated. I mean, I have set rate for fees, but it depends on the situation, and the first thing I do is I find out what their needs are. I don't go in there with a pre-packaged set of programs that I try to force upon them. I go in there and again, just like selling Yellow Page ads, I do a fact finding because they don't know very often what they want. They know there's an issue, or maybe they didn't even know there was an issue, maybe Steve called them up. They said, "You know, my marketing isn't what it could be." Or "My management strategies are maybe not what they could be." "Maybe this guy can tell us something." So, we have to tell them how they can buy my services, and the only way we can do that is finding out about them and how we might be able to help them. So, they might have called about something or we might have called them about something. I might end up doing something entirely different. I might end up doing a series of training.

Michael: I want to bring this up. Picture in front of you, you've got five somewhat new salespeople selling marketing consulting services, and obviously because they're new their confidence level isn't where yours is at. I tell people many times when you're quoting a fee the way these guys do, they say charge a per project basis, seven projects. They close on the first one – developing a USP for the client before anything and they charge anywhere between X and X per project. But, the confidence level – what would you say to these guys related to confidence and consistent with what they charge because many times their confidence may be so low, they may only charge \$250 a project or \$1,000 a project, where if their confidence was higher they could charge three or four thousand. What would you tell them if they were sitting in front of you?

Barry: Well, number one there's a couple of way – how do you get confidence? Let me ask you that.

Michael: Experience.

Barry: Bingo. How do you get experience?

Michael: Doing it.

Barry: Or you study, or you learn it. If I'm going out there and I'm selling my service to somebody, it's not fake it until you make it. You've got to do the research. You've got to actually become the expert that you're talking about. Once you become the expert, which is not hard to do because if you're dealing with small businessmen, most of them don't have a clue about marketing. You don't have to know much to know a whole lot more than they do. You don't have to know much to be able to help them. When I first started out selling advertising specialties, I knew very, very little



about advertising. I took a couple courses here and there, but I knew an infinite amount more than they did and I helped them in the areas where I knew I can help them. As I gained more expertise, I moved into those other areas.

Now, one of the things people have a hard time realizing is that it's easier to sell at a higher fee very often than when it is when you start cutting price. You don't want people buying just on your fee. I mean, who do you want? Do you want a marketing consultant that has to charge \$250 to do a project, or a marketing consultant that's going to charge you \$2,500 to do the same project? All things being neutral, how good can that marketing consultant that's taking \$250 be?

Michael: So, from your experience, even with the higher price, you sometimes get a better result?

Barry: Almost always get a better result. Now, you've got to establish value. I can't say, "Hey, I'm brand new in the business. I've never done this before. I'd like to try it out on you. I'm going to charge you top fee."

Michael: Did your fees go up as your confidence increased?

Barry: Absolutely.

Michael: What did you start at?

Barry: Since I wrote the book, I already spent literally years finding out about the subject plus I spent years in advertising and marketing. So, I had a certain expertise already. I started out, I think at \$95 an hour. A lot of the times, I didn't get \$95 an hour. I'd say, "This is going to be \$95 an hour." And, I'd have to put so much work into it that I'd have charge them for one hour, and I'd have done four hours of work because if I did something where I didn't have the expertise I had to gain the expertise.

Michael: So, your per hour fee, I'm sure is substantially more than that.

Barry: It is substantially more than that now – many, many times more than that. Obviously, if I'm on a weekly basis or something like that, it's still high, but it's not what it would be for a keynote or something like that.

Michael: If these five guys were in front of you, and they were going out making calls, making sales call on the small business owner – a guy who's still running his business, who's at the shop, who's working it – from your experience, how would you identify the mindset of that business owner if



you're coming in as a marketing consultant? Could you categorize the mindset of the business owner?

Barry: Yeah, absolutely. It's the problem that I first went out with when I first became a Yellow Page consultant. When we first sold the Yellow Page book – I had an agent at the time because I'd written other books – he sold this book to the original publisher. We thought we were going to sell millions of copies of this thing because there's five million advertisers out there that advertise in the Yellow Pages and none of them had a clue, and there's all these competing directories, and for a number of reasons. They're all spending hundreds of dollars a month on Yellow Pages, and the book sold for \$19.95. So, we could not imagine why anybody who's spending \$300 a month and up on Yellow Pages, and this is almost 20 years ago, wouldn't spend \$19.95 for a book. Right? So, it's a no-brainer, especially since this book is years of research going into this book and it was the best information on a subject they knew nothing about.

Guess what? They didn't know they knew nothing about it, and they didn't care. We had to generate the business just like anything else. These people don't realize they use marketing. They don't realize they use advertising. They do it on the smallest level they can possibly imagine. Most of them are not spending nearly enough money on marketing and advertising because they don't know that. If you ask them to spend a hundred bucks, it's like your taking money out of their back pocket.

They really have the mindset that, "Well, I'm going to put my sign out there. I'm going to spend money on office furniture. I'm going pay my help. I'm going to buy the best equipment. I'm going to do this stuff." Then when it comes to marketing and advertising, it's the first thing they cut or the first thing they don't spend money on when they open the doors. You're really got to educate them on the value of getting people in there, and the best way to do that is to talk about the customers you're going to bring them, how it's going to change their lives, how it's going to make a difference in their business.

Michael: In the first chapter of your book, you talk about making the skeleton dance. What does that mean?

Barry: Well, it comes from a quote from George Bernard Shaw you can't get rid of the family skeleton, you might as well make it dance. Now, we've all got negatives in every thing we're presenting against the negative idea. So, what can you do? You can hide them. You can basically lie to the customer, hide them. You can mealy mouse them on them and try to slip them by and not notice, or you can bring them out and brag about them. It's a lot easier to bring them out and brag about them just like I did a

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minute ago when I was talking about my fees. Are my fees expensive? Absolutely. Why do I charge so much? Because I can – because my clients aren't just willing to pay these kinds of rate, they're happy to pay them for the kind of results I generate.

So, I'm taking a negative which is this huge negative we all think about – price, "Oh my gosh, price.", and turning it into a positive. Somebody asks me about my price, "Yeah, they're expensive." I'm thinking of raising them and brag about the negative.

Michael: Chapter two, you are your most important customer. Can you expand on that?

Barry: It's the example you were talking about a moment ago – confidence, confidence. If I don't believe in myself, which is what I'm selling. If I don't believe in whatever my product's may be – in this case marketing consulting – if I can't sell it to myself, how am I going to sell it to somebody else? I might be able to if I'm a really good actor, if I'm a really good salesman, but I'm not going to feel good about. You've got to believe in it yourself. And, how do you believe in it yourself? By becoming everything you're claiming to be, and that's not easy. That's why you have to do the research, and you have to become good at it. You might have to do a couple of gigs before you get good at it.

Michael: You've got a protocol set up here. Step one – become your most difficult prospect.

Barry: Exactly, because you want to ask all the questions that the customer is going to ask, that the client is going to ask. You've got to sell yourself thoroughly. Again, it's the same thing. You've got to be completely convinced. That way if the client throws you an objection, you're going to have an answer to it. If you have that objection in your own head, and you're going to secretly agree with him, "Hey you're too expensive." You're thinking, "Yeah I am. I should only be charging \$25 an hour." When he says, "You're too expensive." You're going to flinch.

In my case, if I'm thinking he says, "You're too expensive." I say, "I'm \$250 an hour", or whatever I might say. I'm going to say, "Hey, for the results I can generate for you. The difference I can make in your business, you've got to be kidding me."

Somebody was posting an RFP for a keynote the other day, and I won't say the name of the company, but it's a nationally known company. And, they wanted a motivational speaker, which is one of the things I do – sales motivationally speaking – to come in there, address all their retail sales

reps who were calling on retail customers all around the country, and have them take their product to \$100 million a year, which is their goal, and this was on their RFP. Do you know what they wanted to pay that keynote speaker?

Michael: What?

Barry: \$500. Absolutely ludicrous, but if I didn't have the confidence that I could go in there and talk to those people and make a difference in the way they were presenting what they were presenting and help them meet that \$100 million goal. Hey, they did have people lined-up, and talked to a woman who was serious about it. I called her up and I said, "Are you getting any response to this thing?" And, she says, "I've got people lined up." Because all those motivational speakers have thought they were worth \$500.

Now, I don't know if I want a salesperson or a sales trainer or a sales motivational speaker who can't sell their own services for more than \$500 trying to motivate my people to get them to \$100 million goal.

Michael: Can you tell me two stories? One of the most exciting stories you can think of that first pops into your head about you landing a client or obtaining a client that really excited you, and number two a nightmare client story.

Barry: A client that really excited me?

Michael: Just anytime in your career, that you're like, "Man, yeah, I got that client" it just ended up being financially rewarding and fulfilling.

Barry: Let me tell you something that applies to the issue of confidence. I first started out doing motivational speaking and what I do is I'm not quite sure if I can be classified motivational. We call it real world reality based motivation is we try to base the motivation on the real world rather than, "Let's all think happy thoughts and it will just be wonderful." I was dealing with management issues and marketing issues in that way, and put together a presentation.

Now, I had always done a really nuts and bolts presentation to that point – marketing, sales, Yellow Pages, these kinds of things communication – and this was kind of a leap for me in terms of actually presenting it to people.

Now, the first time I did it, I did it for a very major corporation, and not only did for a major corporation, but I did it for their senior executives, and to say I was nervous was really an understatement. I was extremely

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nervous because again, these are very sharp, very senior people, and I'm doing something that I've never really done before. This was going into more strategies – the kind of strategies we're talking about now. The kind of strategies be your own guru, change the scale, make the skeleton dance, and it was also inspirational, motivational.

So, it was a very different thing from, "When you say, this will get you this on a sales call." Or design your Yellow Page ad, put a headline in it, put a good illustration in it – that kind of thing.

So, I was extremely nervous particularly being with the senior level people because I was going to be telling them all how to manage their own business, and these people were 20, 30 years of managing.

Now, when that presentation finished, and there was a dead silence. I finished the presentation. I thought it had gone really well, but as I finished it said, "I'm Barry Maher. Thank you very much." And, there was dead silence, and it was one of these deals that my heart dropped into my stomach. And, then somebody started clapping, and the entire group stood up and gave me a standing ovation. That was probably the most satisfying moment I had as a consultant or as a speaker because the confidence level thing. I realized that I had done. I could do it, and then of course when they hired me for me gigs, that was icing on the cake. I established a relationship with these people.

I can remember going in the limousine back to the airport after that with another speaker who had been on before me, and I can just remember the feeling, the total satisfaction of, "Yeah, I set out to do this", and at least at that moment it really worked. So, far it's worked since then and hopefully it will keep working.

Michael: Okay, great. And, a nightmare client.

Barry: A nightmare client – same presentation, quite a bit after that one I did. I went in there and I had a client who wanted me just to work with their sales force. They're a nationally known company, or it was a branch of a nationally known company. And, they were very weird about hiring me. They looked at my website. They saw my credentials and everything, and they kept saying, "Are you going to talk about this? Are you going to talk about that?" I said, "I'll talk about whatever you want so you can get the information." They said, "We really need to see you." So, we tried to arrange a time they could see me. There was time they could come and see me, but they hired me anyway. I gave them particularly good rates, but they're part of a national organization, and I figured I could deal with

many of their – but, they were very, very paranoid. I couldn't quite put my finger on it.

So, they said, “We want you to give a second training, too.” So, again, it was one of these deals that I cut my own price. It's not by cutting the price I was giving them a second training, and I probably shouldn't have but it was in my hometown, and it was an easy thing to do, and again, I wanted to work with these people.

So, I said, “I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll do the first session. I'll do my normal session, and for the second workshop, I will have a discussion with these people. You give me the agenda, and I'll go in there and I'll talk about sales, and we'll talk about whatever you want.”

Now, two days from the presentation, I still haven't got the agenda from these people for the second session. So, this guy sends me this email which basically says, “Just go in there and talk about sales.” So, I go in and I do the presentation. It goes over well. I get a standing ovation. I got a nice ovation. People came up to me afterwards. I did the sales presentation. This guy that had hired me was there, and I could see he wasn't liking what I was talking about. People were asking me – they brought in their secretarial staff which they didn't tell me until later, and people were asking me really, really basic questions on sales. I mean, very, very basic.

So, I'm thinking, “Who am I talking to here?” And, I'm dealing with these basic questions. At one point, the person who had hired me ask me a specific question and it was absolutely wrong that he was talking about. It was something like, basically about being forthcoming with the client. He was trying to get me to say that maybe the best way to deal with a client was to ignore this particular objection the customer had. This would have killed any possible sale. As tactfully as I could, I contradicted him in front of his group of people. Well, the session went over and ended. I wasn't happy with it. I don't think the people in the room were happy with it, and this guy blasted me afterward. I mean not there in person. He sent me a letter that went on for probably five pages afterwards about how unprofessional I was, how I hadn't been prepared, how the session had been on an extremely, extremely basic level, and how my information was just flat out incorrect that I was giving them.

Now, the problem was that I had contradicted him and not tactfully. I had gone into the presentation and I hadn't made sure that I was properly prepared. I had allowed them to slide by without setting the proper agenda. I had allowed them to slide by without letting me know just who was in the room because apparently there was a lot of support staff, but there

were all sorts of senior salespeople who were completely board with the presentation.

Michael: So, what's the lesson in that if you were to talk to those five consultants sitting in front of you getting ready to go into a business and help them with their marketing consulting and they may have to go in front of the salespeople and do a sales presentation to show them how to upsell and increase their sales because there's going to be some paranoid people on the other end, "Who is this consultant – this independent marketing consulting? What are they going to do?" Are they fearful of losing their jobs? Do you know what I'm saying?

Barry: Yes, and they absolutely should be. They have a right to be paranoid. They have a right to be concerned, and they should do what I didn't do. What I did because I was very busy, was I had prepared the first presentation and that went over fine. I allowed them to take responsibility for preparing the second presentation, and when it wasn't coming through like it should have, I didn't follow up and make sure that it was done and done correctly. I didn't find out who was going to be there. I just assumed that it was just going to be salespeople. I didn't have the questions. I didn't pin this person down on the material that was going to be covered when they didn't give me the material. Even though they said they were going to take care of it, I was the one standing at the front of the room. I was the one who was presenting a presentation they weren't happy with at the end of the day. So, I should have taken responsibility to make sure that it was done and done properly, even though he said he was going to do it.

Michael: I want to get back to your protocol. Step five – more expensive, less reliable and proud of it.

Barry: Absolutely. Again, bragging about the negative. You've got a product out there. Not everybody can have the best product in the market place. Now, maybe your product is more expensive, maybe it's less reliable, but I can brag about that negative. I can brag about virtually any negative. If the customer is right or the prospect is right about their objections, granted. Are our machines more expensive? Absolutely. Are they less reliable? Absolutely. But, look we're the leaders in the marketplace. Why do you think that happens in spite of the fact that we're more expensive, in spite of the fact that we're less reliable, because blah, blah, blah, and then you give all the reasons.

Michael: Back it up with reasons why.

Barry: Back it up with the reasons why. You know the greatest thing about a negative is instills such incredible credibility. Yes, our machines are less



reliable than the competition's – and, I won't give you the name of the company. I'm dealing with a company that sells very sophisticated technical equipment, and they had a situation where virtually every piece of their technical equipment that they sold to a government agency didn't work, and they brag about that. Absolutely they didn't work, and every single one of them failed, but yet what did we do about that? We got on the situation immediately. We found out the problem. We fixed it so it will never happen again.

So, the problem's not that the product had problems, every product has problems, every program has problems. What did we do about it? How did we handle it? What did we learn from it? Now, that's why we're the leader in the industry. We're the leader in the industry not just in spite of that problem, but because of those kinds of problems and how we deal with them.

Michael: Let's skip ahead. That's well stated. When the truth kills the sale. What's that mean?

Barry: Once in a while, the truth kills the sale. This is about selling the idea to yourself, too. If I can't tell the truth and still make the sale, then I've got to find a way to change that truth. Michael, you know, I really don't know much about marketing. Yeah, Michael, I'm really expensive. Would you like to hire me? If I can't find a way to tell the truth and still make the sale, I have to change the truth. I have to become more of an expert. I have to change my prices so that I really believe that it's a great deal I'm giving the customer. It doesn't have to be the best possible deal. It just has to be a deal that I can believe in.

When the truth kills the sale, you've got to change that truth, and there are a lot of ways of doing that. I wouldn't suggest changing prices. That would be one of the last things I do because then you're just selling price. Somebody can always beat you on price. I suggest changing the value, throwing in a little bit more, giving a little extra, becoming more of an expert. So, you can tell the truth. You can brag about whatever that's negative, it's my fee, and still close the sale.

Michael: Here's another section – Tell, Sell the Whole Story. What's that saying – the more you tell the more you sell?

Barry: I think that's an old salesman marketing thing, and there's a certain amount of truth to that. When I was a kid, I was one of these kids that sold everything from the time I was five. I sold greeting cards door to door to win a bike or whatever it is.



Michael: Were you number one then?

Barry: Yeah, I was annoying. You go to the neighbor's house and you sell them everything.

Michael: I did it, too.

Barry: So, you know the drill. Now, when I was 16 the first real job I had was selling magazine subscriptions. They take a bunch of us kids and they'd ship us over to some distance neighborhood and they'd set up loose on the poor souls that lived there. "Hi, I'm Barry, one of the boys in the neighborhood." I was Barry, and I was a boy, and I was in the neighborhood, but I didn't live there. Not the way to sell, and I should've known better.

Anyway, in the neighborhoods where we would work, we'd sometimes encounter people we didn't want to waste our valuable 16 year old time pitching because they'd be drunk or they'd be underage or they'd be crazy, or it'd be pretty clear they'd never pass the credit check. The magazines were about \$360 and this is back in the mid-'60s. They were really expensive. So, in order to get rid of one of these people as quickly as possible, you simply had to ask them one question which was, "Would you like to buy some magazines?" Exactly what we're selling. Nobody ever said yes. Nobody even said maybe. Nobody even asked what magazines we were selling. They just said no and walked away, and a lot of people when they're selling their services, in effect, ask their customers if they'd like to buy some magazines, would you like some marketing consulting? "I'm doing marketing consulting now. I think I can really help you out. Are you interested?" Of course they're not interested. You've got to tell them. You've got to sell them the whole story.

Now, the problem is that means to one extent or another, you've got to do some kind of presentation after you do your fact finding. After you've established interest and have done your fact finding, you've got to do some kind of a presentation, and people say, "Well, I don't want to do a presentation." Well, what's a presentation? A presentation is just all the information you want these people to have before they make that decision whether or not to do business with you. If you can't give them that information, you're not going to give them the right decision. So, you need to make this presentation, and it shouldn't be, "Okay, now I'm going to orate for 15 minutes." Like I'm doing here. It should be a conversation.

Michael: Now, I'm sure you know – give me the pitch when you knocked on the door to sell that package of magazines.

Barry: I started out, “Hi, I’m Barry one of the boys in your neighborhood. We’re taking a survey to see which ones are the most popular magazines.” And, I’d give them this chart, and they’d check on the chart which magazines they liked, and then I’d go into my pitch about how I was developing a route in the neighborhood. Well, the magazines were mailed to the neighborhood. I was never developing a route. It really wasn’t the way to sell.

Michael: That’s a great story. I can totally relate to that. I had cut lawns on knocked on doors. I knocked on a lot of doors myself.

Barry: Yeah, I did that, too. I would do it and then I’d sell the jobs to every kid.

Michael: There you go.

Barry: I didn’t like mowing the lawns, but I liked getting the jobs.

Michael: That’s great. I’m going to move on a little bit here. Becoming an expert witness.

Barry: It goes on the same lines that we talked about before. Now, the expert witness thing if any of your people have ever done any expert witnessing, it’s a really great thing. You get to sit up in this little front throne right in front of the entire room of people. They hang on every word, and they even transcribe it for posterity. The problem is that after the attorney on the other side tosses you all the softball questions he’s going to toss you and then the attorney on the other side gets his chance, which is the cross examination. And, during the cross examination, this guy gets you to try to contradict everything you said before.

Now, the tendency as an expert is to contest every one of the points that he’s trying to get you to make. All right? I mean, afterall, you’re the expert, they doubt your position. You’ve delivered the word of God, and this guy’s attacking it. So, by extension, he’s attacking you, maybe even attacking God, right? The first thing the attorneys on the other side will tell you is if you contest every one of the points he’s trying to get you to make, you’re going to lose all credibility as an impartial expert.

Now, are you impartial? Everyone in the courtroom knows you’re being paid big bucks from the side you’re on. But, the more you appear to be an instrument of objective credibility, an impartial expert, the more effective the points you need to make will be.

So, when people are selling and when people are promoting themselves, they always want to present themselves as an expert witness. They make

their best possible case. I used to say, “Hey, I don’t want you to forget I’m on commission here. The more you spend the more I make. Now, let me tell you why you need to be spending more and making me more money.” So, I make my best possible case and I don’t pretend not to be an advocate if I’m an advocate. I don’t have to.

Then, I grant the opposition which is not the person I’m trying to sell. They’re never the opposition. The opposition is the doubting Thomas in the mind of that person to clamp that doubting Thomas, his legitimate points. When he’s right, he’s right. If I can say to the customer, “You’re absolutely right about that, all our cameras failed on that, and what did we do about it? You’re absolutely right. My rates are expensive.” If I can say that, I’ve granted his legitimate point, something he knows is right anyway, and all the rest of my points gain massive credibility. Rather than pretending an offering him the only perfect service that’s existed since the beginning of time.

Michael: It all comes down to credibility and believability.

Barry: It all comes down to credibility and believability, and the best way to be credible is to tell the truth.

Michael: Tell me how did you get this philosophy. Is this something that just evolved through your experience?

Barry: Absolutely. At first, you’re afraid, and I’ve done so many sales call, so much marketing in my life, but first you’re afraid to bring out these points, and then as you get more and more confident, you realize, “Hey, I can say these things. It not only doesn’t hurt, he helps, and if it hurts, isn’t it much better to get out this problem now?” If the person’s got a problem with whatever issue you’re trying to hide, isn’t it better to get it on the table now then to leave them to discover it later when you’re not around and you’re doing to have no influence over the situation? It’s much easier to deal with these things now even if it does create a problem, and if you do it right it doesn’t create a problem, it increases your credibility.

Michael: Great, Sex, Rejection and Several Assorted Butts. What’s this about?

Barry: That’s a catchall chapter. Sex – one of the things I say when I see people losing their attention, which of course they never do, towards the end of a keynote, one of the things I say is, “The next section can either be about sex or it can be about dating.” And, everybody’s eyes light up. Sometimes I say dating because some parts of the country, they may not want me to say sex. So, when I say dating only one eye lights up, but it gets their attention. So, what I tell people when I’m out there is, “Your business,

marketing consulting, or any other business, is kind of like sex. If you're not enjoying it, you're probably not doing it right."

Warren Buffet said he worried about people who are doing something in their lives that they didn't enjoy, but hoped that in the future they did and would do something that they really like. He said, "That's like putting off sex until your old age. It's not a good idea." That's the idea of enjoyment.

Now, the sorry butt thing, I just wrote an article about this for my newsletter and I think it's in my book The very best situation where I had with a customer one time, and I walked in there and I was pitching him whatever I was pitching him. I gave him all the reasons why he should buy the service, and I was right, he should've bought the thing. I gave him all the reasons why it was an excellent value, and I was right about that. I gave him all the reasons why he should buy it now, and I was right about that. But, he said, "You know, I've really got to think about it. I'm really not ready to make a decision right now." And, I said, "Well, I haven't given you the best reason at this point." And, he said, "Well, what's the best reason." I said, "Because getting it right now is the quickest way to get my sorry butt out of your office." And, he said, "Sold."

Michael: That's great.

Barry: So, when I started telling people that story around the office it became, "Barry Maher's Sorry Butt Close."

Michael: That's like Zig Zigler's – when I first started in sales, I studied all his closes, and Zig Zigler's one said, "When I get around to it. I'll do it." And, he had "a round toit", "Here's a round toit, now you've got it, let's do it."

Barry: Exactly, humor is a great way to make your point, and it's a great marketing tool. It can be a great sales tool if you use it effectively. It can be a disaster if you use it ineffectively.

Michael: Let's go to closing made simple, give it a shot.

Barry: And, that is simply trying to get through all the miasma of possible closes that the sales trainer sometimes generally teach. There are thousands and thousands of different closes. People always say, "Which ones the best?" None of them is the best. Which one works at each particular time is the best one, and there are thousands of them. I tend to go with the assumed close where you just go ahead and you go through until somebody stops you, and if they don't stop you, you close on them, and that's fine. But, one of the closes that works best for me is ask them, ask for the order.

There's a sales message that goes, "Once you ask them, you order. Whoever speaks next, loses."

Now, this is a cliché which I hate for a couple of reasons. Number one, because it implies that if I get the sale the person that I'm selling it to is a loser, and that if he doesn't buy it from me, then I'm a loser. I would like to think that we both are succeeding if I make the sale. I'm selling the right product at the right price to the right person at the right time. Hopefully, he's going to win by buying the product, and he's going to lose if he doesn't do it. So, I really hate that idea.

The second thing is that it isn't necessarily true. The inexperienced salespeople very often say, "You know my marketing consultants and service is blah, blah, blah, it's going to be this much, this much, this much. Can we get started today?" or whatever, they ask their closing question. Now, what they do very often because they don't want to hear the answer or they're afraid that the answer is going to be no, is they start talking again right away, and they never give the customer a chance to say yes or no, and that's called talking over the close, and it's a very, very bad idea because right away the customer sees that you're not expecting them to buy it, and he starts thinking of all those reasons, even if he's about to say yes, all the reasons why he shouldn't buy it. But, if you ask your closing question, whatever it may be, "Would you like to start on Tuesday? Or would you like to start the week after next?" And, then you wait, and then you pause, and he's thinking. It's one of the most effective closes I've ever found is while he's thinking it over, and he's puzzling in his mind, I just say, "Give it a shot." It is astonishing how often that kind of thing works. It's a little nudge. If it's done correctly, if it's done after he's had some time to think about, and if it's done with the complete confidence that you know that it's the best possible deal that you're offering this person a great deal.

Michael: How about the walk back close?

Barry: Walk back close is another one of those things that a salespeople are told that they never do. After you make the sale, you walk out and you don't come back in because you know he might be having buyer's remorse or she might be having buyer's remorse, and if you walk back in because you forgot your hat or this, that or the other thing, and the first thing they say is, "You know, I've been thinking about that, and maybe we shouldn't start this now. Maybe we should think about it and then give it a couple of months or something."

Salespeople, very often are afraid to talk to the customer again after they made the sales for a while. At least until it's solid in their hand or they've

cash the check or whatever. If they've sold the product correctly, if they closed with full disclosure, if they've bragged about the negatives and getting everything on the table, there's absolutely no reason why they shouldn't be able to walk in immediately.

One of the things that I would sometimes do when I was selling is I would get back to the car after walking into the merchant or retailer, and I would think, "You know, he bought whatever he bought, but he really should have got the next size up, the next program up, it would've worked a lot better for him. I really gave up on that. I took the easy sale what he was going to buy, rather than what he really needed." And, then I would walk back in, because it would drive me nuts. I would walk back in right away. I'd go back in and I'd say, "You know I blew it. Obviously I didn't do a very good job of explaining that to you because you're getting this, this and this. What you really need is blah, blah, blah." It's astonishing how often I ended up selling it to them.

Michael: They appreciate it.

Barry: They appreciated that, and if I didn't, I don't think I could ever think of a case where walking cost me a sale.

Michael: Tell me do you have a guarantee with your consulting services and your speaking engagements?

Barry: No, and I'll tell you why I don't. I use to work with a telemarketing company and they would sell my consulting services when I didn't have anything else going on, and I would pay them a percentage, and I offered a guarantee because I am absolutely sure particularly in this case of what I was selling, but this was going to save people and make them many, many times what they were spending. In all the time I was doing this, I had one guy who asked for his money back. Now, when he asked for his money back, he absolutely denigrated the product. He lied. He said, "You didn't do what you promised you do, blah, blah, blah, blah. I wanted you to do this, that, and the other thing." I did exactly what I promised to do.

I offered to redo it and give him all these other services free. Now, we're talking about a small amount of money here. It wasn't the point. I wanted him to be a satisfied customer. Again, he threatened this, that or the other thing. He was sure I was going to give this money back, which I was happy to do because I wanted him to be happy. He basically sold himself because of that guarantee on the fact that I did a lousy job, that I was unscrupulous, and I was this, that and the other thing so he could justify getting his money back because he already had the consultation.



Then, he went ahead, and it was in the Yellow Pages so I could see it. It went ahead in the next year's directory, and did exactly what I had told him to do on the consultation.

Michael: Sure, you're always going to get people like that.

Barry: I was so irritated by that that I said that I was dropping the guarantee because I don't want people to sell themselves against my services, and that's why I don't do that. I don't want to give people a reason to profit by having a bad idea. It may not be something I stay with, or I may change my mind on that.

Michael: Yeah, it's probably an emotional thing.

Barry: It really was.

Michael: You're always going to get people like that.

Barry: I'm always going to people like that. I've only gotten one in the 20 years I've been consulting, but it was enough that I said – I've never had anybody ask for their money back. If somebody did I'd probably give it to the, but I thought I was giving him a reason to be negative about my product by offering him a chance to get his money back. I'm sure he felt perfectly good about what he was doing, but then he changed his mind and did exactly what I told him to do.

Michael: Does this ring a bell – hiding the rotten rhino?

Barry: Yeah, hiding the rotten rhino is about bragging about the negative. There's negatives in every situation. No matter what we do, we're never going to be able to get rid of all them like we've been talking about, and there's a couple of ways you can present negatives. You can present them like what I call hidden rhino sales rep.

Now, with the hidden rhino sales rep - if there's a rotting rhinoceros in the well that provides the drinking water of that country estate that they're trying to sell you, they're going to do their very best to try and keep that potential negative hidden. If you mention the nasty smell you notice, they never smell anything. And, if you persist, they're going to do something to change the subject to distract you. This in sales is known as the "Hey, look there's Elvis" strategy, right?

Now, hiding the rotting rhino can get the sale. There's no question about that. It's why so many inferior managers, so many inferior marketing people, so many inferior advertising people, so many inferior sales people



use this religiously. But, hidden rhinos have an annoying way of floating back to the surface usually sooner rather than later, and the company or the sales person that doesn't acknowledge it is going to lose all credibility, and they're going to lose the sale. So, you never want to do that.

Michael: What advice would you give these marketing consultants in ways and a couple techniques on how to control the sales calls?

Barry: Bingo! And, that's exactly right, control the sales call. How to control the sales call? You don't control the sales call by talking over the customer. You don't control the sales call by ignoring what they're saying. You control it by asking questions. Okay, to start off with. First you control it by creating a niche, creating a mark which gets his attention or her attention. Then, you ask the right questions and control it that way. Then, it goes into the idea of telling and selling the whole story. I've got a presentation, and my presentation is not going to look like the kind of speeches I've been giving during this interview. It's going to look and sound like a conversation because it has to be interactive, but I know exactly all the points that I want to make in that a conversation.

The potential customer does not know the points I want to make, and he's not going to follow my outline for getting all that information in there. So, he's going to go off on tangents. I'm going to deal with that tangent in whatever way I choose to deal with it, either answer it, "I'm getting there" or I might say, "Oh, that's a best part. I'm getting to that in just a moment, but let me talk about" and then I go right back into the point in the presentation that I left because I know these points. I have them in the order in my head that I want to cover them, and every time he takes me on a tangent I deal with that tangent right away either by answering it, never by ignoring it, or by dealing with it, "I'm getting to that in just a moment let me cover this." Something like that, and then I go right back into the point of the presentation where I left off. So, by the end of the time I've gotten through that, I've gotten in all the information I need to get in.

Now, once in a while, you'll encounter somebody who's a real driver, and they will not let you go through your point. I'm talking about what he wants to talk about and he's controlling the conversation. Now, obviously, you can't fight with a customer. You don't win when you fight with a customer or prospect, but you deal with whatever points he insists upon dealing on, and then you work in your points gradually during the course of the conversation whatever way you can. Usually, by the end of the conversation, if you have created enough interest, you can get back into your presentation in the order that you want to do it, or you can work in your own points just in the course of the conversation.

Michael: You've worked with small business and medium businesses, and certainly looking at your list of clients, you've worked with very large businesses. What would you tell a marketing consultant if he did start working with the larger businesses what he can expect and the difference between the small Mom and Pop owner and the larger business with maybe more layers?

Barry: That's exactly right, it's more layers. What you may find out when you're dealing with a larger company is except for the issues of getting a decisions made in a timely basis, which can take forever, or getting payments which tend to take a while, is what you might actually be dealing with in a number of small companies. A lot of times when I work with a company, and I did a presentation fairly recently for Merck, and I wasn't dealing with Merck all together, the entire Merck Company of Merck Pharmaceuticals, which is probably 30-40-50 thousand people, maybe more than that. I was dealing with the marketing people at Merck. So, that's one branch within Merck. The nice thing about that is I can also sell my services to sales people within Merck, to the PhDs that are in charge of the sales people at Merck, all these different groups.

Actually, a large company can be a community of small companies within there all of which are opportunities for selling your services.

Michael: How do you charge as far as your fees? You want the money up front? Do you get it after your presentation? What do you find works and doesn't work in reference to getting the money?

Barry: I have never lost a penny from a customer in 18 years. So, I don't really worry about it that much, but I don't like to do billing and I don't like to wait for my money. The way it works with speaking engagements is standard. They pay half up front to control the date, and then they pay you half after or before the presentation.

Michael: What do you do?

Barry: I do both. They pay half up front to control the date, and the second half is due at the time of the presentation.

Michael: Before it?

Barry: At or before. Now, what happens is sometimes people forget or they don't have the check, and I am not going to go up to the person and say, "Hey, give me my money." They're good for it, and I'm not worried about it. So, those cases we'll bill, plus my expenses will be billed later anyway. With a new client, that's the way we work it. With an old client, I might not

collect any money upfront. It's just trust because I know they're going to pay me the money and it's not a big deal. It just depends on the situation. Sometimes they might have to pay it upfront because of the way they do their bookkeeping. I don't usually have a problem with clients.

Michael: Do you sign a contract, a letter of agreement?

Barry: We sign a letter of agreement. Now, usually for new consultation clients, I get all the money upfront depending on the size of the consultation. If it's a small consultation with a small business, I'll probably get all the money upfront. For the Yellow Page consultations, I always get all the money upfront. It's just easier. It's not that much money.

Michael: Well, you know we have covered a lot. This has been wonderful. Now, let me ask you this. If someone wants you for any kind of speaking engagements, consulting services, what's the best way to get in touch with you? Tell me a little bit about some of the services you provide.

Barry: Okay, well, we do all kinds of management and even marketing consultations, speaking, keynote, communication, management, sales are my specialty. Those are the kinds of things we talked about today. You can get in touch with me through the website – [www.barrymaher.com](http://www.barrymaher.com) – or [www.fillingtheglass.com](http://www.fillingtheglass.com), or reach me 760-962-9872 and talk to me or my assistant.

Michael: Barry, this has been wonderful. We were all over the place, but we covered a lot of content.

Barry: It was fun Michael.

Michael: I really appreciate it. Thanks have a great day.

Hey, this is Michael Senoff; I really hope you enjoyed this interview I did with Barry Maher. We covered a lot of information, and certainly this is the type of interview you want to listen to over and over again. Feel free to print the transcripts out and then highlight, mess them up, take some notes, and use this guy's advice. He's been out in the field doing consulting for many, many years, and I really enjoyed doing it, and I hope you've gotten some good value out of it. So, stayed tuned, we'll be interview more expert consultants in the field of sales, marketing consulting, and other related topics that are going to help you build your consulting business, and I hope you enjoyed it. Talk to you later.

*If you want to get in touch with Barry Maher please email me at [Michael@MichaelSenoff.com](mailto:Michael@MichaelSenoff.com).*