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**THE ART OF  
CLOSING  
ANY DEAL**

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**How to Be a  
MASTER CLOSER  
in Everything  
You Do**

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**JAMES W. PICKENS**

# Copyright

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I would like to sincerely salute all of the true master closers throughout the world.

~~I would also like to thank the very wonderful people whose love and whose belief in me made this~~  
book possible:

Dr. Jim & Evelyn Pickens

Lindsey Janell Pickens

David Rivera

Donna, Kim, Cameron, and Denise



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

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All of the information contained in this book is based on closing facts and strategies that produce superior sales performances when utilized.

All thoughts and situations included in this book are based on the author's own experiences.

This book was written to help the reader become a master closer—something every salesman should strive to be.

It is the sincere hope of the author that the lessons learned here are beneficial, not only in the reader's business future, but also in his or her personal life.

My Best Wishes and Blessings;

James W. Pickens

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## PREFACE

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This book has three main purposes. First, it is a comprehensive reference book on closing sales. Second, it's a professional sales closer's guide to new closes in today's competitive market. Third, and most important, it introduces a closing formula (Sam's secret) whose proven success record exceeds all other sales strategies and techniques being used anywhere in the world.

This book is not a beginner's self-help manual; it is a "master closer's" Bible. It has not been written for the average, run-of-the-mill salesman or anyone who simply wants to gain a little knowledge about selling tips.

This book has been designed to help Master Sales Closers learn, brush up and study the best proven selling procedures ever devised.

There are no frills or superficial information here. Just bottom-line closing facts to get the reader's closing average up at least forty to fifty percent above what he or she is currently producing. That's why I wrote this book.

It is not the intention of the author to embarrass or upset anyone in the selling profession, although the places the book will take a close and very candid look at salesmen just like you. Hard-hitting, gut-penetrating, sales books—if they're worth anything at all—have to step on someone's toes, and this program is no exception. But this is a selling guide that actually tells you what all the other sales books *have not* and/or *will not*. In the past, authors of business books have maintained a certain level of respect and circumspection toward customers that salespeople generally agree with and accept. However, in this book no holds are barred. The customer is taken apart and completely dismantled, analyzed and thoroughly examined by the Master Sales Closer. After this dissection, the reader can understand any customer's position. Then the sales closer, after developing a sound strategy, goes in for the kill (the sale).

This book is a straightforward, honest discussion of proven techniques, tricks and traps that can produce sales. So, if you are really serious about your selling profession, no matter what field of sales you are in, then don't talk to another customer until you have read this book. Virtually every customer objection that you will ever encounter is covered. It gives you not only the answers but all the ammunition you will ever need to get the sale and keep it sold.

This book is in a league by itself and I can guarantee that you will not be disappointed in any way. The information is for you personally and should not be shared indiscriminately. It's a powerful aid to get the job done (the job of closing sales), and it does just that.

*The Art of Closing Any Deal* will turn you into a master closer in everything you do—the minute you say "Hello" to your customer. You will sell more than you ever have while learning hundreds of valuable tips that can also be applied to your personal life.

This is the only book you will ever need to masterfully close your customer one on one. So, let's get started.

You don't have to miss any more sales, beginning right now!



# INTRODUCTION

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## THE ART OF CLOSING ANY DEAL

My name is Jim Pickens and I'm about to relate a remarkable experience that happened to me this past December. I've never written a book before, but facts and circumstances forced me to try. On December 21st, something happened to me that was so fantastic that I felt it had to be shared. The only way I could explain it to you was to take time off from my business and write it all down in my own words. I decided to just do that.

Before I start to tell you everything that happened, you should know something about me so you will realize that I am quite serious about this book.

First of all, I'm a family man with a wonderful wife, four lovely children, and, with the help of many people, a very successful real estate development company. The reason I'm telling you this is not to brag, but to let you know that an experience profound enough to make me drop nearly everything and take time off to write a book, had to be of extraordinary importance. And believe me, I feel it was just that. I've been through a lot in my life, but nothing compares to what you are about to read in this book.

The best way for you to understand the whole story is if I start right from the beginning—a June morning seventeen years ago in my home town of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. That particular summer I was looking for a job, something to do so I could earn a little spending money to see me through the summer, and for my sophomore year at college.

I just wanted to date good-looking girls and work outdoors, forgetting school and my future career. Oh yes, my dad—and this is just like him—had a great job lined up for me in a giant steel mill where he worked.

Now it's true there was good money to be made there, but I wanted to do something different, something uncomplicated; you know, just do something simple. But at the same time I had to find a job that would meet my new sophomore status at the university, not just a freshman's job.

As it happened, I was looking through the want ads one Sunday when I saw a job description that looked pretty interesting: "Outdoor recreational company looking for young, energetic people for summer employment in public relations work. Good salary and many company benefits."

Now that hit the spot. The job was outdoors, with good pay, and I like the way that classy public relations stuff sounded. In addition, it was only fourteen miles away from my family's house. That way, I could work and feel independent while still having my good old room at home. I decided that was the answer, that was the job I wanted.

So on Monday morning I got all spruced up and in my three-year-old Volkswagen I set out to conquer my employment objective—to *get that public relations job*.

Driving out to the location given in the paper, I felt great. The weather was beautiful, and the foliage was in full bloom. It took me about forty minutes to get to my destination, and what a surprise I was looking at a huge building that must have been a magnificent old hotel at one time. All around this building bustled carpenters, plumbers, painters, people with filing cabinets, people moving desks—just about everyone was trying to get this stately building into shape. It looked as if it had been abandoned for about twenty years, but at the rate everyone was working, this old hotel would see better days very soon.

I parked my car and went inside with my newspaper clipping in hand, not knowing where to go or whom to see about a job. I noticed an important looking man sitting in the middle of this great hotel lobby; he was reading a newspaper. With all the movement and activity going on around him he ju

sat there undisturbed. I went over and asked him where I should go to apply for summer employment. He looked up, then calmly stood. He was dressed in a golfing outfit and looked very distinguished. I stared at me with a puzzling look and finally asked what kind of job I wanted. Not having prepared a good, solid answer I replied, "Oh, just anything." Then he asked me about my family, my studies, my ambitions, and said, "Can you start working right now?" I said, "Yes!" and for the rest of that day and the next week I was relegated to help clean up around the old building, running errands, sweeping, moving, and being an all-purpose "go-fer," as they say. It turned out that the man I had asked about the job application was the vice president of the company. He was in charge of all the renovation and developing work being done. His name was Randell Billing, but everyone called him "Big Bill." My new job under "Big Bill" was working for an organization called the Duron Corporation. This was a land and recreational development firm with headquarters in New York City. The Duron Corporation had six developments in the Midwest and was starting a new one here in Pennsylvania. The name of this new project under development was "Green Vista Estates," comprising 15,000 acres of first class Pennsylvania hillside.

I soon learned that the Duron Corporation was a solid and well respected real estate firm that was more than twenty years old. So, all in all, I had lucked out. My new job amounted to doing anything and everything that would help out the total plan. That plan was simply this: The Duron Corporation was going to develop Green Vista Estates into a total recreational and retirement community. Facilities were to include private golf courses, tennis courts, lakes, swimming pools, town centers, and condominiums. The corporation was going to sell real estate (lots) and houses, along with building roads, country clubs, eventually developing a private, well-planned resort community. To accomplish this, they needed contractors, builders and the sales personnel to find the potential customers.

This is where you will see the story start to take shape, and this is where I really begin to fit in. I wasn't a salesman yet, but, as part of the Green Vista team, I did what I could to help meet the target opening date in July.

After being there a few weeks, armed with my positive attitude and aggressiveness, I felt I was ready to advance to a new and better job position. So I went to "Big Bill" and asked him for some of the public relations work the newspaper ad promised. After a long talk with "Big Bill" I got my new job assignment; parking cars for the duration of the summer. Oh well, at least it was outdoors, and there was some "public relations" work involved.

Opening the resort on time was a top priority. Throughout the hotel everyone hustled to meet the July 1st deadline for the grand opening. I wasn't too busy in my car parking job, since in the beginning there weren't too many cars to park (no customers yet).

Things were looking up and getting more businesslike every day. The old hotel looked fantastic after four hard weeks of solid restoration. Even the huge parking lot behind the hotel—my territory—was nearly finished.

At the far end of the parking area the company had constructed a guard gate and a guard house. It looked good because it was designed in the same mode as the old hotel. The purpose of the guard house and gate was obvious: it added to the atmosphere of privacy at Green Vista Estates. This was going to be an exclusive resort, so the guard house would add to this overall concept. For a short time I thought they wanted me to be a security guard, but no such luck. They wanted an older person for the job.

It was about one week before the grand opening, when I first met Sam Johnson, our new daytime security man. When we were introduced I was somewhat surprised because Mr. Johnson was a fairly old man. In fact, he was old enough to be my grandfather. But he seemed like a very pleasant old gentleman. That first day we didn't talk much because he was busy learning his new job and duties down at the guard house; I was doing my usual running around, conquering all the errands no one else

wanted to do.

At this point, I want you to keep in mind that Sam Johnson and I had a common bond from the beginning. You see, we were the only people working in or around the parking lot area. Everyone else was either inside the old hotel, (the new sales office) or scattered throughout the development working on construction projects.

On his second day of work Sam and I got to talking. He told me a little about himself, and, in turn I told him some things about me. We really had nothing better to do than sit around in his guard house and get to know each other through small talk. (Everyone else was gearing up for selling a promotion, or working with the builders and contractors who were developing roads and other needed amenities.) So there I was, sitting and talking to my new acquaintance, old Sam Johnson the security guard, just waiting for opening day when I could finally do my job—park cars. Well, it wasn't really so bad; parking cars could be a type of public relations work, sort of, and I was starting to get a pretty good tan. So things were looking up.

As I got to know Sam better, I realized that he was a peculiar and unique person. Over the next few days, working and talking together, we became pretty close friends. For example, if I was ever late for work—and I usually was—Sam would cover for me. With this kind of relationship, the parking lot was a pretty good place to work. We'd tell jokes and talk about anything and everything that happened during our working hours. So time passed quickly for both of us.

About two days before the big opening, Sam told me something quite curious. He told me that he used to be a master sales closer and that he had worked all around the country selling real estate for many years. He told me about the company that we worked for now (its good points and its bad ones) and all about its history. He talked about his old selling days, the productive ones and not-so-productive ones. About getting in and out of all kinds of situations. The strange part was that the more I listened to Sam, the more intense, sincere, and serious he became about this special subject of his—the subject of selling.

We would talk for hours about selling when we weren't doing other things. I found myself becoming more interested in this old man and his experiences. One day—and I'll never forget it—Sam told me that if he wanted to, he could out-sell any salesman Green Vista Estates could ever hire. Green Vista Estates was hiring the top real estate sales people in the country, and to hear Sam say something like that (and I sensed he really seemed to believe it) was kind of out in left field. I didn't say a word; I just sat there and listened. The next thing I knew, Sam showed me a ring, a simple gold one that he was wearing. The ring was old and quite worn. It looked like an old crest ring, nothing more. It certainly wasn't expensive. Sam told me that the ring had a secret inscription on the inside that would help make any person into a great master sales closer. The only thing a person had to do was read and understand the inscription and then practice what it said. Sam told me that this gold ring had made him a millionaire many times over, and when he practiced the ring's advice he never failed to get a sale.

Now I ask you, what would you do if some old man (and he certainly didn't look like a millionaire) just got through telling you a story like this? Well, what I then did was human. I asked him if I could read the ring's inscription. But Sam replied, "I'll make a deal with you. We're going to be working together all summer long, just the two of us, and we're going to see a lot of customers and salesmen come and go. I'm a little tired and I don't want to sell anymore. But if you listen to me, I'll point out things about sales and closing that will make you the best sales closer anywhere. I'll make you into a master closer. Not only that, if you practice what I tell you, you will become a complete and total success in any kind of sales field that exists."

Sam said that I could learn all this in a very short time. All I would have to do is listen and understand what he was telling me. Then, at the end of the summer, if he thought that I had been

good student, he'd let me read the ring's inscription. He said, at this point, I'd know the secret that every top salesman in the world could use to become even better. The secret that shows how to be among the greatest sales closers alive.

That was Sam's answer to me. So what could I say? I thought for a moment and decided that since I was going to be here for the rest of the summer anyway—and since Sam just might know what I was talking about—why not? I might really learn something. I couldn't lose, and besides, I wanted to know what that inscription said. I told Sam I would listen to him and try to learn what he would teach me. I knew if I played my cards right I would get to read the inscription eventually, and if it was a joke, a fake, or a real selling secret, I'd soon know what it said. If I could be a success in selling like Sam said he had been, then who really wanted to be a lawyer anyway? Certainly not me. Not with the potential of becoming a top Master Sales Closer dangled in front of my nose.

This is how it all started, seventeen years ago. Each day, Sam would talk to me and explain sales from top to bottom, and he didn't miss a thing.

The extra benefit was that we were in the middle of one of the largest developments in the East with all the top salesmen in the country around us. We could study everything right before our eyes—the customers, the salesmen, and the powerful new techniques for closing any deal.

The Duron Corporation had hired the best real estate closers in the country. So, to my way of thinking, if our company had the best closers around (and Sam told me that he was better than all of them), then I had to learn something about sales, no matter what.

Well, I learned, I mean I really learned! In the following chapters you too will see and understand “The Art of Closing Any Deal.” You will also discover the inscription on Sam's ring which changed me so much. Because of what I was taught that summer by one old man, I decided not to study law. Instead, I went on to become president of the Duron Corporation, one of the top real estate developers. I was a multi-millionaire at the age of 37.

This is just the beginning of an interesting story that can make your sales performance and closing percentage far better than any salesman you have ever known. This book is about what I learned from Sam. Not only what he knew concerning closing, but what Sam knew about human nature. It is all true, and it all really works. Read on and you'll find out for yourself.





# THE ART OF CLOSING ANY DEAL:

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## Overview of Sales Closers

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- A. Types of Salesmen
  - B. Types of Closers
  - C. Techniques Used by Closers
  - D. Characteristics of Closers
  - E. Why They Are Closers
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# CHAPTER ONE

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## **THE ART OF CLOSING ANY DEAL:**

### *Overview of Sales Closers*

Sam gave me my first lesson in sales—or rather, closing—the same day our agreement began.

It didn't take me long to see old Sam didn't pull any punches when he spoke about sales and closers. He said exactly what he thought and always had closing a sale as the bottom line. Sam got so excited when he talked about closing and sales that it was contagious.

The salesmen had already begun arriving at Green Vista Estates—about ninety-five in all. Sam said the salesmen, some of whom were “closers,” would be my first subject of study. He told me that by using closers as a starting point, I could learn the basics and go right on from there.

The best way for me to describe what I learned is to simply put it all down as if Sam himself were doing the talking. In this chapter, you will see exactly what I learned about closers. But keep in mind that for Sam, closing was a very, very serious business.

# TYPES OF SALESMEN

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Before we get into closers specifically, I want to explain the difference between salesmen and closers. But we have to understand salesmen before we can appreciate the skill of a master closer. This will bring everything into proper perspective.

## Order Takers or Tour Guides

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This person knows all about the product; he knows all about the company. In fact, he has all the right answers, and he appears to be tailored for the job of selling. (Note: To simplify things I refer to “he” or “him” throughout—but the examples are all equally applicable to women.) But there is one thing about him that’s wrong: He cannot sell. Ever wonder why?

Well, there are a thousand reasons, but I’m not going to get into them now—you will understand once we analyze true sales closers. Order takers shouldn’t even call themselves salesmen. The reason is they don’t have that one little thing called “magic.” But don’t worry; you will soon find out how to acquire that very special characteristic, if you don’t have it already.

An order taker is like a book with a lot of knowledge just sitting on a shelf, waiting for someone to open up the pages and read. In comparison, a master closer is like a smash Broadway play; it jumps right out at you and hits you right between the eyes. It doesn’t wait for anything; it’s a full-scale production with all the trimmings.

# The Salesman

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He is better than the order taker, at least he can do some things on his own. He has some push, some drive, some determination. He makes a pretty good living, but that is where it ends. He requires he on too many deals. He doesn't study his profession to any great extent. The typical salesman has a limited client base, is satisfied with this minor accomplishment, and that's the extent of it.

Everyone calls him a salesman, but I guarantee that when he is alone, looking in the mirror, he knows he could be better. But he just doesn't go that extra step; he doesn't want it badly enough. So he settles for his own mediocrity. He lacks that extra gut feeling of wanting to be the best. He does not want to upset his routine. He would rather be a good, average salesman than a master closer with true class.

## The Closer

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Now here is a man who can really deliver. He can sell, charm, and hold the customer in a deal. He can do all the things that are necessary to be a top-notch producer, and he is just that—always in front of the rest of the sales force. He thinks he is so good he will not study or listen to anybody. He believes he can live on his past record and all of his old war stories about those big past sales. He uses the same old pitches and closes and never changes except that he gets older.

Yes, he's a closer, and a good one, but not great, not a super-salesman, not a leader—just good. He thinks he is at the top, but in reality he isn't. He simply forgot to keep going forward and learning; that little oversight made him stop growing, and it shows.



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