

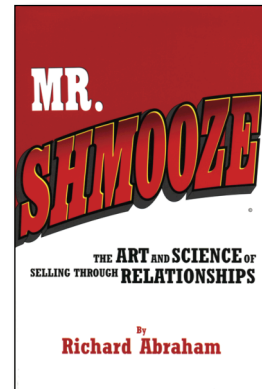
# MR. SHMOOZE

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF  
SELLING THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

THE RICHARD ABRAHAM COMPANY • 700 Commerce Drive • Oak Brook, Illinois 60532

## For Immediate Release

For a review copy of the book or an interview with the author, please contact Dottie DeHart, Rocks-DeHart Public Relations, at (828) 459-9637 or DSDeHart@aol.com



## Real Estate Professionals and the Lost Art of Shmoozing

*Mr. Shmooze—the title character in a compelling new book by Richard Abraham—shows us how to build strong, emotion-based, profitable relationships with our customers.*

**Oak Brook, IL**—It’s hard to imagine a more personal “product” than a home. After all, you’re *not* selling stone fireplaces, hardwood floors, and coffered ceilings. You’re selling nurseries for babies yet to be, living rooms made for 8-foot Christmas trees, the perfect sunspot for the cat to sleep in. You’re selling a happy future. To be *really* successful, says sales consultant Richard Abraham, you must connect with your customers in a deep, profound, meaningful way. You must master the ancient art of shmoozing. That’s right. *Shmoozing*.

“Shmoozing is all about interacting with people in a way that creates feelings of warmth, goodwill, pleasure,” says Abraham, author of *Mr. Shmooze: The Art and Science of Selling Through Relationships* (The Richard Abraham Company, 2002, ISBN: 0-9741996-0-5, \$19.95). “‘Just the facts, ma’am,’ doesn’t go deep enough, emotionally, especially when you’re selling what may be a once in a lifetime purchase. You must make them feel good about their decision and about your involvement in it—when you create joy around a new home purchase, you don’t have to ‘sell.’”

Though Abraham’s book is aimed at salespeople in general, it’s amazingly applicable to real estate professionals. It conveys his lucrative philosophy in the form of a story told from the point of view of an intern working with “Mr. Shmooze.” This larger-than-life character—a real-life composite of the greatest salespeople the author has encountered in his own career—amazes the narrator as he sails through his unconventional business meetings spreading laughter, humor, and even joy.

“We are on the planet together, right now, working, struggling, laughing, crying, every day,” Abraham writes in Mr. Shmooze’s unforgettable voice. “I love these people and I want them to know it. Every time! Everyone makes decisions about who will be their friend, who will be their partner, who they will take a call from, and, in business, who they will buy from based on two basic sensations: *pleasure* and *pain*. If they associate you with pleasure, you win!”

So what can you do to transform yourself into a “Mr. (or *Ms.*, as the case may well be) Shmooze”? Abraham offers the following words of wisdom:

- **Figure out what *really* matters to the customer.** If your customer has children, they are no doubt at the top of her priority list. But that one is obvious, and *any* competent real estate agent is going to gush over kids and point out the rooms they would occupy. Probe a little deeper. Does she enjoy nature photography? Jazz music? Is she a connoisseur of fine wines? Pay close attention to what you see in her current home or office and casual comments she makes. Then you can shmooze with a vengeance. “If she’s a nature photographer, point out the bird’s nest in the grove of maple trees in the backyard,” suggests Abraham. “Or give the jazz lover a flier from a local club. Or send the wine connoisseur a bottle from a local vineyard along with a thanks-for-letting-me-be-your-agent note. Obviously, you want to link the customer’s passions to the homes you’re trying to sell her—by saying, for instance, ‘Wouldn’t that wall be a great place to display your work?’—but that’s secondary to forging a personal connection. It doesn’t matter which house she chooses. All that matters is that she has a great experience with you.”

- **Practice the art of elevation.** In every interaction, seek to elevate the prospect’s experience to a memorable level that goes above and beyond the ordinary. Let’s say the prospect has two young school age children. A typical real estate professional might mention the fact that the community has a great public school system. But a shmoozer would “kick it up a notch.” She might drive the children to the school, introduce them to a few teachers and/or students she knows (shmoozers make it a point to know lots of people) and give each child a T-shirt emblazoned with the school mascot. For a good example of elevation, read the book’s “Dinner à la Shmooze” chapter. Although it’s aimed at a different type of professional, it shows how to make a typical interaction an event to remember. **(NOTE TO EDITOR: See attached excerpt)**

- **If you’re thinking the dinner story is over the top, price-wise, relax. You *can* shmooze without spending a fortune.** Abraham admits that “Dinner à la Shmooze” is a bit exaggerated—but its purpose is only to get you thinking about the myriad of opportunities that exist for value-added shmoozing. There are plenty of ways to elevate a customer’s experience with you that don’t cost much, if anything. If you discover that your client loves Thai cooking or Afghan hounds—based on books or photos you saw in her office—you can e-mail her a link to an Asian recipe website or send her a book on exotic dog breeds you found on clearance at the bookstore. These small gestures can make a big difference.

- **Do your follow-up shmoozing *immediately*.** Read *Mr. Shmooze* and you discover in the very first chapter that, the minute the protagonist leaves a meeting, he’s on his cell phone with his assistant asking her to send things to his clients, prospects, and colleagues: Braves tickets, real

estate license class schedules, articles from the Internet, and so forth. In proper shmoozing, time is of the essence. “There’s a graph we show clients that illustrates the *recency effect*,” says Abraham. “It shows that within a week a potential buyer has forgotten 90 percent of what a salesperson shows her. And in fact, a lot is forgotten in the first 24 hours after a meeting. But if you send someone a book or a tie the very next day after you’ve shown a house, you go a long way toward overcoming that effect. Plus, if you make it standard procedure to do your follow-up shmoozing right away, *you* won’t forget to do it.”

• **Don’t limit your shmoozing to “people who matter.” *Everyone* matters.** Read the book and you’ll notice that Mr. Shmooze shmoozes *everyone*, not just potential clients or people with money. He generously tips bartenders, gives expensive cigars to carhops, gives restaurant hostesses cosmetic gifts. Why? Because these are the people who carry out those all-important “little details” that elevate the entire experience to a higher level. By shmoozing service people, you not only motivate them to do a good job for your customers, you set in motion a “compound interest” effect that can benefit you in the future. “As a Realtor, you may not necessarily take your customers out to dinner—although if you work in a higher end market, you may—but you will come in contact with bankers, insurance salespeople, appraisers, and all sorts of other people who will impact the sale,” points out Abraham. “Treat them well and that ‘goodwill’ will rub off on your customer.”

By now you may be thinking: isn’t all of this shmoozing a little, well, *manipulative*? That’s the wrong question, says Abraham. You’re going to be interacting with these people anyway, so why not do it in a manner that makes their lives a little better? What’s not to like about accentuating the positive? The best news of all is that, in a time when so many people suffer from the all-work-and-no-play syndrome, shmoozing *is* a form of play. It’s as fun for the shmooz-er as it is for the shmooz-ee.

“It surprises people to learn that selling is not about manipulating or talking or even persuading,” says Abraham. “It’s about *giving*. So in its purest form, shmoozing is simply making people’s lives better. And here’s the key: the universe is set up in such a way that when you help others, they want to help you in return. So shmoozing, in this context, is a beautiful thing and a heck of a lot more fun than being clinical and ordinary. Try it. You’ll find that not only is it profitable, it’s rewarding on a very deep and personal level. There is no better way to live.”

###

**About the Author:**

Mr. Abraham is president of The Richard Abraham Company, a company he founded in 1981. He became interested in the dynamics of the selling process through his involvement in the development and marketing of over \$1 billion of commercial real estate.

Today he continues to conduct extensive research and advises organizations that wish to better understand the art of relationship-building and the science of selling. You can e-mail the author at [rabraham@rabraham.com](mailto:rabraham@rabraham.com).

**About the Book:**

*Mr. Shmooze: The Art and Science of Selling Through Relationships* (The Richard Abraham Company, 2002, ISBN: 0-9741996-0-5, \$19.95) is available at bookstores nationwide and major online booksellers.

**For more information, visit [www.mrshmooze.com](http://www.mrshmooze.com).**