**The Real Job of Sales Management? Getting into Their Heads**

by Chris Lytle

I do not have a degree in psychiatry. But as a sales manager, I often felt like I needed one.

You too? Maybe all you really need is the willingness to listen to your salespeople.

"Hey Boss, got a minute?"

Turn away from the computer.

There should be no rolling eyes or heavy sighs.

Give them the gift of your time and attention *before* you shower them with your wisdom.

My late colleague, Norm Goldsmith, was fond of saying this:

*You can't influence a salesperson's thinking until you know what s/he's thinking.*

That’s why my first rule of coaching is to ask seven questions before giving an answer. Listening to your salespeople and getting into their heads is a huge part of your job.

It's not psychotherapy. It's just good (sales) management.

You empower people by listening to them. You build loyalty, too.

So, find out what your people are thinking. Then (and only then), begin to influence their thinking, Boss.