

# In A Nutshell

Everything that is exact is short. In search of quick and poignant sales management insights, we allowed more than 140 characters...but not much more.

## John R. Graham

on strengthening customer relationships

Pass along sales leads. A good lead may be the greatest gift you can give anyone. A customer will appreciate it far more than tickets to a game or a round of golf. Although a lead is free, it has tremendous value for the recipient. It also shows that you care.

Graham is president of Graham Communications ([grahamcomm.com](http://grahamcomm.com)), a marketing services and sales consulting firm.



## Jill Konrath

on selling “stark-raving naked”

Two sellers began having extraordinary success once they stopped bringing their brochures into meetings with prospective buyers. Armed with only a notebook and a pen, they were forced to focus on the prospect’s business. The prospects loved it. They felt valued and understood. They felt like the reps cared and were concerned. They asked for the rep’s advice and even wanted specific recommendations.

Konrath is chief sales officer at Selling to Big Companies ([sellingtobigcompanies.com](http://sellingtobigcompanies.com))

## Jeremy Quittner

on the art of down-sell

If your customers are giving up the bells and whistles in favor of more basic and affordable products, why not follow suit and take the “premium” out of your premium products? It’s a tricky proposition. You have to convey that they’re still getting a valuable product, but it’s priced for the recession and they would be crazy not to take that offer.

Jeremy Quittner is a staff writer for *BusinessWeek*



## Mark Shonka

on not abusing references

Delighted customers are valuable assets and you only want to use these references in qualified situations. You have to worry about going to the well too often. One option is to provide the prospect with the names of appropriate companies you work with, and then mention that specific contact names will be provided prior to or just following a business presentation to the decision team.

Mark Shonka is co-president of IMPAX Corp. ([impaxcorp.com](http://impaxcorp.com))



## Mark Hunter

on determining how serious a prospect is

When things have stalled out, ask them as a next step to review something for you. It might be a report you’re going to e-mail to them or it might be something on a website. The key is to see if they will provide some input. Their response to what you ask them to do will not only give you a sense of their level of commitment, but also may give them a quick “out” to indeed tell you they are not interested. Either way, it allows you to move forward.

Mark Hunter is founder of [TheSalesHunter.com](http://TheSalesHunter.com)

