

## Ep #36: Leadership Is Selling



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 36.

Welcome to *The Empowered Principal Podcast*, a not so typical, educational resource that will teach you how to gain control of your career and get emotionally fit to lead your school and your life with joy, by refining your most powerful tool: your mind. Here's your host, certified life coach, Angela Kelly Robeck.

What is going on, my fellow educators? I am fired up today. I am still thriving on the vibe from my mastermind retreat. I batch these recordings of my podcast episodes, and because my energy is so high, I am just flowing with ideas and content for you all. I am so excited to share all that I have learned with you.

And guess what – I've decided to record and create a video series library for all of my VIP clients, so they can have access 24/7 to all of my best strategies for handling things like building professional relationships, beliefs about money and earning, thought work on time and the relationship we have with time, work-life balance, physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing and leadership and influence.

Will that not just be amazing? It's going to take me some time to get all of that done, but my brain is going wild right now. And believe me, I'm having to self-coach through this process as I know it's going bring just a little bit of mind drama up for me. But I love the idea and I love my clients and I know my clients will love having access to this as well.

So I'm going to keep you posted on this and I will let you know when it's available, so for all of you who have ever been a VIP client or are considering becoming a client of mine, when this goes live, you will have access to it for life. So be on the lookout for that library. I'm super excited.

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Okay, so today, we're going to talk about a concept that might challenge your brain a little bit. I know when I first heard this myself, I was like, what? But as I processed what it meant and observed it happening in my life and all around me, I realized the value in contemplating this perspective. And that perspective is this; you are not simply leading a school site, you are selling.

You are selling yourself as a leader. You are selling your ideas, you are selling your approach, you are selling your authenticity and your enthusiasm and your style. Every interaction in life is a sale. You are either selling or you are being sold to.

I know, it's crazy to think of life this way because most people have such negative association with the words selling or sales. The reason we have a negative reaction to the thoughts around sales is because most of us, at one point in time, have had a negative experience with having to either sell something or have someone try to sell something to us.

I think back to a time when I first graduated from college, my undergrad degree. I graduated in December, and so there were very few teaching positions available, but I wanted to work and start making money right away. I was getting married at the time. I wanted to be busy and have some kind of work, so I signed up for a temp job and I was working a few of these temp jobs until I was offered a work-from-home job that I thought was going to be amazing.

And what it ended up being was a salesperson for Kirby Vacuums. I'm dating myself here, so please don't judge. I attended a workshop on how to sell these bad-boys. And have you ever seen or used a Kirby Vacuum? You'll know what I'm talking about. They are big and heavy and cumbersome. I don't even think they make Kirbys anymore.

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Anyway, I was trained on selling these things and I was expected to follow the sales guide exactly as printed. We were given a quota of people we had to demonstrate the vacuum to per week and per month and basically, what happened is that a team of people would cold call other individuals and got them to say yes to the demonstration by promising them a free carpet shampoo for one room in their home.

So day after day, which really lasted about two weeks, day after day, I would be sent to people's homes and I'd run through the sales script pretty much only to be ignored and told no every single time. I never sold a Kirby Vacuum, and here's why; I wasn't truly selling because I hated the process.

I didn't believe in the product. I didn't believe in the process and I knew the person trapped by my sales pitch also hated having to endure it just so they could get one of their carpets cleaned for free. It was a terrible experience for both of us.

So even if you've never gone door to door selling a product, you've gone through purchasing a car or being asked to attend some timeshare presentation or you've been accosted by those people at the mall who sell those little trinkets or makeup or whatever it is in the middle of the mall. Those hallways where they come running after you, those experiences are exactly why we do not want to believe that we personally are selling ourselves or being sold to.

And the reason is this; we don't like to be sold to when we feel that we're being forced into liking the product or being tricked into liking the product. And we don't like selling when we don't love what we are doing or we don't love what we're selling or we don't love the person we're selling to.

So I want you to do this; I want you to think of things that you love to buy, things that you can't wait to spend your money on. I love high-end skin products. I buy all kinds of high-end skin products and makeup products

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because they make me feel amazing and I love that I get to use them every morning and every night. I look forward to washing my face, putting on the toner and the cleanser and all the serums, all the lotions and potions; I love it.

I feel luxurious, I feel pampered. No one has to call me and sell me on these products because I already love them. I already love spending my money on them. It's a done deal. And the same holds true for things like, I love clothing, I super love shoes. And oh my gosh, I absolutely love buying airplane tickets. Oh, how I love buying airplane tickets, because I love to travel, therefore, I love to pay for the service of being flown to wherever I want to go, right.

American Airlines does not have to call and sell me on their tickets. If I want to go see my mom, I jump online, I buy the tickets, end of story. American Airlines provides me a service – or any other airline for that matter – they provide me a service that I love and I'm super happy to pay them because I certainly don't have the capacity to provide this service for myself.

I don't know how to fly a plane and I don't have a plane, so I'm happy to buy those tickets; not a problem. So if you can set aside your beliefs about sales just for these next few minutes, I want to talk you through what it might look like and feel like to embrace the thought that you are selling yourself as a leader and how to authentically enjoy the process of selling your leadership.

So here are some ideas to get you started. Number one – you have to actually enjoy your role as principal. Now, this may sound like a no-brainer, or it may sound like there's no way in hell you could do that, but if you think about the logic behind it, people enjoy following people who enjoy what they do. People are attracted to positive high-energy people.

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Think about the people you love, right. They want you to like your role because they want you to take action in the role. And if you love what you do, you will enjoy taking the actions necessary to lead your school, which will lead to most people admiring you and following your lead. Think of a past teacher, a mentor, a coach, some leader that you've admired.

What was it about them that was so attractive to you? For me, positivity and that high vibe and energy pulls me right in. This is why I love President Obama so much. And I also have to shout out again to my former superintendent [Dr. Ghezles], he was amazing. Because they were positive people, positive role models, you know, they would get their hits and they would keep going. You love people who love their jobs. It's so exciting.

So what if you are a principal who currently does not enjoy your role at the moment? One way to shift your energy pretty quickly, at least for me, is to be grateful for all of the jobs that you are not having to do in this world. Think about it. I had so many bad jobs compared to leading a school. Like for example, selling Kirby vacuums was not my favorite job. But I also canned dog food one year and I also worked at McDonalds for a total of two weeks. I could not stand it. The smell, the ick - it was disgusting.

So all I have to do is think about the millions of jobs out in the world that I would rather not be doing and I am instantly more attracted to the job of leading my school. So you can kind of trick your brain into saying like, "Yeah, today might not be so great, or this year might not be going well, but guess what? I am so grateful to have this job because of," x, y, z, whatever you choose to believe.

Number two. You have to believe in your product or service. And what I mean by this is that in order for people to agree with what you are asking of them, you need to fully believe that it is the best way to get the result you and your team are seeking. If you fully believe that students will benefit by having an afternoon recess built into the day and you want to sell this idea

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to your staff, you have to be so sold on that idea yourself and believe in it so much that you exude confidence and enthusiasm for the idea.

This concept is so important as a school leader. Think of times when you have felt so compelled and so strongly about a change that you want to offer to your staff versus a time when the district office may have asked you to implement something without allowing your input on it or time for you to really grasp your thinking around it. You're not as compelled to sell the idea to your staff because you yourself are not sold on the idea.

And that's because district office didn't adequately sell their idea to you. Perhaps they aren't fully sold on the idea or perhaps they don't see the value in taking the time to connect you to that new implementation, but you can see the ripple effect that believing in your product or service has. So if district office isn't that tied to it, you're not going to be that tied to it. You're not going to be able to sell it to your team and they're not going to be tied to it, and guess what? It's not going to happen. So you have to fully believe in what you are offering to your staff and to your people.

Number three. You have to take time to bring people along. You have to understand where they currently are in terms of their mindset and their understanding, where you want them to go, and the size of the gap that is between their current status and their desired status or your desired status for them. So for example, if the current situation is let's say a staff member has bus duty after school and they're on a medical leave for a couple of weeks, and you need to find coverage for that yard duty, that bus duty.

You may go to your staff and ask for volunteers to cover the bus duty and in exchange, you'll give them 30 minutes of prep time by covering the class. You're most likely going to get people to jump at your offer because if they give 20 or 30 minutes of after school support to you, they're going to get 30 minutes of free prep time for their efforts. So the gap between where their mindset is in the current situation, which is they don't do bus duty



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versus where their mindset needs to go, which is go do bus duty but I get 30 minutes of prep time, it's a pretty small gap.

They aren't having to vastly shift their ideas or the way they look at life or the way they think or approach teaching in order to solve this problem. It's a pretty small gap. It's a win-win. One, they believe in the idea of monitoring children for the bus, so they're sold on that idea. Two, you're giving them back time so there's no real cost to them. And three, the mindset's very team oriented and positive.

So there's very little gap in that shift. Take that versus the gap that is created when your district adopts a new curriculum let's say in language arts. The time that teachers need to move from their current mindset of how to teach reading and writing from that old curriculum to the mindset of how they're going to shift in their teaching strategies, in their approach, in everything they do for the new curriculum, that's a much wider gap. They're going to need lots of time and training and coaching and resources and support to help them bridge that gap. So their mindset isn't going to just shift immediately. You need to consider this as a leader as you sell the idea of shifting from the old curriculum to the new curriculum. Those are much bigger shifts.

And finally, you have to listen with an open heart and an open ear. Leadership is not a one-way street. In order to be a great leader and sell your leadership approach, you must first be a great listener. It is critical to truly listen to people's concerns, fears, and questions. You have to be able to read through the lines of what they are saying in order to deeply understand the root of those concerns.

Most times, what people believe is their problem is not their actually their problem. They may think it's the bell schedule that's the problem when really it is their inability to design a schedule that works for themselves and their students. Now, you're not going to call that out, but you need to understand more deeply the problem than they actually even understand it



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themselves. You need to listen with such compassion and a fullness that you thoroughly understand what it is they actually need from you as a leader, so that you can then explain the problem to them just as well as they explained it to themselves, and once they know you understand, they're going to grow to like you and grow to trust you.

And it is from this place that you can lead them. When you understand their problem more deeply than they do, you can offer them the true level of support and guidance that they need to solve that problem. Then you can help them see that the circumstance or that situation was not the problem. You guide them by helping them bridge the gap, helping them like you and trust you from a place of true authenticity, through true compassion and from understanding where they are and where they need to go.

You must also know what their objections are, so asking lots of questions - it's almost like you're a doctor who's looking to see what is going on with a patient. You want to ask lots of questions, thoroughly exam their thoughts and their emotions and their approach so that you can identify and make a diagnosis within yourself of what type of approach and support this staff member or teacher needs. So once you know the objections, you can start to address them and then continue to move forward in your leadership. But that's all a part of being an effective, empowered, and influential leader.

Thinking of leadership this way, it might be unconventional, but it is powerful. I want you to observe yourself this week in a variety of interactions. Notice who is selling and who is being sold to. Observe your boss, observe your staff, observe the people at Nordstrom, wherever it is you are this week, observe who is buying, who is selling, and try thinking about this way for the next week and let me know where you feel your energy lies. This can be a true game changer for you as a leader.

So go get 'em, tiger. Have an empowered week. I want you to think about leadership in the eyes of a salesperson and not a cheesy salesperson. An authentically loving, open, compassionate salesperson who loves what

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they do, loves the product they're selling, believes in them fully and is open and serving your school with a servant's heart. Have a wonderful week. I will catch you next week. Bye guys.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit [www.angelakellycoaching.com](http://www.angelakellycoaching.com) where you can sign up for weekly updates and learn more about the tools that will help you become an emotionally fit school leader.