

CATCH



**BECAUSE
TELLING
AIN'T
SELLING™**

ERIC S. TOWNSEND

CATCH — BECAUSE TELLING AIN'T SELLING™

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This is the second edition of this primer.

Formerly titled *Telling Ain't Selling: Play Catch With Customers*.

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Publisher: Go Booklets of Fairfax, VA 22030. www.gobooklets.com.
Parent Company: Glimpse Digital. Distributed worldwide on Amazon.

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- *Bizkii Volume I*
- *Bizkii Volume II*
- *Catch: Bond in Meaningful Ways (abridged)*
- *Catch: Because Telling Ain't Selling (complete primer)*
- *Command Parallels*
- *First World Maladies Volume I*
- *Lovely*
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*“Baseball is too much of a sport to be called business,
and too much of a business to be called a sport.”*

— Philip Wrigley

*“Baseball is an allegorical play about America
— a poetic, complex and subtle play of courage, fear,
good luck, mistakes, patience about fate, and sober self-esteem.”*

— Saul Steinberg

DEDICATION

This resource is dedicated to my late grandma, Antoinetta Capobianco.

FOREWORD

I grew up in a household that loved baseball.

Grandpa and I would play catch in the yard each day. The exchanges were more meaningful than I could've imagined. That's the power of the ritual. Tossing a ball back and forth, sharing a conversation — it's bonding.

At the time, I was an unraveling bundle of nervous energy. Sitting still was a real test. The only activities that focused me were ones that I adored. The simplest of these could be repeated over and over again.

Catch never got boring.

As the sun set behind our neighbor's house, my mom would return home from work. The family would retire to the kitchen. There, grandma would prepare and serve an Italian specialty for dinner. We didn't switch things up all that often. Grandpa and I would sit down at the table, and my mom would join us soon after that.

Grandpa would dial up the Yankees pre-game on radio. Over dinner, the family would listen as Phil Rizzuto and Bill White called the action. Grandma would release us to the living room to watch the late innings on TV. This cycle repeated daily, spring through fall.

Why am I strolling down memory lane? This sales program leverages the wisdom of baseball pitchers, catchers, coaches and others to prove definitively why Telling Ain't Selling.TM. Playing catch with customers, albeit figuratively, forges a bond that leads to convincing.

How I came to be passionate about catch is the type of story you'll share to great effect with customers. Retire canned presentations. Today's pitches call for a truly interactive approach.

Eric S. Townsend continues to play catch today — on amateur baseball diamonds and in his marketing work.

HOW THE PROGRAM IS ORGANIZED

Topics loosely follow the arc of a baseball pitcher who's become injured, completes rehabilitation, returns to the team and competes anew. They're meant as a metaphor.

You don't need to appreciate the game of baseball to make sense of this journey. Topics unfold plainly at each step of the way, providing a number of parallels and examples.

The first edition of the primer was tailored to sales professionals. Some of that has survived to this second edition. Of course, "selling" is a far more universal practice. Any time you seek to convince someone of something, you need to sell effectively. Buyers are everywhere.

Topics we'll cover include:

- (i) REHABILITATION
- (ii) PRE-GAME
- (iii) CATCH
- (iv) PITCH
- (v) POST-GAME

All topics are presented as single pages. This program shouldn't thin your patience or become something you can't adopt. In fact, you should be able to practice more often because it's easy to locate a targeted topic and just review that.

Only one topic spans multiple pages (three in total), and for obvious reasons — the close.

Hopefully, you won't tire of the baseball references I employ. A bit of Americana is a good thing — especially when it aids understanding and provides a break from the action.

This primer focuses you on quality. It won't always increase your speed. Often, there will be a higher cost, whether that's currency or patience. Quality is your best route because it's more credible and withstands the test of time. There's a deeper value in that.

With this, let's "leave it all on the field," shall we?

I. REHABILITATION

Heal From Your Injuries

**CHOOSING SUCCESS
CONSULTATIVE SELLING
OVERCOMING THE LIZARD BRAIN
SETTING EXPECTATIONS**

*“Progress always involves risks.
You can’t steal second base and keep your foot on first.”*

— Frederick B. Wilcox

*“It never ceases to amaze me
how many of baseball’s wounds are self-inflicted.”*

— Bill Veeck

*“I have heard there are troubles of more than one kind.
Some come from ahead, and some come from behind.
But I’ve bought a big bat. I’m all ready you see.
Now my troubles are going to have troubles with me!”*

— Dr. Seuss

CHOOSING SUCCESS

Many players hide injuries from others, thinking that a departure from the team will hamper it substantially. Playing injured is far worse. Performance is generally surprising (in a bad way), and there's no accounting for it. Your teammates have planned for your best!

Perhaps it took years to commit to catch. Maybe you wouldn't hear the voices around you asking to exchange. They've likely been there all along.

Let's focus on today. It took courage to get here. Let me start by offering a huge KUDOS!

Here's the reality — if you're convincing less than 25% of the time, then you're doing something wrong. The top salespeople close in the 25-50% range. They're connecting.

Sound far-fetched? That's probably because it is — from where you stand right now.

Your decision to adopt a new perspective, to educate yourself in the right way to approach exchanges and to succeed by others is admirable. This choice will change everything for you. It starts RIGHT NOW.

When you excel, you're a happier person. When you're in a healthier place, all of your relationships experience a renaissance. This rebirth creates a cycle that can and will repeat — when you most need its influence.

There's no reason for you to struggle much again. Rehab your injury and never look back. Sure, you'll run into a slump here and there — but ending the slump will be a simple matter.

Step back. Look at what you're doing differently. Reel it back to the program. You may believe that something has changed and now hampers your chances. You'll say "this is what works *now*." What works is discipline and the timeless principles of catch. Pick up the ball.

Establishing a repeating, sustainable routine of success will be your greatest ally in this process. You can't forget this, should the material ahead prove difficult to adopt.

CONSULTATIVE SELLING

In this book, you'll sense a major league paradigm shift. This program is a direct response to two key factors. Opportunities are few. People are more careful. I'm here to tell you — this particular change is a good thing.

When someone isn't flinching, you may feel the urge to press. She senses this unsettling energy. No matter what gain is sought, pressing creates an unsteady playing field. Errors are made. It's not just you — others like you also bobble the ball.

Weakened competition signals greater opportunity for you.

Capitalizing on what others can't seem to do well doesn't make you a mean person. They're competing with you. Their shortcomings can inform your strengths, which becomes how you connect. Confidence and composure grow. Think about how refreshing it will be when you step up to the plate and do things better.

In business, competitors will search for and lure in new talent. They'll invest in their website and leave-behinds. They'll bulk up their capacity to handle new business. They'll snatch up tablets and learn new ways to “sizzle” in front of consumers. Yet, none of these investments will make the real difference. The problem lies in the premise.

Performing better doesn't mean doing more. She doesn't want more of the same. She seeks conversation, helpful exchanges and solutions. That's it.

Our program will teach you a form of consultative selling — the practice of discovering and isolating what someone wants, followed closely by delivering a solution that aligns to meet or exceed needs. Catch aids this. Contrast this with traditional selling — telling someone about features, advantages and benefits. Those exchanges are one-way talk. Communication is flat.

While others cling to a form of guessing, you're about to shift to a foundation of knowing. They're telling, you're selling.

OVERCOMING THE LIZARD BRAIN

As you continue with this program, a force will oppose you. It can prove to be a formidable foe. The good news is that it resides inside you, so there's no need to be blind-sided. It's what many call "The Lizard Brain."

Athletes have long suffered at the hands of inner voices — the fears that are shepherded, the allowances for negativity, the tendency toward flight over fight, etc. You're not alone if you harbor any or all of these!

Enjoy this cartoon introduction: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAoFPIHBu6U>.

Want something more mature? **Try this Seth Godin speech:** <http://vimeo.com/5895898>.

What obstacles does "The Lizard Brain" present?

- (i) Procrastinate and shy from progress.
- (ii) Be overly critical of yourself.
- (iii) Invent anxiety.
- (iv) Obsess over details.
- (v) Make excuses.

Overcome the "Lizard Brain" in this manner:

- (i) Allow yourself to have bad ideas.
- (ii) Don't make a Plan B, or talk in terms of "just in case."
- (iii) Train yourself to pursue the opposite — providence.
- (iv) Embrace failure as a learning experience.
- (v) Make no excuses!

You'll fight and win the small battles that lie just ahead of you. They're small because they stand in the way of something very big — your ultimate success.

Don't abandon when you have a bad day, or even if you've had a bad month. Simply review these last two pages and make sure you're in the right frame of mind. Remember that slumps are easily overcome. It's all in your choices.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Before we get too far into the program, there are assumptions to address. This primer walks through dynamics present in all conversation — whether there's an opportunity to sell or otherwise. Set your expectations reasonably here, so you can glean the greatest benefit.

Here's what this booklet won't do:

- (i) Catch won't improve your other skills — what you do best.
- (ii) Catch won't point toward a subset of your skills to leverage most.
- (iii) Catch won't comment too much on a specific playing field — which can vary wildly.
- (iv) Catch won't show you how to target or generate audiences.
- (v) Catch won't show you how to locate new teammates.
- (vi) Catch won't provide a cookie-cutter pitch (though the steps will be detailed).
- (vii) Catch won't tell you how to manage the costs in play (marketing, patience, etc.).

Here's what this booklet will do:

- (i) Catch will show you that preparation is always the first step.
- (ii) Catch will help you to warm up before you pitch.
- (iii) Catch will teach you when and how to slow things down.
- (iv) Catch will show you how to have meaningful conversations with others.
- (v) Catch will prove to you why asking questions trumps all else.
- (vi) Catch will develop your listening skills from passive to active.
- (vii) Catch will reinforce why being a real person is important.
- (viii) Catch will remind you why you should be thorough.
- (ix) Catch will demystify common objections people raise when being sold.
- (x) Catch will make it OK to ask for the sale (thanks to a low-pressure, opt-in close).
- (xi) Catch will position you as the most sensible voice among many.

I want to thank you for taking the time to consider and adopt this program. Your patience during rehabilitation is appreciated. It's time to return to the team.

II. PRE-GAME

Prepare to Compete

SCOUTING
WORKING THE MITT
LOOSENING UP
CONTROL

*“People ask me what I do in winter when there’s no baseball.
I’ll tell you what I do. I stare out the window and wait for spring.”*

— Rogers Hornsby

*“If you’re not practicing, somebody else is
— and he’ll be ready to take your job.”*

— Brooks Robinson

“Over-preparation is the foe of inspiration.”

— Napoleon Bonaparte

SCOUTING

Somewhere between staring into space and preparing too much is the correct balance. Game time is fast approaching. It's time to scout the competition and get to know your teammates.

Scouting potential teammates may be a new endeavor. Inherently, you know that your most valuable teammates will be those who feel similarly, or the types who grow to choose you.

Without strong teammates, there's no defeating the competition. Successful bonding with teammates dictates how easily you subdue the other voices and choices.

Here's how you might educate yourself on competitors.

- (i) Explore Google search keywords. This data reveals what consumers are looking for, by marketplace (<http://www.googlekeywordtool.com>). This can be done from a mobile device on the go. You don't need to be in the office. *Update: Google now requires an Adwords account.*
- (ii) Copy/paste all leading keywords of interest into a word processing document.
- (iii) Create a new page for just the 10 most popular keywords.
- (iv) For this shortlist, add the name of nearest city at the end of each to create a local version (e.g., "carpenter" becomes "carpenter washington dc").
- (v) Google the local search keywords. Note the websites that compete. Websites aren't all named for their companies. Some are loosely affiliated. If you're a parent, then think in terms of who influences your child in a given week: teachers, coaches, friends, you, etc.
- (vi) Explore what each competing voice offers. What's unusual and unlike your approach?
- (vii) Are the differentiations advantages or weaknesses?
- (viii) Think about how you fare against their advantages. Buyers will note them. You need to have answers and reasons for why you do things differently and why it's better.

Here's some basic scouting to do on your potential teammates:

- (i) Think about why someone opted to play catch with you.
- (ii) If you don't know him/her personally, then Google and take notes.
- (iii) Take particular note of interests and recent activity — these are talking points for catch.
- (v) Confirm your get together with a quick, friendly phone call — but don't pitch anything.

WORKING THE MITT

The smell of grass is in the air. The temperature is perfect outside. Baseball players arrive at the field early. They've prepared and envisioned this since the final out of the previous game.

Most players inspect each piece of equipment before taking the field. It's an important ritual in the pre-game routine. Pitchers and fielders alike focus on the mitt. They're going to use it throughout the game.

Dust off the mitt. Work a little oil into the leather. Tighten the strings. Pound your first into the palm and soften it for catch. You don't want any dropped balls later!

A business executive gets ready for a sales pitch in like fashion. His preparation also begins the night before a meeting. A friend who's meeting someone for coffee may jot down notes in his/her head casually. If there's an agenda, then role playing in advance can be helpful.

Commit to a pre-game routine:

- (i) Review your pitch — especially if this primer prompts new thinking and habits.
- (ii) Collect supporting examples to explore.
- (iii) Prepare visuals — since seeing can be believing.
- (iv) Think on success stories, which should accompany any visuals.
- (v) Point to what was achieved at similar moments in the past.
- (vi) Outline what you'd like to discuss — it's OK to bring notes with you.
- (vii) Try to get a decent night's sleep.
- (viii) Dress purposefully but comfortably for the get together

The best players respect all aspects of their sport — from rehabilitation to pre-game preparations to on-field warmups to performance to post-game analysis. Shortcuts easily impact final scores, even if indirectly. The savvy can sense who's ready and who's not.

LOOSENING UP

In the consultative selling section, I touched upon the damage caused by nerves and pressure during a pitch. She won't bite under these conditions. Time to try a different approach.

Capitalizing on your new knowledge of how to overcome "The Lizard Brain," you now know that heading in the opposite direction is where success often lies.

Nothing improves your chances more than positivity.

The right frame of mind is established through loosening up. We start with a round of soft toss. We ease into the paces. We talk ourselves through what might happen in the game. We work our way up to going 100%.

Warmups include:

- (i) Chart your commute carefully — there's no room for being late.
- (ii) Plan to arrive at the destination about 20 minutes before the get together will start.
- (iii) Be mindful of the weather and the setting — as both can impact the overall mood.
- (iv) Situate so you can watch him/her approach — before s/he knows you're there.
- (v) Remove distractions for the next series of activities.
- (vi) Review your outline or notes of how the get together will ideally go.
- (vii) Rehearse your success stories — what was achieved through trust in you?
- (viii) Affirm that you're the right person, at the right moment.
- (ix) Breathe deeply, slow down the game — like baseball greats do before delivering.
- (x) Remind yourself that two things matter most — questions and listening.
- (xi) Anticipate the objections — they're often the same each time, with slight variations.
- (xii) Commit to turning each obstacle that arises into an opportunity to better understand.
- (xiii) Take a quick look in the mirror — you can't afford a negative first impression!
- (xiv) Note how s/he arrives and approaches.
- (xv) If arriving last, then walk up in a relaxed but measured pace — don't look nervous.
- (xvi) Provide space for the greeting — don't stand too close or bound toward him/her.
- (xvii) Smile genuinely, make contact warmly — whether you shake hands or tap a shoulder.

CONTROL

During the steps ahead (when you'll play catch), the finesse with which you command attention and your craft will be critical.

Like nerves and pressure, anything resembling a control freak will concern an otherwise willing participant. Don't dictate that "there's only one way to do this." Don't say "I can't speak for them...." Don't draw lines in the sand. No jerky movements!

Exhibit control by offsetting the nerves of those you meet. Talk softly and slowly. Move assuredly, but carefully. Show an ease with yourself and others.

"Work like you don't need the money. Dance like nobody's watching."

— Satchel Paige

If selling feels like an "away game" for you, then nothing shows the home team you mean business better than projecting composure. You've been here a million times. No matter what happens on the field today, you'll leave happy for the chance to compete.

Make no mistake about this — it'll likely be uncomfortable before it's easy. Some will try to take away your ability to compete. How you respond dictates whether you'll succeed.

In business, she might say she thought you were a different company, to imply that she's still shopping. Sometimes, she'll be less coy and simply state that she's collecting other estimates and opinions. In all of these instances, let her know that evaluating choices is important.

She may rush you to a nagging problem, or try to get you fired up about something she'd like to have done. Following begins the wrong kind of reactionary cycle. Listening is good. Following is bad. You plan to be the answer, so your actions need to reflect that.

Your goal isn't to prevent important exchanges. It just makes sense to soft toss before you fire up the fastball. Don't risk re-injury before you return to game action.

III. CATCH

Bond in Meaningful Ways

ORIENTATION

“SHOW ME”

INQUIRY

ACTIVE LISTENING

CHECK

RESONANCE

REVELATIONS

CONSENSUS

EXIT STRATEGY

*“When they start the game,
they don’t yell ‘work’ ball
— they say ‘play’ ball.”*

— Willie Stargell

*“I became a good pitcher when I stopped trying to make them miss the ball
and started to make them hit it.”*

— Sandy Koufax

ORIENTATION

School, work and play have each introduced us to some form of orientation. It's not wise to jump into things. We won't make the most of experiences without it. Stretching leads to soft toss, which leads to catch, which leads to pitching — there's a progression.

"I never rush myself. They can't start the game without me."

— Satchel Paige

The first matter at hand is to set expectations. Slow down the pace. Set the tone. Orientation should feel inviting.

Orientation isn't a detail of each step, like a bad Powerpoint show. You're not a robot.

She wants to pull you toward the problem, or to something that excites her. Acknowledge that you're there to address concerns and what you can do to help, but then transition to finding a place where you can both sit down to get started.

It's symbolic to sit down. We're in no rush. We're pausing to make the most of this together.

There are four important points with orientation:

- (i) Verify why you're there, recalling the initial request to meet.
- (ii) Estimate the time the get together should take.
- (iii) Outline the 3-5 areas that you'd like to cover.
- (iv) Remove the pressure!

The most critical aspect of orientation is to remove the pressure. That's the 800-pound gorilla in the room.

Orientation should be relaxing. You don't want the kind of relaxation that leads to nodding off to sleep. If that happens, then reschedule. Don't be afraid of a second, shorter get together when the pitch is made. For now, establish a meaningful connection. This is a fact-finding session. You should take the time to know what this can be.

“SHOW ME”

I had a coach in high school who was fond of saying, “This is Missouri, son...you’ve got to SHOW ME!” He wasn’t looking to lead a history lesson on the Show Me state. Coach was pushing me take things to the next level. It was time for something more.

Once you’ve greeted and begun orientation, the next step is to learn where this can go. When a baseball pitcher joins a new team, the catcher starts by learning the repertoire he throws. During the game, he’ll visit the mound to discuss situations.

Walking is a powerful metaphor. Walk me over to the problem. Walk me through what you’ve been thinking. Let her lead for now.

Listen carefully to what she offers. Show you’re listening by taking notes. Assume the role of a sleuth and closely inspect all she references. Test the viability.

Begin to study mannerisms. Start to make her comfortable. Note any hesitations for later.

Show me, Let’s take a walk — whichever end of the tone spectrum you prefer, this is your first substantial investment of time and attention in playing catch. Prior to this program, you may have relied on more of a “canned presentation.”

Think about walking along the beach, picking up seashells and enjoying the waves. It’s the little things that matter. Your passion for the walk will begin to show her that you’re capable of helping by her standards.

**“Show me” isn’t listening to the sound of your voice.
It’s listening to her.**

Make no mistake — the walk is far from fluff. This is how you make your way to the strongest pitch. “Show me” leads into a number of mission-critical areas that include inquiry, active listening, check, resonance, revelations, consensus.

INQUIRY

There's one oversight central to every average, struggling or soon-to-be failing pitch. It's so fundamentally crippling that I was compelled to include it in the title of this primer.

Telling Ain't Selling™

"A man should look for what is, and not for what he thinks should be."

— Albert Einstein

There's a fundamental swing and miss that's made by home-run seekers. The assumption (and resulting projection) is that you know what she wants and needs. You convince yourself of this position because of past experiences, at the same time that your success relies on how much you can seize this particular moment.

Those who sell for a living love to talk about urgency. You have to create urgency. You're probably sensing a pattern here: nerves, pressure, traditional attempts at taking control and forcing urgency — again, none of these energies are conducive to convincing.

I don't deny the power of urgency in any situation. I just prefer a quieter version of it. She wants to find a solution, and so do you. Pursuits are aligned. Care to learn about her needs. Bonding leads to trust, which speeds her toward buying into you.

Inquiry is urgency. Asking questions draws her closer. Don't assume the answers are already known. Why risk making a real connection on things you can't yet know?

I'm not suggesting that you bombard her with questions in an invasive manner. This shouldn't feel anything like an interrogation. Imagine that you're playing catch.

Toss the ball. She catches it. Sometimes, it's not thrown back immediately. When she's ready, she returns it. The pattern repeats at a relaxed and comfortable pace.

ACTIVE LISTENING

If asking questions is how you begin a conversation, then listening is how you create momentum. Intensifying an exchange shouldn't feel intense. Conversations advance steadily. Avoid racing. In baseball, playing catch builds arm strength and lowers the risk of injury.

Research shows that, on average, we can hear four times faster than we can talk. The more intently we listen, the sooner we can come to an understanding.

You and she want smooth progress, but don't confuse progress with speed. Focus instead on ease and enjoyability. There are three types of listening: active listening, passive listening, NOT listening. Only one leads to a productive conversation.

Active listening has the curious effect of convincing her to consider your pitch more easily. Like slowing down the action at the outset, it's an efficient means of gaining control. You're practicing the thing you most need from her. Guess who will follow whom next?

Take a look at what you're now projecting. You're showing respect. You're conveying that you won't accept misunderstanding. You're creating intimacy — where you become worthy of the answers you seek.

Active listening looks like this:

- (i) Reduce or eliminate distractions in the room.
- (ii) Imagine the type of listening you'd appreciate.
- (iii) Be sure to face her — don't glare or lock eyes for long stretches.
- (iv) Lean forward for emphasis — don't slouch or invade space.
- (v) Respond slightly — though too much silence communicates that you're not listening.
- (vi) Stay in the present — don't mention similar past experiences, and don't anticipate.
- (vii) Release inner distractions — “The Lizard Brain” that pulls you from playing catch.
- (viii) Keep an open mind — ignore “aha!” or any tendency to box things up.
- (ix) Don't cut her off, no matter what — she stops, then you continue.
- (x) Clarify what she's said to provide proof that you've been listening.

CHECK

During the course of playing catch, she'll let loose with a fastball or snap off a curveball. Check is any challenge to the conversation's momentum. It represents a line of defense.

**In chess, check is forcing the opposing king to a safer place.
During your get together, check will also feel like this.**

In sales, the most common check will be some version of the question “what’s this going to cost me?” She seeks the safety of considering the costs (without yet buying something).

You can't blame her from wanting to know this information, and you can't punish her for asking. You can't generate the kind of check that happens on a bad first date. What did he just say to me? Maybe he's not the guy for me. Waiter — CHECK!

When she tests you, remember that it's just a defense mechanism. You're creating comfort. She's signaling that she's not quite at the stage where she's comfortable to trust you.

The fact that you're not asking for her to buy anything early in the get together, and you're taking the time to get to know her — both will be disconcerting. Others didn't invest in this, nor show the same finesse you're showing. Check is a *compliment* — not an affront.

The best response to check is to question why you should rush ahead. Communicate calmly, but directly. “Do you need to be somewhere else? I'd like to ensure we're both in the moment here. I know from experience how this can lead to success later. Is that fair?”

She wants to know with certainty that she's found someone who can help her, right?

Responding to check in this manner is balanced. It shows patience and emphasizes the importance of details. It communicates that this isn't salesmanship — you genuinely care.

You absolutely should care. Playing catch is a form of bonding.

RESONANCE

In music, resonance is a supplemental vibration that intensifies and enriches the overall tone. That's a powerful metaphor. In baseball, resonance is the pitcher who finds a rhythm with his catcher. He stops aiming his pitches. They just roll. It's difficult for opponents to disrupt it.

Resonance is key. It's not the product of manipulation. It's a natural, absolute connection.

She wants this. She knows it leads to success. She may have “checked” you, but now she's finding an ease with you.

Your commitment to active listening led the two of you to resonate with each other. At first, conversation will shift subtly. There will be slight tone changes, repositioning, perhaps even a verbal recommitment to keep this rolling longer.

It's not a bad idea to suggest that while you're perfectly happy to be here, and that real progress is being made, that you don't want to wear out your welcome. You want her to invite you to stay — perhaps even insist upon it.

Here are some of the things she might say, each of which indicates resonance:

- (i) “Can I get you a drink?” or “Can I get you another drink?”
- (ii) “I'm so glad we're working through this.”
- (iii) “What do you do for fun these days?”
- (iv) “Is it OK that we're going into so much depth with this?”
- (v) “Do you have anywhere else to be after this?”
- (vi) “You should meet so and so — she would like to meet you.”

All of this is happening without a “canned presentation” — your back story, resources, approach, contacts and more. Some of that is ahead, so not to worry.

This is how you should want things to unfold. She's selling you on why she's worthy of your time and energy. She's concerned for you. She's thinking of referring you to a friend. It's a remarkable turn of events.

REVELATIONS

No, not like Biblical revelations. Life has just begun for those who care to play catch. After resonance, revelations is the most exciting moment in a conversation.

When you're both actively listening and resonating, a wonderful chain of events begins. She lets down her guard. She speaks with you openly. It's your job to follow her lead. Let down your guard. Open up as well.

Following, in this instance, is a form of leadership. I know, this seems counter-intuitive. Think of it like this — you built the trust and comfort, now she's looking at you differently.

When she chooses to reveal something to you, don't jump on it like an Amazon box dropped on your doorstep. Step back. Acknowledge it. Thank her. Smile! Reward the behavior you most needed from the conversation.

Without revelations, conversation sits at an uncomfortable distance. Nothing of real significance is shared. Objections remain withheld.

Compare this to playing catch. A ball is tossed back and forth. At some point, someone does something out of rhythm. Maybe it's a wild throw. Maybe it's a curveball. Perhaps a joke is shared, or a "do it again" is offered. Catch goes up a notch.

Confidence is critical in the presence of revelations. There's great benefit to showing her that this is a normal occurrence with you. People trust you. People reveal things. You connect. Acknowledging is brief, but poignant — then toss the ball back.

There's a limit to how far you should let this momentum roll. Often, she'll signal when she's ready to get down to brass tacks. OK, I think I get what you're saying. What would it look like if we...? What would it take to...? What's the next step?

You follow her decision. You pause the conversation to pivot for the next step.

CONSENSUS

You can't afford to get excited when a buyer reveals things, or when she indicates that it's time to take action. If you're not careful, then this communicates that the conversation has been less than sincere. It's a journey. Don't appear to be overly focused on resolution and rewards.

In sales, sellers don't offer options and pricing without a "soft sell" first. Don't relinquish the control you earned by walking with her, asking questions, listening actively, resonating.

Allowing her to dictate when catch proceeds to its final tosses is not a form of leadership. There's one last bit of due diligence — to insist upon consensus.

She'll signal that it's time to go to the next level. Like orientation, when you paused to sit with her, it's again time for a brief but vital breather.

The reality is that you're both getting tired. She could be thinking about what needs to be done later in the day. It's not a slight to you. It takes energy to have a meaningful conversation. Regardless of circumstances, you require consensus.

In baseball, the catcher talks to the pitcher during warmups, as they sit in the dugout and mid-game. Rapport is constant. He's managing the pitcher's mindset and performance.

Affirm these important items for consensus:

- (i) She had specific reasons or an urgency for the get together.
- (ii) Those reasons are aligned or complementary with yours and others who advise her.
- (iii) All have invested in understanding and addressing the challenges.
- (iv) There isn't a significant divide that can't now be crossed together.
- (v) Verify there's comfort and trust in you doing a thorough job. Emphasize thorough.
- (vi) Repeat key questions and confusions that arose earlier, playfully testing for answers.
- (vii) If there's any hesitation, or glances at each other (given a group), then address it.
- (viii) Do other influencers think she should instead do x, y, or z? Address that as well.
- (ix) If addressing seems to cause frustration you can't manage, then reschedule catch.
- (x) If she seems incredulous, then try to reschedule with the missing influencers present.

EXIT STRATEGY

If asking questions and listening actively is how you play catch effectively, then resonance, revelations and consensus are how you transition into your pitch.

It's paramount that you value her time and intelligence.

Every conversation must come to an end.

Your exit strategy is an important sign of respect.

I'm pausing here to make sure your exit strategy isn't a form of concession. When it is, you've conceded control of the momentum. Be cautious about this!

Reasons why she may compel you to pitch sooner than you should:

- (i) Fatigue.
- (ii) Confusion.
- (iii) Plans after the get together.
- (iv) Heard this before from someone else.
- (v) Works in a related field.
- (vi) Sounds costly.
- (vii) Can't wait for the solution — excited!

The transition from catch into pitch shouldn't be difficult. Once resonance and revelations occur, move briefly to consensus — but then enable your first exit strategy.

Exiting through consensus is summarizing where you've been together. It's a bookend to the initial orientation. You're orienting her for the answer she's hoping you'll deliver. In baseball, catchers and coaches like confident pitchers who remain in control.

There's one slope that'll prove especially slippery in sales — when the customer is hot to learn the cost. If you allow her to receive this before you've built trust and value, then control is squandered. Don't accept this fate. Your best customer wants you to be thorough.

The French call it dénouement — or falling action. Economists call it the law of diminishing returns. Your job is to guide the tail end of momentum toward a solution (not stagnation).

IV. PITCH

Finish What You've Started

SETTING THE TABLE

"CREDENTIALS"

OPTIONS

SELECTION

OBJECTIONS

HE SAID, SHE SAID

THE CHASE

THE CLOSE

*“You see, you spend a good piece of your life gripping a baseball...
In the end, it turns out that it was the other way around all the time.”*

— Jim Bouton

*“I’m not used to seeing the ball go wherever she wants.
As a pitcher, I like to be...I don’t want to say perfect...
but I want to know what the ball is going to do.”*

— Mariano Rivera

*“I can’t tell you how comforting it felt
to have Mariano Rivera come in when I left the game.”*

— Roger Clemens

SETTING THE TABLE

Just like orientation was a good idea before beginning the conversation and walking, so too is preparing her to hear and embrace your pitch.

It should go without saying that this is the most unnerving stage for her. Despite your ability to develop rapport and trust, she'll soon be asked to listen to you, consider something different or buy. Any of these will test the relationship.

Some baseball catchers don't like it when a pitcher "shakes off a sign," which signals that he's going to throw a different pitch than called. Some pitchers struggle to follow a lead.

The best way to ease the mounting stress is to address it — by discussing what the current situation will look and feel like once you've made the difference. This is the time to put your signature on her vision of "better."

Salespeople say you should overcome a prospect's fears and inertia by taking her to the root of her misery — to remind her why you're there and how much the status quo is unsatisfactory. I think this is manipulative and dangerous.

When you resort to a sales tactic, you become less genuine and authentic. Why forfeit good fortune in the moment to recall misfortune in her past? When you align yourself with a negative, you sever your ties to a better way, a solution, an answer, etc.

You can't be the need AND the solution.

Don't underestimate the power that current circumstances have over her. You can't represent cowardice in the face of these forces. Positivity before the pitch!

Setting the table is about tone. It's not about detailing the steps in your pitch. Doing that would render you a robot for the most critical stage of the get together. In sales, the stress of considering the cost would loom just ahead. Convey compassion and understanding.

“ CREDENTIALS ”

I put the word in quotation marks for a reason. It's *allegedly* important in sales. You may have been trained that you can't pitch without first establishing your credentials. In baseball, pre-game rhetoric should be dialed back. Ruffling feathers can produce stronger opposition.

Before I admit that there's a place for credentials in a pitch, let's examine the counter forces to presenting them.

Jealousy, or “player-hating” as some call it, poses a very real threat. Learning of your good fortune can elicit a negative response or counter. It's important to tiptoe here.

Rather than venture to know where she stands on this, instead create a version of credentials that eases her into supporting your pitch.

Everyone says you need to differentiate — in order to stand out. This is certainly true. She has many options available to her. She's chosen to get together with you today, but may speak with two to four others as well. The key is to be different in a positive way.

Perhaps the best way to reinforce worthiness is through a “coming of age” story. When I say story, I'm not implying that you create or embellish a tale. In business, you can recount how you founded or survived a crisis. A confidant can share a pivotal moment when she and a friend navigated a situation together. Avoid bragging or pointing to the trophy case.

**With every “coming of age” story are profound decisions.
Revisit these. If luck lifted you, then speak to it.**

With great storytelling, she'll follow and become invested in what happens next. Contrast this with how some nod off or become frustrated by visiting your trophy case. Recognize that your success signals a higher cost to accept your solution.

If she likes your story, then she'll invite you to talk more about yourself. Otherwise, let her know that you don't bore people by placing feathers in your cap. Speak to credentials in passing, with a few tantalizing highlights. Let her stop you and say they're important.

OPTIONS

There's an undervalued tool in your arsenal — creativity. Some leverage it better than others do. It's one of those traits that everyone can appreciate, when it's placed in the right light.

Creativity is the safest road to building value in your pitch. Cultivate options. When she sees value, she'll spend. The greater the value, the greater the investment.

Don't feel as though you need to present the most thought-provoking, other-worldly recommendations. That's risky. The value of an idea is validated when someone desires it.

Flex your creativity best by distributing energy equally across options. Make each viable. Present pros and cons. Briefly paint the picture of how life might be improved with each.

A baseball pitcher is most potent when his repertoire contains a variety of pitches that can be thrown for strikes, each available on call by the catcher. The batter knows he'll need to swing.

Thoughtful options that she finds helpful affirm, once again, why you're there. Thinking creatively is something you do for her benefit. It's not about what you would do if this was you. Each of us is different, so you can't make this mistake!

Another pitfall is falling in love with a recommendation. The strength of your pitch would be diminished. If she doesn't value it, then you've been derailed. Damaged credibility makes it difficult for you to get things back on track.

Present all options as viable. Be neutral and measured in the attention each receives. Salespeople price two ways — based upon time/costs as well as perceived value.

When she says, "This all sounds reasonable," or asks, "What do you think would be best?" simply say thank you. It's a matter of preference. You've enjoyed being creative for her!

SELECTION

While she's considering her options, you wait. Perhaps it's an awkward silence. In baseball, a pitcher often stands frozen on the mound when he doesn't like the pitch being called. The catcher will call time out to chat. The pitcher usually wins these exchanges.

Provide space for options to be weighed. Let her think. It's imperative that this unfolds naturally. That's because you're confident in your pitch. You're time-tested.

If you second-guess options, or invest attention in one over others, or point her toward what's best, then you deny a basic phenomenon from happening — selection.

In shopping, it's exciting to find a desirable solution. It's not your job to dampen this search. Feed selection with silence. Like toys on the shelf, you're just waiting to be chosen.

When she selects an option, you lean forward to engage. Grab a notepad. Show you're interested in what she has to say. Stay moderate and sincere.

Sometimes, the selection will be definite. "I'll take it!" or "This is what I need to do." These moments will be few and far between. Small battles lie just around the corner.

Align yourself with the joy that springs from the solution.

Whether it's love or like at this stage, your response is to ask why — as in "Why do you feel that way?" Remind gently that each new challenge deserves a tailored solution. You can't be viewed as having placed a bet. All options are viable. You want what's best for her.

The answer to this "why" is her first admission that she believes in your solution.

OBJECTIONS

Yes, she wants the benefit(s) that come with your recommendation — but she also wants to win the exchange. It's like the baseball pitcher who tells his manager that he's not tired and can continue to perform. They all say the same thing!

“Check” paused momentum earlier. Objections are her last line of defense.

Objections aren't fully real. They originate from fear. They accompany selection because they're buying signals.

Maybe she wants to think on it. She might want to speak with her pastor, significant other, friends or family members. Perhaps she's not a fan of change. Even those who welcome it can get cold feet. In the face of these, avoid defensive posturing and adding tension.

Assume the opposite energy in the face of objections. Your tone and patience while she hesitates speaks volumes. Continue to be helpful and compassionate. Try to be light-hearted. Don't resort to all-out humor (though a little comic relief can ease the stress). Again, focus on the joy of solving a problem.

Your demeanor when handling adversity is critical. It was easy to have a conversation with you, generate valuable options and make a selection. It will also be easy to navigate obstacles.

Here are a few points to remember with objections during a sales pitch:

- (i) Always relate back to why the appointment was first made, the consensus you gained together, the option she has chosen, and why. Now is when you'll leverage those affirmations.
- (ii) If she balks at your price, then point to the value that's been built. Underline how quality assurance costs money. You've been creative in offsetting costs by cultivating numerous benefits. Feature ones that aren't easily quantified.
- (iii) Show a willingness to compromise in slight ways, especially when she isn't being moved off an objection easily. Remind her that only so much can be done, due to strains on you to ensure quality. The alternative — resorting to price “drops,” or deep discounts — these would instead imply that you're strictly in it for the money.
- (iv) Scheduling is a tool you can leverage against an objection or a compromise. Your calendar is crowded. She'll be pleased that you're prioritizing her needs.

HE SAID, SHE SAID

If I was given a nickel every time money was the key objection, then I'd be rich.

While I'm not here to diminish the grip that cost has over most, I do find its power to be exaggerated. In the words of the zen master Yoda, "there is another."

In America, the rich are getting richer. Credit is extended and can be abused. Money is scarce for most classes, yet many spend beyond what they have. This suggests that what something costs isn't ultimately an obstacle. People stretch for what they want.

One objection that's often discounted or forgotten is the "he said, she said" — thoughts from neighbors, loved ones, associates, mentors, customers, estimators, "The Lizard Brain," ego!

We all shelter voices — opinions that we can't shake.

If you've accounted for all other objections, and you've narrowed the pitch to a cost consideration, then double check that all decision makers are present. While it may be technically true that they're present, others opinions could exist in the background.

In baseball, only the pitching coach is allowed to shape the pitcher's talent and approach.

During consensus, we cautioned about outside influences. If they're still in play, then you got "uh huh" at each step of catch and pitch — a rushed feeling toward learning the cost. Soon, you'll be thanked for your time and told "we need to think about this." Get back on track!

Here are a few voices to address in reference to the "he said, she said":

- (i) Have you had any bad experiences with someone like me in the past?
- (ii) Did I activate any of your pet peeves?
- (iii) What are others asking you to consider?
- (iv) What will others make of what you're about to do?
- (v) Do you have family or friends in a related field of work?
- (vi) How often do you consider do-it-yourself to be viable?

THE CHASE

There's a Catch-22 underlying most pitches. If she feels as though you need the sale, then she won't take action. If she feels you're too busy to manage her work, then she also won't bite.

There's a delicate balance to be struck — damned if you're sitting on your hands, and damned if you're the most successful business in town. In baseball, some managers like to tinker with the lineup. They keep players fresh and opponents off-balance.

When you're able to exist somewhere in the middle, through presenting how your current calendar looks and what you can reasonably offer her, you draw her closer.

As with any relationship, your mission is to create the chase.

When there's no chase, and you're instead applying pressure to take action today, she will retreat. Neediness reduces the credibility of your pitch. Maybe you're not in demand. In sales, maybe costs are higher today than they'll be during a boom. Her instincts tell her to wait.

If you portray that you're the most successful business in town, she could feel that she's signing up to wait. Standing in line isn't ideal. Quality would also likely suffer, as you juggle too many projects and make mistakes.

Be transparent about both ends of the spectrum. You're not waiting for the phone to ring. You're not so busy that you can't offer a standardized turnaround. Illustrate a few current projects. Detail a typical week. These can speak to the extent of your capacity.

Once you've established that business would proceed as usual, and that no detail of the solution would be in jeopardy, turn her attention to the possibility of doing something special. Generally, that's prioritizing the work. That should immediately interest her.

The goal is for her to eventually sell you, much like it was during resonance. Let her ask for things. You respond with what it would take to make that happen. Let her chase you.

When there's a chase, you control the value of any selections and the income that's received in exchange for them. Establish urgency on her terms.

THE CLOSE

This was adapted from a pitch for a home improvement company.

If she didn't easily accept an option, and she hasn't yet bought into a solution through creating the chase, then it's time to take your stand. Time is valuable for both parties. You don't want to abuse a good thing. Again, you're grateful for the chance to compete today.

A closer is a baseball pitcher who enters the game to protect his team's advantage and lead them to victory. His repertoire is basic — one or two devastating pitches.

I prefer a two-part close. Of course, you've been closing indirectly all along. There are 11 opportunities for her to take action in the close I recommend to salespeople. Start by asking for the sale simply, then complete your estimate steadily. Don't rush or drag feet.

If you ask for the sale just once, then you're significantly hurting your chances. She is likely to purchase on the fourth opportunity to take action, or later.

Remember: "no" often stems from nerves. You won't need to ask 11 times. Let her opt in. "I've enjoyed meeting you today. I hope we can do this again some time. Are you ready to make a decision at this point, or do you need more time? Is there anything further I can do to assist you? I hope you've found me to be fair." **OPPORTUNITY #1**

You shouldn't feel obligated to follow this word for word. You're not a machine — especially at such a crucial juncture. Scripted = bad. Collected and methodical = good. It demonstrates that you do this every week. Don't let nerves play into this. Remind yourself that you can call on her again in a few days. You're doing all that can be done now to help her. Like the baseball reference, you've "covered all bases." You should look relaxed in that knowledge. Convey this ease through your close.

Begin to write your estimate quietly. Verbalize that this is what you're doing so she doesn't think you're assuming a sale. You can't appear to be arrogant. Provide your estimate on the same document where she can agree to do the work. She may buy now because this should only be done once, if you're being efficient together. **OPPORTUNITY #2**

What's the point of an estimate that can't be executed as a bonding agreement? It's wasteful. As you complete the estimate, she's weighing the buy. She may show this by asking more questions. Stop what you're doing to address these. Once you've worked through each, ask again if she's ready to commit. **OPPORTUNITY #3**

Maybe she admits that she wants to do something — it just feels like she needs more time. Ask her to clarify the “wants” bit. Does the solution feel more like a luxury than a need? Gently remind her that you can't be held responsible for elements of the job that become more costly with advancing conditions. You're a “no surprises” practitioner. You're not going anywhere. You can re-assess later. You won't forget how to be creative. She may buy because you're here now and her reasons now seem silly. **OPPORTUNITY #4**

Bad contracts irritate. Good ones relieve. Demonstrate how thoughtful, organized, fair and reasonable you are.

Once you've completed the estimate, walk through the specifications. She may ask about the math. Stop to explain it clearly. Test her understanding of it by changing the figures and quizzing the price. Where the math is transparent, it's also more credible. She may buy because it's reasonable and the value seems enhanced. **OPPORTUNITY #5**

Perhaps she asks about a term or condition of doing business. Encircle the concern. Let her explain what's confusing or causing alarm. Is this a pet peeve or a bad past experience creeping in? Have a quick chat. She may buy because she's just been reminded how comfortable she is with you. You're just doing your job. **OPPORTUNITY #6**

Some will suspend a decision until all of the details are written — even though you've been discussing the same items verbally or showing them on a pad. She could buy at any time just because you're taking the time to formalize the offer. When she listened to other pitches, maybe they scribbled ballpark costs on a scrap of paper or the back of a business card. Maybe they just emailed a few figures afterward. Those are bratty, defeatist responses. You're showing care and acting like a professional. She may buy to reward that behavior. **OPPORTUNITY #7**

Underline your guarantee. If you don't have one, then it's time to develop one. It's the perfect complement to a thorough pitch and commitment to quality. She may buy here because she appreciates both and feels short-sighted for focusing solely on price. **OPPORTUNITY #8**

The simpler and more complete your guarantee is, the more strength it will lend to the value of her selection.

Note any trial offers that make it easier to “get into a solution” without fear of a mistake. Many worry that there’s a hidden consequence — that what’s not understood now will hurt later. You’re the expert. She’s the newbie trying to make sense of how things are done. Take the lead by showing her a risk-free way to work with you. Just as a guarantee builds upon the value of her selection, a trial offer reinforces her confidence in your ability to help her. She may buy here because she can’t imagine it getting any easier. **OPPORTUNITY #9**

Ask her if she’s aware of any current promotions that are running. She may think you mean market-wide and offer those. You mean from your company. Ask to review others’ coupons. Be prepared with all coupons your company has recently published. The last way you want to look is desperate. Don’t drop your price for the wrong reasons. Discounts should be slight, which indicates fairness. If she doesn’t have your company’s coupon to redeem for the discount, then offer your copy. You’ve got her back. Update the price, circle it and add “lowest price FINAL.” Ask her if this reads clearly, so she sees this is the lowest it’ll get. Your company doesn’t run any discounts lower than those already reflected. Couple this with the advancing age of any issue that goes unaddressed (most things don’t improve with time). Apologize for having to imply that solutions generally become more expensive as time goes on. She may buy because the price looks leaner, when weighed against the consequences of procrastination. She feels better that you again compromised. **OPPORTUNITY #10**

Finally, if she’s looking to pay in cash or check then you can adjust the price by 4%. Share that most customers charge to credit or bank debit cards, and that the banks charge you fees that rise with the seasons. Joke that it’s like that with all of your costs of doing business. She may buy here because your costs are rising steadily over time, which means the fees for hiring you will also keep rising. You also showed her another way to save. **OPPORTUNITY #11**

No matter where in the above close she takes action, complete the remaining steps. Much like when she first revealed things to you, don’t become excited. Thank her for the confidence. No cheesy one-liners for assurance (e.g., “You won’t be sorry,” or “You won’t regret this”). Offer that it takes just a few minutes to walk through the estimate. Have her initial each section and sign at the bottom. Collect between 25% and 50% for the deposit.

V. POST-GAME

Repeat the Cycle

ANALYSIS
SO WHEN'S THE NEXT GAME?

*“Baseball is ninety percent mental,
and the other half is physical.”*

— Yogi Berra

*“Baseball is like church.
Many attend, few understand.”*

— Leo Durocher

*“Baseball is like a poker game.
Nobody wants to quit when he’s losing,
nobody wants you to quit when you’re ahead.”*

— Jackie Robinson

ANALYSIS

The best baseball pitchers, catchers and coaches keep a log of successes and failures. I'm not talking the bad kind — when you're constantly replaying failures as opposed to resetting to again seize the moment. Winners repeat the beneficial and remove the detrimental.

If you're flying solo, then get into the habit of reporting on the disposition of pitches to a sales manager. You can ask a friend, foe or spouse to assist you with this important function informally. In the least, have a conversation. At the most, receive coaching.

Through reporting what transpired during pitches, you'll learn to hold yourself accountable You'll recognize and track patterns. A second opinion is critical to selling.

Perhaps the most important gain from post-game analysis is the understanding that the final score isn't all that matters. There's also improved determination. If you're not passionate about and focused on what you do, then forget about tracking conversions.

Without the right focus, sales won't happen for you like it does for others. "Commission breath" dooms any salesperson the moment it's detected. Your enthusiasm, expertise, and care are what's contagious. Selling is a service. Buying is an option. Don't lose sight of these.

Don't be afraid to admit that the fit is wrong. Some matches are not meant to be. It's a fine assessment, as long as you gave it an honest effort. I deliberately avoided this topic earlier, for fear of encouraging an easy way out of tough situations. Been there!

If you don't yet know what your ideal audience looks like, then post-game analysis will get you there. Stay at it. Look back on the pitches that flowed well. Some bought at first offer. Some responded to reason later in the get together. Some took on a greater cost than others. If there was a positive response, then that was a win. Be mindful.

Knowing what the right-fit audience looks like and describing their traits to lead generators and marketing resources will further boost your productivity. Those professionals are paid on how well you perform. Succeed for them as you do for yourself. Sustain the winning.

SO WHEN'S THE NEXT GAME?

If you're curious about other courses of action, then we're happy to assist you!

STEP I: *CATCH: Because Telling Ain't Selling*™ — the primer was just completed.

STEP II: *Big Game Hunting* is a companion resource that's in development, if you feel that the number and nature of your opportunities to pitch aren't ideal.

STEP III: Remodel Your Business

Hire the author of this primer, Eric S. Townsend, to consult with you. He'll consider any suitable freelance opportunity to assist with your marketing and sales.

Hire Eric for any or all of the following reasons:

- (i) To examine the specifics of your sales pitch and rewrite it — from the ground up.
- (ii) To act as your sales manager, or to guide you in developing a sales management routine.
- (iii) To build a website and internet presence that draws prospects to your business.
- (iv) To establish additional lead-generation channels.
- (v) To improve existing marketing and branding strategies.
- (vi) To handle and qualify prospects so you can pitch higher-quality leads.
- (vii) To produce quality sales collateral.
- (viii) To launch a blog, newsletter or email marketing campaign to keep people close to you.

Introduce yourself today:

Email Eric today: eric@glimpse.digital. Please allow up to 48 hours for the initial reply. Depending upon the nature of your needs, he may wish to call you first to ask questions. Please be sure to provide a “direct” phone number. Cell phone is best.

STEP IV: CATCH Companion

<http://www.catchcompanion.tumblr.com>

Enjoy a CATCH-themed magazine on Tumblr. Snapshots and stories from the chase!

We thank you for your interest in *CATCH — Because Telling Ain't Selling*™ as well as Go Booklets. Our parent company, Glimpse Digital, provides full-spectrum marketing consultation and services to a select number of clients. That website is located in the footer.

Here's the Go Booklets library:

- *Bizkii Volume I*
- *Bizkii Volume II*
- *Catch: Bond in Meaningful Ways (abridged)*
- *Catch: Because Telling Ain't Selling (complete primer)*
- *Command Parallels*
- *First World Maladies Volume I*
- *Lovely*
- *Orion Sagas*
- *Score Big*
- *Sharking*
- *The Legend of Tabula Raisa*
- *150 Sharks (abridged from Sharking)*

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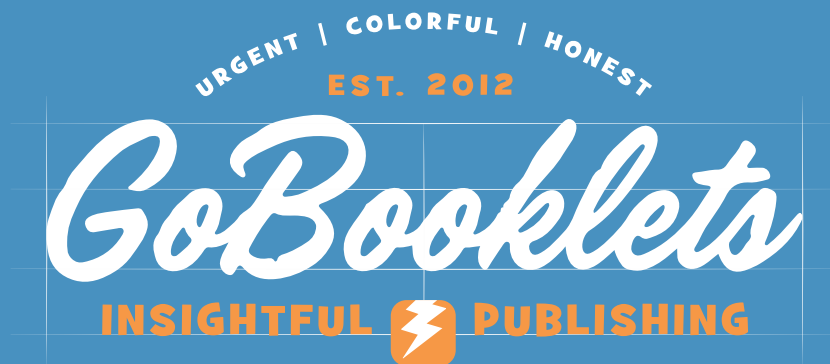
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