

Value for Money

In the above hypothetical conversation, our magician friend actually stated quite a few good features of his act. But features are based on logical statements. That's what features are - logical statements. Unfortunately, most potential buyers or clients are not persuaded by logic but by emotions. Emotions are the benefits of a feature.

Your value as an entertainer is in direct proportion to the number of benefits you can offer. That is so important I'm going to repeat it - "*Your value as an entertainer is in direct proportion to the number of benefits you can offer.*" So, what you must sell to your client are the benefits (emotions and feelings); don't dwell on the features (logic).

In this way you are giving lots of value for the money you quote for your show. That's why many clients would rather book a £250 act than a 'cheaper' £95 act, simply because they are convinced one represents better value for money than the other.

How to Develop Your Selling Script

Let me show you a selling technique that's as old as the hills. All successful sales persons use this technique because it's tried and tested and guaranteed to work for you. Some sales techniques books describe it as the 'sell the sizzle, not the

sausage', or 'sell the white teeth, not the toothpaste' method. In other words, you describe the benefits, not the features. But this feature-benefit method is even more effective when employing a technique called the 'tie down' sequence. Using this will result in your inquirer's attitude changing from, "I *need* a magician" to, "I *want* you." It really works; here's how.

First, list some features of your act. As an example, I perform lots of sight gags in my act. But what are the benefits of sight gags to the booker and the booker's children? The benefits are that the children enjoy and laugh at the comical situations. The selling sentence is strung together by first stating the feature and then linking it to the benefits with a phrase such as, "which means that..."

Then, after enthusing about the benefit, immediately get the client to say, nod, or give a 'yes' response by using a 'tie-down' type of question which consolidates the feature (with yet another benefit if possible). 'Tie-downs' are also great for keeping the inquirer involved in your sales presentation. **Figs 1.5 to Fig 1.8** list some examples.

Try the technique with your own show's features and see how easy it is to construct a persuasive selling sequence. You know it makes sense (don't you?)

Sell emotions and feelings (benefits). Don't dwell on logic (features)

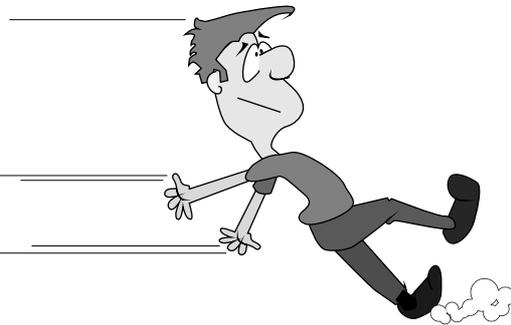
<p>FEATURE I perform lots of sight gags with the magic ...</p>  <p>Remember: <i>Your value is in direct proportion to the number of benefits you offer!</i></p>	<p>BENEFIT Which means that all the children not only follow the magic but thoroughly enjoy and laugh at the comical situations. And that's why I can assure you my birthday shows are always so successful.</p> <p>TIE-DOWN And, of course, everyone then credits you for organising such a super party. After all, you are doing all the arranging and hard work, aren't you?</p>
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Fig 1.5

Features are based on logical statements. That's what features are - logical statements. Unfortunately, most potential buyers or clients are not persuaded by logic but by emotions. Emotions are the benefits of a feature.

Emotive words that 'open doors'...	
Security	<i>Invest</i> in my magic show and you will
Enjoy	<i>create magic to delight!</i>
Investment	
Value	Just think of the
Fun	<i>happiness</i> and
Create	<i>pleasure</i> it will give your
Pride	little girl!
Happiness	
Pleasure	What I'm offering you is
Luxury	a <i>unique</i> package
Excitement	<i>pecially</i> designed for
Strength	your little girl and her
Health	friends!
Love	
Special	<i>Fun, excitement</i> and
Unique	<i>happiness</i> are three
Free	main <i>strengths</i> in my
Secret	show!
	Children <i>love</i> helping
	me with the magic!

The Fifteen Most Persuasive Words...	
Improve	Act on these notes
Reduce	and <i>discover</i> how
Results	<i>easy</i> it is to <i>improve</i>
Save	your negotiating
Increase	skills.
Proven	
Have	These <i>new</i> and
Gain	<i>proven</i> techniques
Discover	<i>guarantee</i> to
Easy	<i>increase</i> your
You	<i>results, gain money</i>
Guarantee	and <i>save</i> you wasted
Money	time.
Safe	
New	

Fig 1.9 (left)
A random list of emotive words that 'open doors'. Your selling sequence becomes more powerful when you employ these types of words.

Fig 1.10 (above)
This list of words is based on many surveys, and they are the fifteen most persuasive words in the English language.

I then go through my feature/benefit/tie-down sequence, and really heap up the benefits (remember your value is in direct proportion to the benefits). I then round off the sequence by asking if that sounds like the sort of thing they are looking for. You bet they are!

Tracey's mummy will answer by saying that's exactly what she is looking for; how can she not when I've spoken all along about the benefits to her? Tracey's mummy will now be bursting at the seams, and with bated breath, ask how much for all this.

You still don't answer this question directly but briefly summarise the main benefits again, and then state your price. Now you must stop talking. You must *keep quiet* after stating your price, and wait until Tracey's mummy replies. Avoid filling the silence with any follow-up remark at this stage.

This silence puts tremendous pressure on Tracey's mummy to decide there and then, and she will usually say something like, "Can I book you?" You can improve your selling story still further by peppering it with plenty of emotive and persuasive words.

Persuasive Words

Fig 1.9 shows a random list of emotive words that 'open doors'. The other list, **Fig 1.10**, is based on many surveys, and these are the fifteen most persuasive words in the English language. If I ran an advertisement to sell this book I would certainly sprinkle it with words from the fifteen most persuasive words list, as shown in the example in **Fig 1.10**.

Note their frequent use in most advertisements, printed or spoken. Use them, and make them work for you! In fact, it's always a good idea to keep your whole selling sequence script and a list of these 'emotional' words by the telephone, **Fig 1.11**.

Next time Tracey's mummy calls, your sales pitch will always be at its best and most convincing.

Fig 1.11
Keep your whole selling sequence script and a list of these 'emotional' words by the telephone.



Fees

The subject of Fees has been done to death! Many magicians boast of their very high earnings and of the hundreds and hundreds of shows they do each year. Most of it is bunkum!

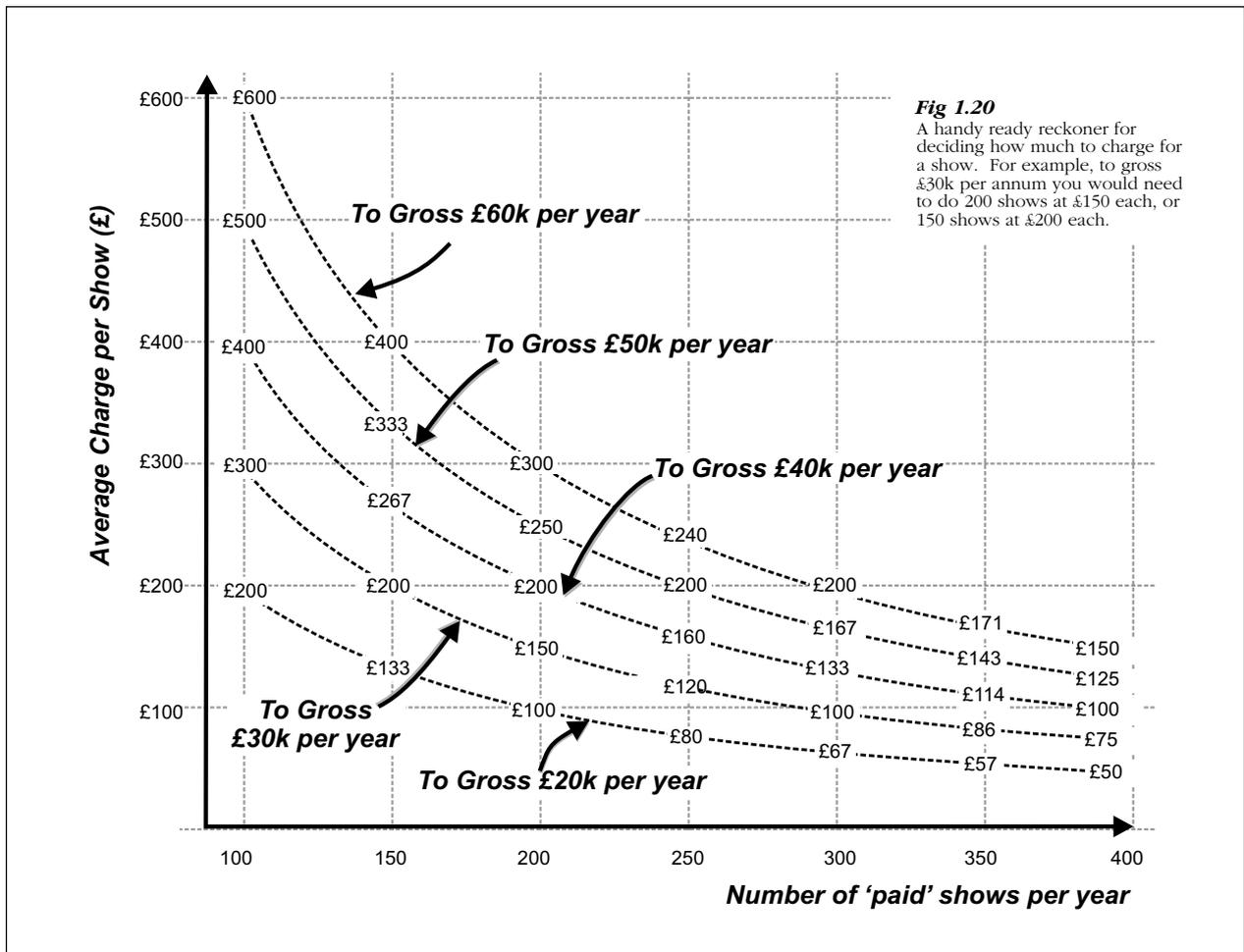
Actually, the level of your fee is dictated by the confines of your 'market area'. My main area is Swindon, Wilts. At the time of writing, North Wilts. is a cash-rich area with zero unemployment. I command and easily get £135 for a 50-minute show or £265 for a 2¼ hour 'Stress-Free' package. However, just 35 miles up the road the story is quite different! The local magicians in that area are lucky to get half of what I charge.

I honestly use the techniques outlined in this book. In this way I can get about 130% more than the average price charged in the area that I work. The techniques are not mine but based on millions of Pounds and US Dollars of research into what motivates people to buy. The techniques actually work!

Personally, I do not grade my prices according to whether I do a 30-minute, 45-minute or a 60-minute show. Doing an extra 10 minutes on the show is neither here nor there. I feel the real effort is getting ready, travelling to the venue, setting-up, re-setting, breaking-down and travelling back.

If your local market and economic climate permits, you could try to 'sell' at least four 45-minute shows, rather than one 'whole 2¼ hour Stress-Free Party' per day at the weekends. But all the running about with many shows per day is a lot more stressful. Also, the income, in reality, is unstable since the actual number of shows fluctuate so much. Nevertheless, your potential total earnings could be much more than a single 'big' show in one afternoon.

How much to charge is also based upon your targeted gross annual earnings. **Fig 1.20** shows a handy ready reckoner. Suppose you are semi-Professional and wish to gross £25k per annum. So where do you pitch your price? At the risk of sounding silly (but just to make the point) you could



The Likeability Factor

How easy is it to be a Magician? I guess one could argue that if you can demonstrate a magical effect and the spectator doesn't know the secret, then that makes you a magician. But that analysis is obviously far too simple because many other elements are involved in the make-up of a successful magical entertainer.

Apart from 'skill', perhaps the most important element that is often overlooked is one's personality and charm; that is, *'the likeability factor'*. There are many very skilled magicians around, but, for some reason or reasons, they are not well liked, and it becomes an uphill struggle for them to become commercially successful.

There are others in the magic business who are absolutely ham-fisted but radiate a persona that is extremely likeable. Two examples that immediately come to mind are the late David Nixon and Tommy Cooper.

Neither were clever finger flingers, but what truly pleasant and likeable entertainers they were – and still are, whenever their TV repeats are screened. And yet, despite the bumbling, they still got to the top of their tree. So, there must be other special qualities that make up this *likeability factor!* We perceive Father Christmas as a likeable character, **Fig 1.24**. He is always depicted as someone who 'gives' more than he 'takes'!

Modern-day entertainers with a simple sort of charm naturally attract friends, fans and business opportunities. I'm sure you have your particular favourites who fit the bill. They are sometimes dexterously skilled, but, more importantly, each exudes a magnetic charisma of their own.

On the other hand, there are those whom you just 'can't take to'. I'm sure most of us feel extremely uncomfortable when we are mentally challenged by persons of superior intelligence and education. We just don't like them; especially when they constantly correct us on some minor point.

Neither do we like someone who tries to portray himself as a very knowledgeable person: someone who enjoys publicly expressing his or her expert opinion on just about anything. As a result, we perceive him or her as a bigheaded 'smart-alec'. And we all know that nobody likes a smart-alec! The 'likeability factor' in this instance turns into a *'dislike-ability factor'* (even if we respect their knowledge and skills).



As performers (and as salesmen), we should be continually aware of our psychological relationship with spectators (and our listener on the telephone). What we actually say and, more importantly, how we say it, could mean the difference between success and failure. A warm smile, twinkles in the eye, a daft expression, an ability to laugh at one's self, an ability to make others feel comfortable, an ability to convey respect and genuinely to like the spectator(s), and a modest approach are just some of the ingredients that go to make up this elusive *'Likeability Factor'*.

Personally, I like anyone who likes me (which considerably narrows down my Christmas Card list!)

Round Up

This module has been about 'selling you'. You're in showbiz: try to develop a positive attitude. In your customers' or clients' eyes you are not the type who has money worries, health problems or ever moans about the weather. Your service does not begin and end with your magic show: you are 'on show' all of the time. So act the part – for that is what it is, *acting!* Go out, make 'em laugh and bring a little happiness... and the feeling will come back to you.

Children's laughter is a wonderful sound. Cherish the feeling it gives every time it happens to you!

Fig 1.24 (above)
We perceive Father Christmas as a likeable character. He is always depicted as someone who 'gives' more than he 'takes'! So what are these special ingredients that make up this *likeability factor?*