Part of the reason people panic is that selling seems like a mysterious process. We can solve that mystery. Selling is like any other journey: the territory you are covering may be new to you, but it has been travelled before, and there are certain steps you can take to clear the way.

Each step you take along the way matters. Let’s look more closely at the selling journey.

Building up

Selling a product or service is, in many ways, like a building project.

I have been involved in two major renovations for both a home and a commercial building. Here’s how the process unfolds:

1. You speak with an architect who presents you with some plans, drawings, or visual examples of what your home or building might look like.

2. Once you approve your plan, you seek a builder to do the construction.

3. If you want to approach the build with confidence, you’ll also want to be involved in the builder’s plans and timelines. Using excellent project management tools is key.

4. Still, even the best-laid plans sometimes change. You might go back and forth and change a few parts of the plan.

5. Even when you get started, you need to keep in mind the need to be flexible, adjust to shifting timelines, accommodate last-minute decisions, and possibly suffer some setbacks.

6. You need to be nimble, but it’s hard, because there is a lot at stake, financially and emotionally.

7. Soon enough though, you start to visualise the final product and then watch your home or building take shape. Finally, you see your completed project in front of your eyes. All of that

planning has paid off.

Following a plan and actually building that home requires discipline and principles.

It’s the same with sales, which unfold in similar stages. With both types of projects, it is important to begin with the right mindset, so why don’t we do that when it comes to constructing a sale?

Why don’t we plan the process that will let us get a result we want? Most business owners jump in too quickly, assuming that their product is so magnificent that people should just buy it.

Or, they don’t bother to plan. Usually, salespeople do not follow any particular steps or process on the way to the sale of that product.

If you look at sales the way you look at building your home, though, you will see that there are certain processes you have to follow to get a good result. It does not have to be a complicated process, but you do need a plan.

Knowing a few simple steps in the journey to your sales is all that is required.

If you don’t know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?

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Mike Brunel started mikebrunel.com after being a successful entrepreneur and founder of NRS Media. He co-founded NRS Media in Wellington, New Zealand, expanded it into a global powerhouse in media sales and training, and was eventually responsible for opening offices in London, Atlanta, Toronto, Sydney, Capetown, and Bogota. He has hired hundreds of salespeople around the world.

He made a lot of mistakes when it came to hiring his superstars. Check out his How to Hire A Super Salesperson Each and Every time – It's packed with tips and ideas on how to hire great salespeople. Don't ever Hire Bad Salespeople Ever Again. Promise!