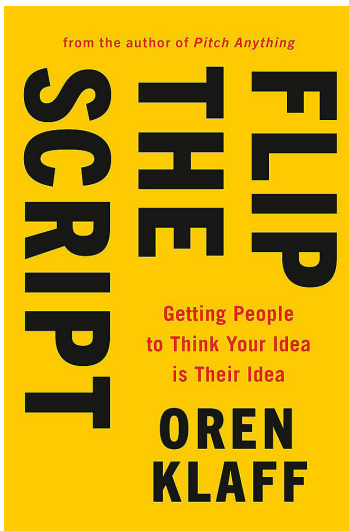


EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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Flip the Script

THE SUMMARY

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Introduction

Here's the big idea in 81 words:

I don't like being pressured into making a purchase and I'm not alone. Over decades of being marketed, pitched, sold, and lied to, we've all grown resistant to sales persuasion. The moment we feel pressured to buy, we pull away and if we're told what to do or what to think, our defenses go up. In other words, buyers don't put much trust in you and your ideas. Accordingly, today, products are bought, not sold.

If you're trying to make a deal in this environment, it's never been harder. Buyers in your industry are skeptical of new products and services, and if you're the person who has to sell them, they'll be skeptical of you as well. They fact-check everything you say, sometimes while you're saying it. Buyers are always looking for a better deal, thinking they can somehow improve on your offer, no matter how good it is.

Instead of pushing your idea on the buyer, it's a better move to guide them to discover it on their own, so they believe it, trust it, and get excited about it. Then they'll *want* to buy it and will feel good about the chance to work with you.

This book is dedicated to showing you how to plant your idea in the mind of another so they will discover it, appreciate it, and fall in love with it on their own. You can't accomplish this with standard sales methods. Instead, you need to flip the script.

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Several years ago I wrote a book called *Pitch Anything*, in which I taught readers a unique method to prepare and deliver a pitch that would wow buyers and investors every time. In the years since then, the marketplace has changed. *Buyers have become more cold and digital, and so I have changed with them, creating new methods for closing deals.* These new methods are what I've put in this book.

I have developed a revolutionary approach, a way to win every deal without spending a single moment selling or trying to close—a way to sell without selling at all. In other words, the buyer feels it's his or her idea to work with you and make the deal happen. You don't apply pressure, try to overcome objections, or give chase. This ability to *flip the script* will help you in any situation and close any deal.

Chapter 1: Why You Need Inception

If you've ever bought a product you didn't even know you wanted, or made choices that seemed a little out of character, then it's likely you've had an idea implanted in your mind.

Inception is the allegedly impossible implantation of an idea in someone's mind so that they think it's their own. It involves the ability to introduce parts of an idea to someone and create the perfect conditions for the whole idea to "surface" as if it were theirs, not yours.

Creating ideas for other people, however unlikely it may sound, is not only possible, it happens every day at the highest levels of business and government.

Have you ever seen a sign that reads ONE PER CUSTOMER and immediately thought, "I'm going to figure out how to get two?" This is a classic form of inception. You simply forbid an action in order to encourage it, creating a kind of universal DO NOT PUSH button that everyone wants to press. The reason is none of us want to be told what to do.

The human brain is wired by evolution to distrust any information from the outside world and to greatly favor that which originates inside us.

Make people feel like the idea is coming *from them* and they will place more value on it, believe it more deeply, adopt it more quickly, and remember it more easily.

This book will reveal the Inception script to you. I will show you exactly how to target the part of the brain that produces the feeling of *Ding! I've got it!* When you present an idea like this, everyone who is listening will trust and believe in it because the idea will feel like it originated in the depths of their own minds.

So how do you plant an idea in someone's head in a way that makes them feel like it was theirs? Researchers have found that Inception moments arrive suddenly, in a burst. There is no gradual buildup in the brain. We sit there, pondering all the pieces of the puzzle, and at some point, out of the blue, there is a huge spike of activity in the superior temporal gyrus, a tiny bundle of neurons on the right side of the brain, just below the temple, that's tied to the feeling of certainty we get when an idea is our own. A short while later we consciously know the answer. When you can reliably re-create this exact sequence of events in the mind of the person you are trying to influence you will be able to trigger Inception.

Does that sound impossible? Master these six techniques and you'll never have to ask someone to do what you want again; they will come up with the idea all by themselves.

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Chapter 2: The Dominance Hierarchy

Who gets what, and why? It's tempting to think you should get financial rewards in a fair way according to your effort, sacrifice, and contribution. While this might sound great in the Gospels, *it is not how we as a species operate*. Humans operate, and have always operated, within a rigid power framework I call the **dominance hierarchy**, where the few who exist at the top get more of the best of everything, and those at the bottom get the scraps.

Social mobility for most people is fixed at birth. The hard truth is that you inherit your underlying social ranking from your parents the same way you inherit your height. In other words, your birth is your fate unless you master the tools that will allow you to change your position in the social layer cake. The problem is that most people have misunderstood the process of how to do this even though it can be done.

After many years studying the science of power and dominance, my team and I have discovered a way for you to match status and power with anyone, in any business or social situation. It takes only about thirty seconds to pull off when you understand how it works.

Today, a mix of subtle visual and verbal cues helps you instantly recognize the social status of people around you. The way you dress, the precise words you use in conversation, the tone of your voice, and your behavior in specific situations will all telegraph your status within a group or society at large.

When you learn to recognize and control these words and symbols, you can change your position in the social layer cake at will. You can enter a completely unfamiliar social group in just a few seconds and create enormous influence in the process.

You cannot get the full attention of a decision maker to listen to your idea if they think you're on a different level of the dominance hierarchy than they are. When you're going to press someone toward an important decision, you first need to be sure he feels he is in the right place at the right time with the right person. To accomplish this, you must create Status Alignment.

Status Alignment comes when you're in front of a decision maker and you have perfectly raised or lowered your own status to match the decision maker's view of himself.

The most efficient way to achieve Status Alignment at the start of any conversation or negotiation with any other person is using a three-sentence phrase called a Status Tip-Off that could only be known by an in-group member. (Interview three people at the same level of the person you are trying to influence to find a Status Tip-Off).

Memorize your Tip-Off and find an opportunity to deliver it to a decision maker. Then sit back and watch doors start to spring open for you—because you will have just separated yourself from all the other people trying to get this person's attention. Three key elements that make up the successful Tip-Off formula are (1) specific industry lingo, (2) a recent action you have taken, (3) a real situation everyone in the industry cares about.

If you chose your words carefully, they will see you are at the same level of status, authority, and power. People in the same position of the dominance hierarchy are drawn to each other magnetically.

Chapter 3: Creating Certainty

Whenever your mind desires 100 percent certainty about a deal but your gut says it's got a 50 percent chance to work out, you're mentally experiencing a Certainty Gap. The larger this gap gets, the more you will start to feel psychological

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anxiety and even physical distress—causing you to back away from the deal.

Every decision we face, every purchase we make, and every agreement we enter is a function of great uncertainty. When a buyer says, “I need to think about it” at the end of a presentation (a common response), it means they don’t have enough certainty and confidence to move forward. Sure, what you’ve promised sounds good, but what if it doesn’t work out like you say? How can the buyer be sure?

The goal of every sales presentation is to reduce the Certainty Gap in the buyer’s mind—improving the chance of getting to yes.

Instilling certainty is different from Status Alignment. With Alignment, your goal is to show the buyer you’re similar to them and make them feel like you “get” them—whether you’re talking to a coal miner or a Fortune 500 CEO. To instill certainty, on the other hand, you need to prove that you are a complete, absolute, undisputed authority in your field. You fill in the Certainty Gap using a very special type of script called a Flash Roll.

A Flash Role is a linguistic fireworks display of pure technical mastery over a complex subject. It should take sixty to ninety seconds to deliver, about 250 words, strategically written and memorized so you can deliver it at double your usual rate of speed. It must locate a problem; take a point of view and should arrive at a deductive conclusion about how to solve a problem, with a clear beginning, middle and end.

You absolutely cannot be seeking validation or the opinion of the buyer.

What you want to create is an action sequence delivered in highly technical language which does something to establish you as an expert, told dispassionately, with no emotional content or display, without extraneous details. When you’re delivering a well-written Flash Roll at this pace, the buyer has the sense that you’re simply describing something you’ve done or dealt with a hundred times before, making a decisive conclusion on such a specific problem so matter-of-factly. The fast pace with the technical detail and the finite conclusion will make it obvious that you are for real.

Marisa Tomei delivers an impromptu classic Flash Roll in the film *My Cousin Vinny*, while on the witness stand. The prosecutor sarcastically asks, “Can you tell me what would the correct ignition timing be on a 1955 Bel Air Chevrolet with a 327 cubic-inch engine and a four barrel carburetor?”

He’s trying to prove Mona Lisa Vito—an attractive Brooklynite with heavy makeup, big hair, and a too-tight dress— isn’t qualified to testify. “It’s impossible to answer,” she says. “Nobody could answer that question.” Triumphant, the prosecutor moves to disqualify Miss Vito as an expert witness.

“It is a trick question,” she said, talking a mile a minute. “Cause Chevy didn’t make a 327 in fifty-five. The 327 didn’t come out till sixty-two. And it wasn’t offered in the Bel Air with the four-barrel carb till sixty-four. However, in 1964 the correct ignition timing would be four degrees before top dead center.”

A stunned silence hangs over the courtroom. She has instilled certainty by establishing herself as an absolute automotive authority in about fifteen seconds. “Well . . . uh . . . she’s acceptable, Your Honor.”

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Chapter 4: Using Pre-Wired Ideas

Information doesn't just magically move from the outside world into your brain. There's a process. You have to perceive something in your environment using your senses (input the data) and remember it for later (save the data). Before your brain can perceive, process, and save a new idea, you need to have the right type of idea receptor waiting for that information, or it will pass through you, completely unremembered or quickly disregarded.

Where do idea receptors come from? They must be built through teaching or experience, and this process takes time. Nikon doesn't attempt to market their D5 camera, with its \$10,000 price tag, to anyone who doesn't already have the necessary idea receptors to understand why they'd want a D5.

I've found there are a few receptors that everyone has that you can use when you don't have the time to construct your own unique receptor. These receptors come pre-wired in humans at birth. Think about slot machines, drugs, alcohol, pornography, and refined sugar. These things take advantage of pre-existing brain circuitry and easily activate it. The same is true of a gripping movie, a book you can't put down, a reality show, or neighborhood gossip.

Over the course of thousands of generations, evolution has taught us to be constantly on the lookout for these specific types of information: approaching doom, a big payoff, and a fair deal. Our receptors for these specific pieces of information are so deeply wired that we cannot evaluate details of an offer until the "big three" are satisfied. Buyers, therefore, come with the desire to know three things above all else:

- *Why should I care?* (What new threats and dangers are out there?)
- *What's in it for me?* (How can I get a better-than-average reward?)
- *Why you?* (How can I trust you to give me a fair deal?)

Once you answer these questions satisfactorily, the buyer will feel like they completely "get" your deal. Only then should you provide them the detailed information you have prepared. Most presentations either don't ever answer these questions satisfactorily or they take too long to get there. The simple way to get your buyers feeling they fully understand the answers to these questions for your deal is to specially format the information you have so that it fits perfectly into these pre-wired idea receptors—like a key fitting a lock.

In your presentation, following your prewritten Status Tip-off and Flash Roll, give your audience the three pieces of pre-wired information their brains crave.

Why should they care? Because Winter is Coming (whatever winter looks like for them).

What's in it for them? 2X—Twice as Much (because something important to them will double in size, productivity, efficiency, competitiveness, output, or just plain happiness and satisfaction. Double is a magic number).

Why you? Skin in the Game (you are financially, physically, or contractually committed to this—maybe even more than you are asking them to be).

When you provide information in a way your audience is pre-wired to receive it, you can count on them—no matter who they are—to respond in exactly the same way when you activate their Pre-Wired receptors.

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Chapter 5: The Power of Plain Vanilla

Over the course of my deal making career, I've observed that most people proceed cautiously when chasing a huge financial reward, because they know there is a very real possibility of great loss. This is why most people will pause at critical moments to think about everything that could go wrong (especially when millions of dollars are on the line) and weigh the potential reversal of fortune before they decide to go forward.

Scientific research shows that mammal brains seem to like things that are a little new and unusual, but not so new and unusual that we don't know how to process it. Exploratory behavior always seems to follow a predictable trend of seeking less novelty due to two conflicting drives: curiosity and anxiety.

When something is new and novel, we don't have much information about it. This means there is a chance to deliver a big reward. So we're programmed to be curious about novel things. The more novel something is, the more curiosity it triggers in us. This is why people are motivated to hear about your idea (at first) if you introduce it as new and novel and never done before. The more they hear, the more the novelty level goes up until they reach the point where anxiety and novelty are perfectly balanced. One tiny step closer, and they have crossed a line and the situation is too novel. The scale tips and anxiety wins out over curiosity. When they back away, they begin to feel more curiosity than anxiety. So at the end of the day, we're most comfortable with things that are about average.

Ever notice how websites always seem to give you three different price levels? Companies today know the vast majority of people will instinctively choose the middle one. So they strategically engineer web pages with one option that is too expensive, one that is too basic or limited, and one that is "just right." Time and time again customers go with the Plain Vanilla option, the most middle-of-the-road out of the three choices.

Once I bought a nineteen-thousand-dollar fridge I hadn't planned to buy. What had this man said to get me to do this? "Normal," he said. "Standard. Plain vanilla." To which I said, "OK." He had made the novel (and expensive) features seem normal. In practice, too much novelty produces avoidance and not the hoped-for attraction effect.

The best method to get people to listen to our ideas is to make what we are saying seem new and exciting, but doing so can trigger anxiety and avoidance, and they won't be likely to take action when it counts later on. Where's the balance? The trick is to use a technique called Novelty Chunking to make it seem like your deal is different from "normal" in just one key way, while everything else about the deal is completely Plain Vanilla. Then you show the buyer that what's normal is shifting, and the one key different thing is really popular today. There is a *new normal*.

Every buyer has a slightly different level of tolerance for risk, or what I call a *novelty preference point*. Once you push a buyer past this preference point, anxiety, stress, and a host of problems start to occur and he or she will begin to back off. Buyers add up risks, almost like a point system. If you have many new and unproven features and ideas, then you have too many risks. To control the way a risk is perceived, figure out how all the novel or scary things are related to each other. This becomes the "chunk" that you'll use to explain how your idea is different in one key way from the status quo.

"This thing is Plain Vanilla. No frills. Straight up the middle. But there is something unique about it. But otherwise, it's Plain Vanilla..."

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Chapter 6: Leveraging Pessimism

Let me flip the script for you. Pessimism, not optimism, is the formula for success in sales. What pessimism does is provide an alternative point of view, and it's one the buyer has to consider before making a purchase decision that sticks and doesn't result in buyer's remorse.

When it comes to making a deal in which there's a lot on the line, buyers always go through a period of skepticism and unease before they ultimately decide they feel good enough to move forward. They must consider how the partnership with you might fail; how things might not work out the way you say; and how, by choosing you over someone else, they might actually lose some (or all) of their money. You should not fight this process, but instead guide them through it.

The possibility of failure enhances a buyer's motivation to act. There is a kind of self-satisfaction to pessimism. Thinking about obstacles and the many things that might go wrong in a deal is healthy and reassuring, because nothing in life is perfect, and buyers are searching for that imperfection to decide if they can live with it or not. If you hide the negatives, the sale cannot proceed. Until the negatives are out in the open, the buyer's spoken or unspoken state of mind is "What's the catch?" Therefore pessimism is not a type of negative thinking that needs to be argued with, overcome, and destroyed. Instead, it should be invited and cultivated.

When you pressure a buyer to express optimism and move ahead with your deal before they feel ready, it threatens their feeling of autonomy, and so they react negatively. So give the buyer permission to start questioning you and your deal, but first teach them exactly what to question about it. (You have to be careful, however, because when buyers see an obvious manipulation, they start to back away.) So in my deals, I use a seven-step Buyer's Formula to lay down "do not cross" lines.

1. Introduce the buyer's formula: *"I deal with this kind of thing all the time. Let me try and help"* (reinforces one's status as an independent expert).
2. Outline obvious ways to fail: *"Price does not mean higher quality."*
3. Highlight counterintuitive ways to fail: *Outline five or six things that could go wrong.*
4. List obvious actions: *"This is only 70% of the total cost, leave some cash in your pocket for the other 30%."*
5. Less obvious "Hacks": Offer less obvious tips and insights, things someone would only figure out after doing it 100 times.
6. Hand over autonomy: *"Yeah, well, that's what I would do."*
7. Redirect to keep the buyer "In Bounds": *"People are always worried about that issue, and in the end, it's never an issue at all. There are twenty-five different things to worry about, but only these five matter."*

If the buyer won't respect your expert status and your Buyer's Formula, he's never going to be a good customer, partner, or investor. Start backing away from him. If he does accept your expert status, you have laid an invisible fence. Now you can safely step back and provide autonomy.

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Chapter 7: How to Be Compelling

Salespeople everywhere struggle to make sales by using a loser's formula. During nearly every sales call, they shift from persona to persona, appealing to whatever emotional state the buyer was in at that moment. It boils down to five different personas or archetypes. This change from persona to persona confuses buyers, who crave consistency and certainty from people they're doing business with. These are the five personas that make up the Loser's Formula, listed in order of their appearance in most sales presentations:

The Ultimate Nice Guy

We play it safe. We want above all to be liked, and we try to achieve this by seeking common ground. A pleasant, approachable, friendly start is the easiest and safest approach.

The ShamWow Guy

People expect to know what it is we're selling, right? So we start listing the best features of the product, our most famous customers, the five-star ratings, our incredible customer service reputation, and our recent industry awards.

The Sorcerer

Following this information overload, we need to explain how these features will actually benefit the buyer. The Sorcerer archetype explains how each of the product's amazing features will benefit the buyer in many exciting (but unverifiable) ways. The Sorcerer mask will stay on until the buyer is sold on how great life will be as they will be smarter, more handsome, and married to the person of their dreams.

The Angel

Is it time to do a "trial close"? Who better to test the waters without causing a ripple in the pond than the Angel persona? She is a sweet, kind cherub who looks and sounds easygoing, wonderful to work with, submissive, and eager to please as she asks, "So what do you think? Is this something you'd be interested in? Any questions before we move forward?" Buyers often respond to the Angel's trial close by introducing objections, and testing the waters for discounts, free upgrades, and other signs of weakness.

The Wolf

With the first glimmer of an objection, like the first rays of moonlight falling on a man with the werewolf curse, the Angel rapidly transforms into the Wolf. The Wolf jumps on the buyer's objections to wrangle him into submission by becoming combative and aggressive. The dramatic switch from Angel to Wolf is a shock to the buyer, even more off-putting is the five very different personalities the long-suffering buyer has endured.

With the typical sales script, however, it's impossible for the buyer to form a consistent mental model of the real you because of the personality changes through five different archetypes. It's easy to imagine how this kind of wearing of masks triggers alarm bells, leading the buyer to conclude that something is wrong here. The solution, of course, is to stop modulating behavior as you move through a presentation but what, exactly should you replace it with?

The key is to stop being reactive to the needs of the buyer, and write personal scripts that are authentic to who you are, then stick to your guns (politely) anytime a buyer offers resistance or tries to push you around. Discount? *Not on your life.*

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Free upgrade? *No, why would I do that?* Send me a proposal? *Ok, so we have a verbal agreement on terms?* This prevents the buyer from unmasking you, discrediting you, or changing the script in any way. The only thing he can do is work with you or go away which sometimes is for the best.

“If I’m not the Ultimate Nice Guy, then what am I?” The answer to this is as easy as it is straightforward: You are the expert. You must become an undisputed expert in the mind of the buyer in the first few minutes, and then continue to add credibility, insight, and competence to this expert status throughout the conversation. The Status Tip-Off and the Flash Roll are the perfect points of entry to creating this expert status. Your own industry knowledge, principles, and experience will cement that status.

Conclusion

You’ve seen how I used these principles in high-stakes situations to land important deals without pressuring or coercing the buyers. Here’s a quick recap of the process. Think of it as a quick-start guide.

You’ll start by getting your audience—whether they’re a buyer, an investor, or a business partner—to pay full attention to you and take you seriously, as they would a partner or colleague. You’ll do this by achieving Status Alignment, the first step to making a deal.

No buyer of any kind is going to listen to you until they feel they’re in the right place at the right time with the right person. That’s why the Status Tip-Off is so powerful. When your buyer sees that you understand who they are, can speak their language, and are part of their in-group, they’ll immediately become receptive to what you have to say. Whether you’re talking to an assembly line worker or the CEO of the company, you need to establish that you fit right into their world.

Either way, a Status Tip-Off works the same—it’s a brief story or phrase that would be known only by an in-group member and will instantly cement your status as “one of us.”

When the stakes are high, you need to instill absolute certainty in the buyer’s mind that you’re a true expert in your field and that things will happen exactly as you say they will. To do this you’re going to use a Flash Roll.

While the Status Tip-Off aligns you with your audience by showing them you have a lot in common, the Flash Roll should distance you from your audience, demonstrating your technical expertise in a very specific field—which happens to be the area in which they are having a difficult problem.

Once you’ve explained your Status and expertise, it’s time to explain your big idea to the buyer. Specifically to answer the three questions in the buyer’s mind: *Why do I care?* *What’s in it for me?* and *Why you?* The faster you answer these, and the less cognitive strain you place on the buyer, the better your chances are of closing the deal. The easiest way to do this is using a sequence of Pre-Wired Ideas: “*Winter is Coming,*” “*2X,*” “*Skin in the Game.*” With these Pre-Wired Ideas, your audience will understand everything they need to know about you and what you’re offering.

To make the buyer feel interested enough to explore a new idea but safe enough to move forward, you need to find their novelty sweet spot. Show them how your offer is the New Normal—a Plain Vanilla concept with just one key and valuable difference. To keep things moving along, you should lump together all the ways your product or idea is new and unique so the buyer isn’t overwhelmed or scared to buy it. Then show how your offer is new and different from the status quo in just one key way.

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By this point, the buyer is becoming attracted to your idea and the idea of working with you, and you won't feel the need to control, pressure, or corner them. Instead, you'll be in free exchange of ideas and plans to move forward. However, before you actually turn the power to make the decision over to the buyer, there's one final step. You need to contain their pessimism within a set of pre-defined boundaries. To do this, use a Buyer's Formula to teach them how to buy whatever you're selling.

When you list the obvious ways to fail before you relinquish control to the buyer, you block off certain options in their mind. That's why it's so important to build Alignment and Certainty, so you are credible, believable, and positioned as the world's best expert in the buyer's specific problem.

One note of caution: through the above five steps, you can't change who you are or change your values to make the buyer happy. One reason why so many people are mistrustful of salespeople is because they see the seller move through different characters during a sales pitch, and this leaves buyers feeling confused and uncertain. Flipping the switch isn't about changing yourself to give the buyer what they want; it's about sticking to your guns. Stay consistent to your personality, your character, and most importantly, your values.

In the final delivery of your ideas, if you're considered an insider and an expert, if the buyer knows why they should care about your idea, what's in it for them, and why you; if you acknowledge their concerns or objections, and guide them through the process of buying your product; and in all this they find you to be a compelling person, they will search for, find, and suggest a way to do business with you.