

# Selling with Noble Purpose

Lisa Earle McLeod

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*What is the current state of our work force?*

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*Why Noble Purpose drives competitive differentiation and emotional engagement.*

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*How Noble Purpose was discovered*

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*How sales teams around the world have implemented Noble Purpose.*

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*Why The Giants Fall: A Cautionary Tale*

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*Overcoming your fear based Lizard Brain*

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*Operationalizing Purpose*

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*Money and Meaning*

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**The two critical - yet often overlooked - requirements for a truly successful business. :**

## **Competitive Differentiation**

The market and your team must know what makes your product or company distinct

*Without differentiation, you're a commodity.*

## **Emotional Engagement**

You can't create passionate customer without passionate employees.

*Without passion, You're a transaction.*



Creating a tribe of  
true believers.

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# The Tribe of True Believers

A tribe of True Believers is a team with a mesmerizing belief in their value.

A team with mesmerizing belief in their value transfers that belief to customers.

You can not create a mesmerizing belief hitting people over the head with target and quotas.

You can not create a mesmerizing believe talking about accountability.

Targets matter, accountability matters. But they are not enough.

To create mesmerizing belief, You need a **Noble Purpose.**

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# Noble Purpose

## The driver for competitive differentiation and emotional engagement

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*Competitive differentiation and emotional engagement spring from the same sources.*

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*Purpose recognizes our core need for connection and meaning.*

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*Making money and making meaning are not in conflict. They're inextricably linked.*

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Leaders often think competitive differentiation and emotional engagement as separate entities. Competitive differentiation is the responsibility of product development or marketing, while emotional engagement is the purvey of culture, leadership, and HR.

Yet these two lynchpins for success – differentiation and engagement – both spring from purpose. When the North Star of your business is a customer-driven purpose, it becomes a galvanizing force for the entire organization.

### **You create a mesmerizing belief**

People are looking for meaning at work. Organizations who frame that meaning around the impact they have on customers stand out. They engage customers and employees alike; they transcend their market to become more than a mere transaction. They become coveted brands and destination employers.

**The collective research proves what we already know in our hearts to be true; you cannot spreadsheet your way to passion.**

It's time to admit the truth. The narrative of earnings and bonuses that was supposed to improve employee performance had the opposite effect. It stripped the joy and meaning from work in ways that have a chilling effect on morale, performance, service, and ultimately profit itself. We allowed the money story to replace the meaning story, and in doing so eroded the very thing that can make a business great: passion.

Measuring money does not produce money. Leaders can attempt to bypass emotions in favor of metrics, but money is not produced in a vacuum. It's the output of a multifaceted ecosystem. We must not confuse the result with the process. Great organizations are driven by qualitative strategies; their success is measured by quantitative results.

Purpose is a hot topic. Yet in many organizations, it rarely makes it beyond the slogan phase. This is fatal error.

The absence of purpose in the workforce is a huge problem. . . .

# The crisis of disengagement.

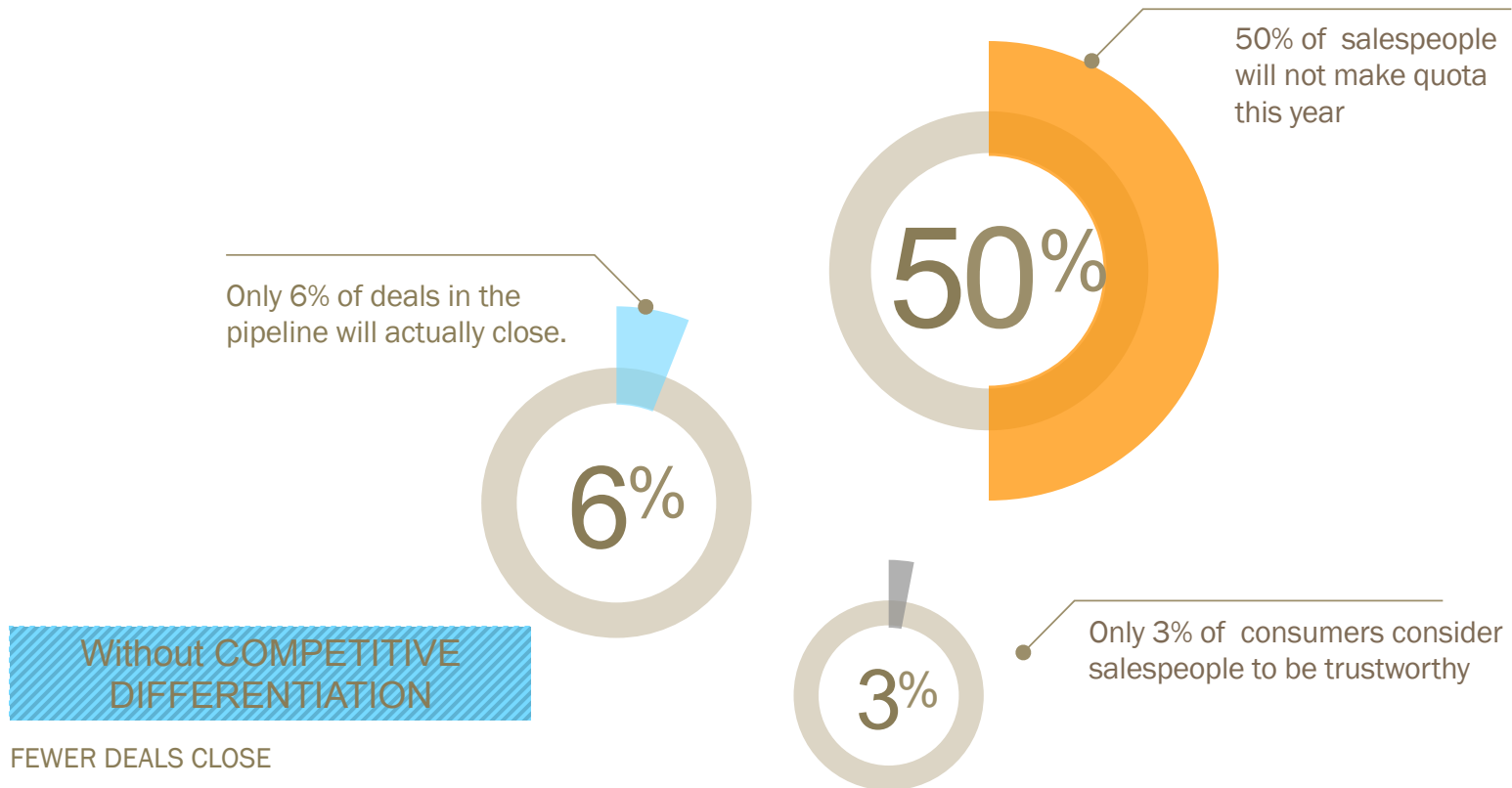
A man in a dark suit stands on a high-rise balcony, looking out over a vast cityscape of skyscrapers under a clear sky. The man is seen from the back, standing with his hands in his pockets. The city below is densely packed with buildings of various heights and colors, stretching towards the horizon under a bright, clear sky.

**68%** of our workforce is disengaged. They're showing up with their bodies, but leading their hearts and minds at home.

It's expensive. Work should not be soul-sucking awful. It's not the work itself that erodes our spirit, it's lack of meaningful work.

# A lack of competitive differentiation

It's harder than ever to win deals and create trust.



FEWER DEALS CLOSE

DEALS ARE SLOWER TO CLOSE

CUSTOMER CHURN INCREASE

# It doesn't have to be this way

The single question leaders need to ask is Are you telling your team a money story? Or a meaning story?



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# How I discovered Noble Purpose

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**The sales rep said, “I always think about one particular patient, that grandmother. She’s my purpose.”**

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**A large pharmaceutical firm asked us study their sales team to determine the behavior and skills that differentiated the exceptional performers.**

*It was a double blind study, we worked with top performers, and average performers, but we didn’t know who was who. We shadowed them on sales calls, we interviewed them, searching for those magic qualities that made the top performers so exceptional.*

*Near the end of the study, I worked with a sales rep in Phoenix. As she was dropping me off at the airport, we had a few minutes, so I asked her a question that I hadn’t asked anyone else. I said, “What do you think about when you go on sales calls?”*

*I’ll never forget her answer. She said, “I always think about one particular patient.” She said, “I was standing in a doctor’s office one day, waiting to speak to him. I was there, wearing a name badge that had my company’s name on it, so I stood out.”*

*“This lady in her 70s came up to me and said, ‘Do you work for that drug company?’ I said, ‘Yes, I do.’ She said, ‘I just want to tell you that before I took your drug, I couldn’t do anything. Now, because of your drug, I can get on a plane, I can visit my grandkids, I can get down on the floor and play with them. I just want to thank you for giving me my life back.’”*

*“That grandmother,” she said, “She’s the reason I do my job. She’s my purpose. When I have a tough day or it’s a rainy Friday afternoon, others sales reps go home, I don’t. I think about her, and I push through..”*

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*In that moment, I realized, we were looking at the wrong things. We had been looking at single discrete behaviors. I realized, that thing I now call Noble Purpose, the story in your head and the sense of meaning you attach to your job, is actually what translates into hundreds of behaviors that produce top performance.*

*I went back through the interview transcripts from the other reps looking for places where purpose was evident. I saw it in the rep who said, “My father was a doctor, and a doctor’s life is a lot harder than people think. So I just want to make the doctors life easier.” Another rep said, “Science is such a passion of mine, so I love to go into people’s offices and share science with them.”*

*All told, I found five representatives who seemed to be talking about purpose. At the end of the study the pharmaceutical company leaders asked me, “Who are the top salespeople in your group?” I said, “These five.” I was 100 percent right. And the rep in Phoenix woman who talked about giving the life back to the grandmother? She was the number one representative in the country.*

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## **Purpose drives profit, not the other way around**

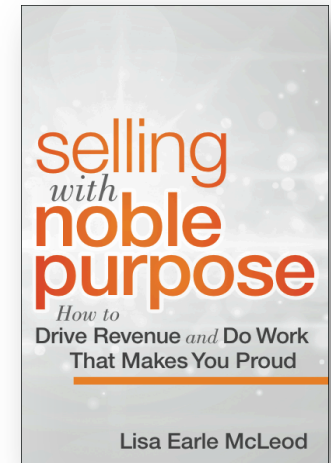
**The rep who talked about giving the life back to was the number one representative in the country.**

**The Noble Purpose movement was born.**

The data from over 10,000 hours spent studying sales team around the globe is clear.

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People who sell with Noble Purpose, who strive to improve their customer's condition, out sell people focused on on revenue targets and money.



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**Lisa Earle McLeod**

Author, *Selling with Noble Purpose*

President, McLeod & More

# Purpose creates True Believers

A lot of people hate their jobs.

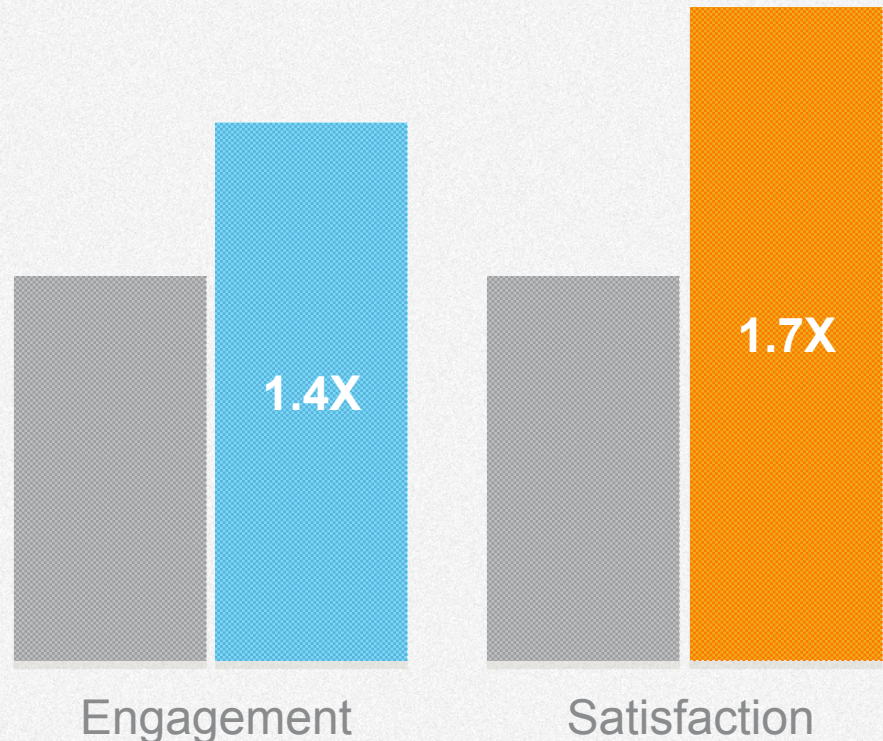
*The New York Times* article “Why You Hate Work” revealed that lack of purpose erodes morale, decreases productivity, and increases turnover

Conversely a survey from Harvard Business Review of more than 12,000 mostly white-collar employees across a broad range of companies and industries revealed: **Employees who derive meaning and significance from their work were more than three times as likely to stay with their organizations** — the highest single impact of any variable.

Authors Tony Schwartz and Jerry Porath partnered with the HBR on the survey write, “Put simply, the way people feel at work profoundly influences how they perform.”

Employees with a great sense of purpose report 1.7 times higher job satisfaction and they are 1.4 times more engaged at work.

When you consider the amount of time and money most organizations spend on recruiting and retention, purpose stands out is one of the cheapest easiest way to attract and retain top talent.



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## Companies with a purpose *bigger* than money experience...



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You don't have to save the world, or create world peace.

**If your products improve the lives of your customers, you already have a Noble Purpose. The leadership challenge is to name it, claim it, and point your team towards that Noble Purpose every single day.**

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# Noble Purpose in Practice



blackbaud®

*Purpose-driven salespeople focus not just on what customers want, but on the potential impact they can have on their clients.*

They combine product knowledge with a customer-driven ethos to be more proactive.

Four years ago, Patrick Hodges was the Sales Director for a single Blackbaud division. Hodges made the decision to embrace and leverage purpose. Over 24 months, this early adopter drove his team to double-digit sales growth, outpacing the industry and the rest of the organization.

Hodges says, “Other people in our space may have similar products. Our salespeople face getting no after no after no. But when they have a sense of purpose in their personal psychology, they’re more resilient. They get more personal fulfillment in their job.”

Hodges says, “Most software companies want mercenaries, people who will just sell the heck out of your stuff. But the reality is your people may be just one phone call away from changing jobs.” Under Hodges’ leadership Blackbaud decreased sales turnover, and was voted a top place to work.

Over a three-year period as they drove their Noble Purpose, **Blackbaud increased revenue. Their stock price doubled.** They have their choice of top talent.

Hodges is now the CRO reporting directly to the CEO.

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*“It’s pretty simple. Engaged salespeople sell more.”*

*-Patrick Hodges CRO Blackbaud.*

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Purpose drives engagement, which increases retention.

Reid Hoffman, co-founder of LinkedIn, “Companies that understand the increasing emphasis of purpose in today’s professional landscape improve their ability to attract such employees and also their ability to retain them for longer periods of time.”

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**When the money story replaces the meaning story, the team loses their sense of purpose. Competitive differentiation erodes, innovation stalls.**

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We don't have to imagine the results. We've already seen it happen.



monster.com®

In 2006 Monster.com was one of the 20 most visited websites in the world. By January of 2011, Monster was rated one of the worst stocks of the year.

### What went wrong?

*Industry analysts suggest that Monster's demise is due to their inability to compete with newer, more nimble, more connected technologies like LinkedIn. The industry analysts are wrong. Lack of competitive differentiation and old technology were the symptoms of Monster's decline. They weren't the root cause.*

*The real reason for Monster's freefall into oblivion was they lost their Noble Purpose.*

*Monster was founded on the belief that helping people find jobs was a Noble endeavor. Their iconic "When I Grow Up" Super Bowl ad featuring kids saying, "When I grow up I want to be a yes man" or "I want to claw my way into middle management" made it clear, you deserve a better job, and Monster wants to help you find it. Founder Jeff Taylor's mantra was, "It's half about a better job, and half about a better life."*

*Flash forward, Taylor's successor, Sal Iannuzzi, didn't talk about job seekers. His leadership narrative was focused exclusively on earnings. f During a Monster town hall in 2015, he told his entire organization the goal of their new strategy was to increase the stock price. Not help customers, not improve the industry, just increase the earnings.*

***On November 4, 2014, Iannuzzi's tenure as CEO ended. During his time at the company's helm, its stock value declined by over 90% and it lost 93% of its market capitalization, falling from 5.5B USD when he was named CEO to under 400M USD when he departed.***

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## Why The Giants Fall

Monster serves is a cautionary tale. The same scenario has happened elsewhere.

Blackberry, Blockbuster, Sears, and Toys 'R Us, were once giants in their space. They took gut-wrenching tumbles when they lost their sense of purpose.

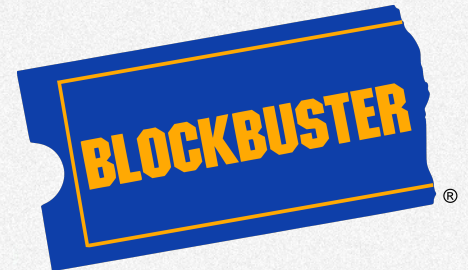
It wasn't a loss of earnings that caused the loss of purpose; it was a loss of purpose that caused earnings to decline.

While Blockbuster was adding overpriced candy at the check out to increase profit Netflix was focused on helping people enjoy entertainment at home.

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Each of these organizations were so intent on making money from their existing business models, they lost sight of the true purpose of their business, to improve life for their customers.

With no lens on the customer's world, they were out innovated, outsold, and out maneuvered. They became dinosaurs, because they focused on profit instead of purpose.



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The collective research proves what we already know in our hearts to be true; **you cannot spreadsheet your way to passion.**

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# The job of leadership is to take fear off the table

*The amygdala, the most primitive part of the brain, commonly referred to as **the lizard brain**, is always on the lookout for danger. ...*

*Unfortunately, **the lizard brain** isn't very smart; it can't tell the difference between a threat to your life and a threat to your ego.*

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*A culture focused exclusively on numbers will never be anything more than an every man for himself rat race. It's ironic but true, the more you focus on numbers, the more fearful people become, and the less likely you are to hit your numbers.*





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The narrative of profit, earnings, and bonuses that is supposed to improve employee performance has the opposite effect. **#NoblePurpose**

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Leaders frame the narrative. The internal conversation becomes the eternal conversation. If you want a compelling story for the market, start creating a compelling story with your team.

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A person is silhouetted against a vast, starry night sky. The Milky Way galaxy is visible, stretching across the frame from the bottom center towards the top. The person is standing on a dark, rocky outcrop in the foreground. The sky is filled with numerous stars, and a bright star with a four-pointed diffraction pattern is visible in the upper right quadrant. The overall scene is dark and atmospheric, with the colors of the Milky Way ranging from purple and blue at the top to orange and red at the bottom.

Use these three Discovery questions to  
name and claim your Noble Purpose.



A silhouette of a person standing on a rock, looking up at a vast night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. The sky transitions from a dark purple at the top to a warm orange glow near the horizon. A bright star with a lens flare is visible in the upper right quadrant.

How do you make a **difference**?

How do you do it **differently**?

On your best day, what do you **love about your job**?

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# Infuse your **Noble Purpose** into the daily cadence of business.

## 3 quick adds to what you're already doing



Framing results: After you report numbers, talk about how many customers you helped, and what impact you had on them. Bring one of them on stage to tell their story.



Job descriptions: Go beyond basic duties. Describe the impact you want the individual, and the team, to have on customers. Use both emotive and factual language.



Sales coaching: During pipeline reviews, after you ask your team when the deal will close and how much it will be, ask: How will this customer be different as a result of doing business with us?

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Don't let anyone tell you that you have to choose between making money and making meaning. Purpose and profit are connected. **You can have both.** You deserve both. We all do.

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# Our Noble Purpose: We help leaders drive revenue and do work that makes them proud.

We work with executive teams and sales organizations. If you'd like to talk about how your organization can name, claim and leverage your Noble Purpose, call us.

## Contact Information

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