

Improving Results

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By Facing Our Challenges, We Discover Our Potential

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How To Maintain A Positive Attitude

Many sales professionals know that a positive attitude is a key element, perhaps the most important element, to success in sales. Even though they know this, most sales professionals find it extraordinarily difficult to maintain a positive attitude all day, every day. The reason: most likely because they believe that their attitude is the result of external circumstances rather than something that is within their control.



Here are some tips to help you stay positive:

- 1. Create a new definition for yourself of "external circumstances."** You might think that hitting a few red lights on the way to an important meeting with a prospect could be seen as "*bad luck*" and put you in a bad mood. Definitely not a mood you want to convey to your next potential client! However, if you view those red lights as an indication to yourself of how wise it was of you to leave early, they take on a whole new meaning.

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The Customer Is King!

"The service we render others is the rent we pay for our room on earth." – Wilfred Grenfell

Last evening I saw a stand up comic go through his customer service routine. He was very funny and had the audience of about 200 people roaring with laughter. But I found myself thinking of his basic premise as being very different from my research and experience.

He said that, by definition, a customer needs something (I would add, or wants something). And that anyone who needs something is vulnerable. Therefore customers are vulnerable and you (the business or organization) need to treat them with care because of this vulnerability.



Yes, customers may need or want something; but in this day and age, that makes them anything but vulnerable. (Unless you are the only one selling water in the desert.) Customers are actually empowered: they have the power to give or take business from you; to give you a piece of their mind; to go somewhere else for what they want; to bargain for prices; to cost you business with a careless comment; and other forms of customer power.

So, as I see it, the element of customer service is more about surviving in business than it is about acting out of the goodness of your heart for the "*vulnerable*" customer. Although the paradox is that sincerity and genuine care are critical for the best customer service.

This boils down to identifying customer needs; providing solutions; keeping the focus on the customer; dealing with complaints and bad moods without taking things personally, and most of all – not taking yourself so seriously.

Source: Dr. T. Elaine Gagné. © Engaging Change. All rights reserved.



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Learn how to Save, Invest and Manage Your Money Better –

MyMoney.gov is the U.S. government's website dedicated to teaching all Americans the basics about financial education. Whether you are planning to buy a home, balancing your checkbook, or investing in your 401k, the resources on MyMoney.gov can help you do it better. Throughout the site, you will find important information from 20 federal agencies government wide.

The U.S. Financial Literacy and Education Commission established MyMoney.gov to provide financial education resources for all Americans.

Check it out at: www.MyMoney.gov



Hank Sullivan is President of Strategic Solutions in Hayward, CA and a Nationally Certified Business Coach. He provides processes to assist individuals and businesses in improving results. He concentrates on leadership development/coaching in areas such as Management, Sales, Customer Service, and Strategic Thinking and Business Planning. In addition, he offers a program for youth leadership called America's Rising Stars.

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- If you are late because of those lights, take it as an opportunity to collect yourself and brainstorm a damage-control strategy.
- 2. Begin every day with 15 minutes of positive input.** If you fill your mind with positive thoughts, you'll have a larger library of positivity to pull from when your day might not quite go as planned. Read an inspirational book or listen to motivational CD's in the morning. We happen to know where you can get a few of those! Might we suggest popping in your Sales Development CD's on your way to prospecting meetings? (If you need one contact us today)
 - 3. Choose your news.** You get bombarded everyday with a news media that believes in the mantra, "If it bleeds, it leads!" followed by commercials designed to make you feel better. Our media strives to ramp up your feelings of anxiety by highlighting horrific stories and follows them with advertising that helps you to buy comfort food or medications to relieve the pressures of everyday life. Unplug yourself from this negative imagery. Find alternative sources to keep yourself up to date with the day's events, such as public radio or print news. It's easy to choose what to read and listen to.
 - 4. Surround yourself with positive people.** Business associates, friends, and relatives who have a negative view about life can make it hard for you to maintain your positive attitude. These people can drain you mentally and physically. Wherever possible, avoid them or at least limit your contact with them. If you cannot avoid them, don't get drawn into lengthy gripe sessions. Listen empathetically and turn the conversation to a more positive topic as soon as you can. On the other hand, positive people can enhance your life and help to keep you upbeat and with a good outlook on your world.



Hayward Chamber of Commerce – Business Improvement Academy –

Make plans for you and your staff to attend the Spring 2008 sessions of the Business Improvement Academy at the Hayward Chamber of Commerce Conference Room on the following dates:

March 13, 2008

- *What you think you heard is not what I said!*
Communication is a two way street

March 27, 2008

- *How to get ordinary people to do extraordinary work*

April 24, 2008

- *Focus on the positive not the negative to achieve better results*

Plan to attend one or all of the seminars.

Cost is \$20.00 per session or \$50.00 for all three.

Time: 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM

Facilitator: Hank Sullivan of Strategic Solutions

Plan Early – Space is limited, Call Vesta at 510-247-2042 today!

