

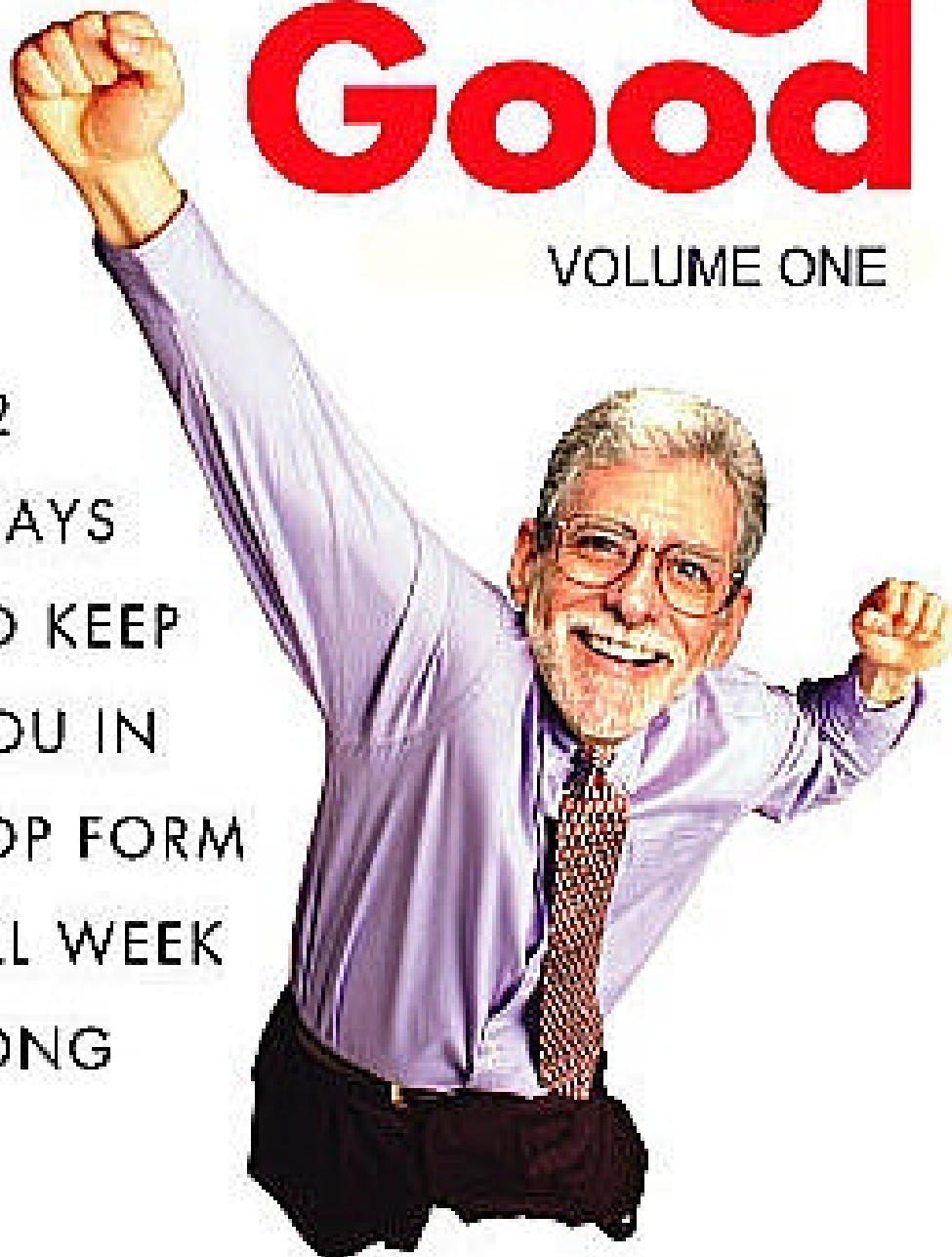
MIKE MARCHEV'S MONDAY MORNING MESSAGES

IT'S MONDAY  
MORNING AND

# I'm Feeling Good

VOLUME ONE

52  
WAYS  
TO KEEP  
YOU IN  
TOP FORM  
ALL WEEK  
LONG



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First Edition

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ISBN: 0-000-000000-0

Printed in US by Greyhound Press, Colonia, NJ

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# Introduction

The following messages are intended to be read easily, quickly and without much effort.

They are my thoughts as they entered my mind. And I hope at least a few of them hit you at the right moment to help you get through the day, week, month, quarter and/or year.

Read them all at once, or read them one per week. Better yet, read them over and over again to help you keep your ship pointing in the right direction ..... toward your personal goals and objectives.

I am not a complicated guy and I don't think our lives have to be as complicated and confusing as many people insist.

Glance through the table of contents and flip to a topic that catches your imagination.

This little booklet is for you .... from me. I hope you find some value in my thinking.

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# 1. Make “Great” Happen

It is your responsibility to make your clients, customers and guests feel special.

Here is how you do it.

Decide what response you want to hear when you ask your clients: **"How was your experience with us ?"**

Here are a few possible replies:

1. Fine.
2. Good.
3. Okay.
4. Not bad.
5. I enjoyed it.
6. Fair.
7. Disappointing.
8. Could have been better.
9. Could have been worse.
10. Exactly what I had in mind.
11. Nothing like I had in mind.

None of these replies are satisfactory.

Here is what you want to hear when asking the question "How was your experience with us?"

Answer: **GREAT!**

Or: **FANTASTIC !**

Or: **INCREDIBLE!**

If these three responses are the only ones that satisfy your customer service requirements, then you can deliver the service that will result with these three responses.

Know the intended result. Then make it happen. No wishing. No hoping. No flying by the seat of your pants. You want to hear “incredible”, give them “incredible”. You want to hear “fantastic”, give them “fantastic”. You want to hear “great”, give them “great”.

People expect "poor" service. They appreciate "good" service. But it is only with **GREAT, FANTASTIC and INCREDIBLE** service that loyalty, trust and relationships are established.

## 2. No Regrets

*Here is some good advice:* If you don't want to regret your past, don't screw up your future. And the future is entirely up to you.

When asked whether he had any regrets, the comedian Woody Allen answered:

" I feel I had grandiose plans for myself when I started. And I have not lived up to them. I've done some things that are perfectly nice. But I had bigger plans. What has made it double poignant for me is that I never was denied the opportunity. The only thing standing between me and greatness is me."

And the only thing standing between you and greatness is you.

Are you living up to your plans for yourself? Whatever your definition is for success, have you achieved it yet, or are you getting closer? If not, why not?

"The only thing standing between you and your goals may be you."

Think about whether you are helping your cause or standing in your own way.

Maybe it is not the economy. Maybe it is not the industry. Maybe it is not your employees. Maybe ..... it is you. And if it is you, then get out of your way.

You too have many opportunities to make your life one you can be proud of.

Starting this today, begin making your life work for you. Get out of your way and don't waste any more time on regrets. They are yesterday's news and the future is yours for the grabbing.

### 3. Stick To The “Done-Dids”

What you don't want, is to look back at your life and utter the useless phrase,

“If only I....”

What you "should have" done, and what you "could have" accomplished while arriving on today's page on the calendar is a waste of time. Whatever opportunity you clearly see over your shoulder is “yesterday's news”.

Yesterday is a memory, while tomorrow is merely a dream. Today is your reality. **What can you do today to make a difference?**

Make this answer count, so tomorrow when you look back at today, you can be proud of what you remember.

A recent TV commercial shows a grandfather surrounded by three young children. He is holding a toy Harley Davidson motorcycle and telling his grandchildren about the days he was *thinking* about riding into the sunset on two wheels. One of the kids asked him if he owned a Harley. With remorse in his voice, the grandfather sheepishly replied that he had invested in aluminum-siding instead. The kids immediately retreated to seek out more memorable experiences from Grandma. The old man looked disheartened.

I have nothing against aluminum siding but the lesson is clear.

Eliminate the should-haves, would-haves, could-haves, and focus on the "done-dids".

This week, make up your mind to make decisions that will add life to your resume, put a bounce in your step and make your grandchildren think you are really cool and fun to have around. Go ahead. Stick your neck out a bit and live life a little larger than usual.



## 4. Take a Power Walk

The **Power Walk** is an effective marketing tool. Make it a habit to get out of your office for the next 60 days to take a walk. You pick the time. The secret is to ... walk.

Don't concentrate on anything but .... walking. The positive effects will surface all by themselves. Your mind will take over and soon, exciting ideas, solutions, thoughts and remedies will pop into frame.

Don't force it. The **Power Walk** has refined itself over the last 500 years and it works without much practice. Just walk every day and enjoy the results.

You might be wondering how far you have to walk?" As long as you feel like it. When you start getting tired, turn around and head back to the office. The idea is to get out of your daily environment and enjoy the world around you while grabbing some exercise. Your mind will kick-in all by itself.

A close relative to the Power Walk is the **Power Shower**. Hot water bouncing off your body does wonders for the creative mind. The Power Shower also works without much work. The single snag here is that you must **Power Shower** alone ....sorry! The **Power Walk** can become a group activity.

Don't make this difficult. All you have to do is take a walk or take a shower on a regular basis and you will arrive at all the answers you need.

It's a new week. What a truly tremendous time to reenergize yourself. Begin the process today. Take a walk.

## 5. Get Your Act Together

Which story defines your organization?

### **Story #A. I do the work.**

I called a store and asked about a replacement glass cover for a kitchen light fixture. I was told that I would have to take a picture of the part and come into the store since they did not have a computer. I am not saying a computer makes or breaks a business. I am saying that the burden was quickly transferred onto my shoulders and what at first appeared as an easy fix was becoming more difficult by the second.

### **Story #B. You do the work**

I ran out of shipping boxes and had to call my supplier. Before I could finish my “hello” and explain my predicament, the gal on the other end of the phone was checking my past order on her computer screen, calling me by name, and confirming my shipping address. Within 47 seconds I had placed my new order, received a confirmation number and was off the phone.

Which story depicts you?

“B” obviously is my vendor of choice.

Is your act together? Or at the very least, is it coming together? Are you easy to work with? When your clients and prospects hang up on you are they pleasantly surprised? Are you leaving a friendly, easy to work-with reputation in your wake?

If you do (when you do) the people you touch will be feeling better having met you. And this is what you can be working on this week.

Get your act together and make it easy to do business with you.

## 6. Ask For The Business.

Here is the long and the short of it.

Professionals ask for the business.

Amateurs don't.

The choice is yours. Are you a pro or are you a wanna-be?

Here are the facts:

- ✂ ✂ Some people are going to think you are pushy no matter what you do or say.
- ✂ ✂ Some people are going to tell you to "buzz-off".
- ✂ ✂ Some people are going to threaten to call the cops.
- ✂ ✂ Some people are lazy and although they are looking at you straight in the eye, they don't have a clue what you just said to them or asked them to do.
- ✂ ✂ Some people will be reluctant to do business with you but they will agree just the same.
- ✂ ✂ Some people will be glad you asked ... others will take offense.
- ✂ ✂ Some people won't wait for you to ask and they will demand you to take their money.
- ✂ ✂ Some people are looking for someone like you who knows what they are talking about.
- ✂ ✂ Some people are shy and are depending on you to make the first move.
- ✂ ✂ Some people just don't know what to ask, what to say, or what to do.
- ✂ ✂ Some people are really glad that you came upon the scene.

Many people will need you.

Most people won't.

This is what makes the world such a competitively planet. It takes all kinds.

As long as you are not a crook, thug, or a dishonest ex-con, you have nothing to apologize for. Just stick to your knitting.

Go out there and mix with the people. And keep on asking for the business.

**You are a professional.**

## 7. What About Me?

When my internet provider bought out a competitor the switch made my life miserable. I had all sorts of problems with the connection from, let's call them XYZ, and I wasn't a happy surfer.

My local newspaper printed an article about the whole mess mentioning how clients were more than mildly upset.

When I read the words XYZ in the headline, my attention was drawn to the article. It said in effect, "Hey bub, if you are the recipient from this bogus treatment, I'm talking to you."

When the article stated that XYZ was having trouble all over the country, they couldn't have impressed me less. I was concerned about New Jersey. I didn't care about Kansas and I don't care about Iowa. When they started to talk about how this problem was also affecting television viewers, I found myself skimming through the article. My TV worked fine.

It was only when I spotted the words "New Jersey", "internet", "XYZ", "problem" and "fix" did I concentrate on what was being written.

What was happening here? I was only reading what concerned me. And that was the internet problem XYZ was having in New Jersey.... and what they were going to do about it.

Take a lesson and get this straight.

### **FOCUS ON THE IMMEDIATE WORLD**

### **OF YOUR PROSPECT AND CUSTOMERS.**

It is the only world they know and care about and the only world they have time for.

Your prospects and customers only hear and see the words that involve them. Period!

So when you write a letter to a customer, write it with your customer in mind. When you speak to a client, focus on your client. When you make a proposal to a prospect, offer solutions to your prospect's immediate concerns.

It is always about them.

This should give you plenty to think about this week. Go think about "them".

## 8. Elephants Don't Bite

### *Little things make or break deals.*

In a “me-too-only-cheaper” competitive environment, the fundamentals and strict adherence to the little things will position companies faster and more accurately than just about anything else.

**Fact:** Clients are in the driver's seat.

**Fact:** They know it and have a number of options when preparing to make a purchase.

**Fact:** Your success will have everything to do with how you manage the “details”

If it is true that it takes months to find a new account but only seconds to lose one, then it makes sense to give a 100% effort to your valued prospects and customers.

Solidify the base of accounts that you have and make them glad they have chosen you as a supplier of goods and services. Since the smallest error, mistake, misinterpretation or oversight could blow your previous accomplishments out of the water - and set your company back a couple of months - focus on the task at hand. Dot those i's... cross those t's ... and think "details".

Each and every employee must pull their weight. “Each” is spelled (E-V-E-R-Y-O-N-E). Avoid shooting yourself in the foot and losing what you already have for some foolish reason, or as a result of taking a shortcut.

Now is the time to prove your value and worth to your current client base. You can do this by simply doing what you say you will do.... the right way ... each and every time. The little things will kill you if you let them. Remember, elephants don't bite. Mosquitoes do.

## 9. Execution

E-X-E-C-U-T-I-O-N is a nine-letter word that identifies the reason most companies (and individuals) fail to meet their full potential. Or put another way, a “lack of execution.”

Webster’s New World College Dictionary defines “execute”: [to carry out; perform; do.]

The issue is not a lack of “knowledge”. It is a shortage of "do"

This week, focus on the concept of:

### **E-X-E-C-U-T-I-O-N.**

The author Tom Peters (In Search of Excellence) is known for saying, “It is amazing how many people in the oil business fail to get the message that in order to strike oil, you have to dig a hole”.

Popular clichés remind us that "Talk is cheap." And "after all is said and done ... more is said than done."

You want to strike oil, dig a hole.

You want to grow your business, do more.

I’m not suggesting that planning ... thinking ... reflecting .... and strategizing are not necessary steps in establishing excellence. I ‘m reminding you that sooner or later you need to put your money where your mouth is and put your knowledge, skills and personality into motion..... and execute your plan.

Here is this week’s three-prong attack:

- 1) Finish what you start.
- 2) Perform job tasks like the confident professional you are.
- (3) Do what you say you will do.

This week, execute your skills with energy, enthusiasm and confidence.

## 10. Frustration

**“While we can all become frustrated and discouraged, we must remain in the end a people prodigiously resourceful – resilient – and creative.”**

Don't ask me where I saw this quote but it caught my attention when I saw it.

I think it is safe to say that at times, many of us allow ourselves to be ---- frustrated. Confused. Doubtful. Queasy. Anxious. Scared. Hesitant. Sad. Resentful. Soured.

I'm betting you can come up with a dozen or two more terms that might fit your negative mood now and then.

In the end, don't fret. Your true stripes will win out. Because, as the quote infers, among other things, you are **resourceful**. Taken literally, that means you are full of resources. You have the tools, the contacts, the ideas and the wherewithal to succeed. All you have to do is recognize this trait within, and select a time to “let er fly”.

You are also **resilient**. This means that you have the power and the capability to bounce back. You are human, and at times will stumble and fall. You will experience your share of failure. But you will also learn from each and every mistake and return to the game with a noticeable bounce in your step.

And you are **creative**...a little “off the wall.” You know what it means to “think out of the box”. You realize and appreciate that having fun trying new things is .....”fun” and “refreshing”.

This is a good week to be resourceful, resilient and creative. And while you're at it, make others extremely happy that they know you.

## 11. The Mind Quits First!

Under the pressure of day-to-day battle, it will sometime sound like a good idea to throw in the towel. For some, this may very well be sage advice. For most of you, it will prove to be a big mistake.

Regardless of your lot in life, there will be times when you decide that a Hot Dog Stand sounds very attractive.

We all experience doubts.

We all question life's logic.

We all wonder why.

We all second-guess.

When your mind starts to play games with you (and it will) fight back by doing something you have been wanting to do

? Define in concrete terms whom you would like to meet and eventually do some business with.

? Polish up your outdated database. Get rid of "yesterday's news" and add "today's opportunities".

? Begin writing a rough draft for that Special Report you know you should be "rough drafting."

Title: **WHAT EVERYBODY SHOULD KNOW ABOUT .....**

Don't allow your mind to negatively influence your week. Trust me. It will try.

I learned this lesson during my Ironman training days: **One's mind always quits first.**

Just when it seems that your body can't take another step and when you are so fatigued you feel that you are going to fall down and never get up, you find some inner strength to keep on going.

Your mind will always try to find a way to sabotage your progress. It will try quit on you. Don't let it.

Spend time this week training your mind.

James Allen wrote "As a man thinketh, so he becomes". How true this is.

Work on your mind and all else will fall into place.



## 12. Concentrate!

It is more important than ever that we "**CONCENTRATE.**"

Not only on our families, friends, relatives and loved ones. But on ourselves, and our futures and our goals. How about **CONCENTRATING** on our businesses.

Define a goal you want to reach by this coming Friday. Make it believable and meaningful. Write it here: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Then, with razor like precision, **CONCENTRATE** on achieving this goal ... as it relates to your customers or prospects. On Friday, you can identify your next goal for the following week

Examples:

1. Call ten current clients and thank them for "hanging tough" with you.
2. Polish your database by weeding out 50 old or inactive clients/prospects. Add a few "inactive leads."
3. Draft an introductory letter that will be sent to 20 new prospects over the next two weeks.
4. Send a Press Release to your local papers announcing your NEW customer-friendly policy on airline ticketing, refunds, etc.
5. Answer the phone with the specific goal of making those who called glad they did.
6. Call back everyone within five minutes with a pleasant sounding, concerned, SORRY-I-MISSED-YOUR-CALL voice.
7. Have each employee send five postcards to "somebody". (Anybody)

There are hundreds of ideas. Your goal is to tell those in your "business universe" that you are "in business and eager to help."

I don't care what it is you concentrate on. I just want you to remember the important role you are playing in your community and the absolute importance of leaders continuing to lead.

People are not only watching you. People need you...and are counting on you.

This week-----**CONCENTRATE**

## 13. Fail Faster

What would you try to do if you knew you couldn't fail?

More than you are attempting today I bet.

Failure has a way to erode one's self-confidence. And self-confidence is a delicate thing. It makes a huge difference between what we accomplish and what we don't attempt for fear of failing. Most people talk themselves right out of accomplishment and right back into a more comfortable state of mediocrity. Why? Because they don't think they can succeed. Over the years they have trained themselves to feel content on a certain rung of the ladder. Just as water seeks its own level, people tend to gravitate toward their own comfort zone.

The truth is you can **do more** ... and you can **be more**. And once you come to terms with the fact that failure plays a key in growth, you will find yourself enjoying accomplishments that once were considered beyond your grasp.

For nearly fifteen years I have been urging people to accelerate their failure curve. If you want more.... fail more.....fail faster.....fail with flair.... fail with a little bounce in your step.

A positive off-shoot of failure is that you will be leaving many of your boring attributes behind. Failure is never boring.

So this week, enjoy the ride. Stop boring people with your negative thoughts and comments thinking that they somehow care..... They don't.

And try grasping for something that is just beyond your reach.

Trust me. You will be more fun to be around and you will begin adding to your already long list of achievements.

## 14. Fill A Need

The concept of “supply and demand” infers that if there is no need for your particular skill, product or service, there is little justification for your employment. If people (owners, managers, clients or prospects) don’t feel you provide value, then you are in for some bad news..... *similar to the same bad news you read about everyday in your morning paper when it announces another 5000 jobs have been eliminated in an attempt to save the company.*

- ✍ ✍ If somebody, somewhere, somehow indicates a need for what you do, and they are willing to compensate you for your contribution, you had better be pretty good at satisfying this need.
- ✍ ✍ If you can perform a task better than anybody else, and there is a need for what you offer, you are sitting pretty ... for the time being.
- ✍ ✍ If your product or service is mediocre and people begin to question your contribution, value or worth, then you better start rethinking your career path.

Most people think they are very good at what they do. Most people are wrong.

Everybody can, and must get better at what they do for a living.

This week, make a concentrated effort to improve your value.....and then get better at what you do. Bring measurable value to the people you touch this week. Make this a habit and you will never have to worry about clearing off the dining room table or cleaning the spare bedroom to launch your new business. This week, get better at what you do.

## 15. Stop Trying To Sell

“**No Worries**” is an Australian phrase that defines a philosophy worth investigating.

Unlike Americans, Aussies don't appear to be “selling” all the time. They are more laid back. They seem to allow relationships to develop based on simple communication. This approach is refreshing indeed.

Few people enjoy the idea of “being sold.” A key step toward becoming more successful in sales is to adopt a contrarian approach to this selling thing. Once you manage to pull this off, you will find yourself in a more natural and comfortable position .... and you will become more pleasant to be around. Your words will not only be heard but your recommendations will be considered. Once you approach sales from this non-threatening angle, your success has a better chance.

What is this contrarian approach?

Four words say it all. ***Stop trying to sell!***

Notice I didn't say stop calling people ... meeting people ... questioning people or listening to what people have to say. I didn't say stop seeking opportunities to be of service or to stop fine-tuning your presentation. I didn't say stop writing to prospects or sending newsletters, postcards or press releases. I didn't say stop attending trade shows, seminars, workshops or conferences. I didn't say stop subscribing to trade papers, magazines or bulletins. I didn't suggest that you sleep late or watch TV until four in the morning.

I simply recommended that you **STOP TRYING TO SELL.**

Stop trying to sell this week. You will soon experience the wonderful feeling that comes when *more people buy.*

## 16. Enthusiasm Sells

I remember I once was given the opportunity to address an audience for 10-minutes at an annual convention, which isn't much time to "connect" with an audience.

I gave it my best shot and was pleasantly surprised at the warm and somewhat lengthy ovation I received at the conclusion of my message. I hadn't said much. But then I realized that they were not applauding my words.

They were recognizing someone who was happy at his work... a speaker who didn't take himself or life too seriously ...and someone who didn't appear to have an axe to grind.

I talk for a living, and time and time again I notice that a successful program has less to do with what I say rather than how I say it.

When people witness an example of genuine, from-the-heart, sincere excitement.... joy.... and happiness, it is only natural for them to try to join in the celebration.

This week's message is a simple reminder to those of you who have a keen desire to make your lives work better.

### **Get enthused about yourself, and what it is you do for a living.**

- ?? Your prospects will notice and appreciate you for it.
- ?? Your management will notice and appreciate you for it.
- ?? Your employees will notice and appreciate you for it.
- ?? Your family will notice and appreciate you for it.

Your enthusiasm is both welcome and appreciated. Give me some of it.

## 17. CHANGE YOUR WORLD

Some people walk around looking as if they have just lost their best friend. These people are communicating to the world that life is, and will continue to be, an unfair experience. Daily existence is a total drag while life offers nothing in return for their “showing up”.

If you know one or more of these types (and I'm betting that you do) let me suggest that trying to improve the future of anyone engaged in an exercise in self-pity is often an exercise in futility.

Don't think that it is your responsibility to get these people singing happy songs. Your job is to get **your** thinking straight, in gear and firmly positioned so that you can contribute to those eager to enjoy the ride.

Here is this week's phrase that pays:

***You can't change the world .... but you can change YOUR world.***

Your job is to energize **you** while making certain that you don't get confused for the walking dead.

Once you take care of **you**, your actions will do the rest. People are attracted to those who are alive, energetic, and happy -- who have ideas and exciting notions about life -- who have kind things to say about others.

So, if you truly want to become the exception, pick a game .....any game .....and then get into the game. Become a positive player .....today!

And what better time to start showcasing the new and attractive you than right now....this week.

Go set the example and enjoy every minute of the next seven days working on the best you that you can possibly be.

## 18. Friendly Alliances

Savvy entrepreneurs know that there is help available to them ... if they look for it ... and if they are receptive to it.

An interesting article by Allison Fass in the New York Times commented on "alliances".

**"In this day and age, where competition is so great, companies can't isolate themselves. They're going to have to reach for 'out-of-the-box' opportunities".**

Business is becoming more difficult, and competition is getting so intense that entrepreneurs are beginning to talk to each other more freely, more openly and without a hidden agenda. Businesses are realizing that going it alone may not be the answer.

Then, in another edition of the NY Times, I spotted this quote:

**"To cope with this often dreaded aspect of work, more independent consultants of all types are banding together, forming working alliances on projects and sharing tips about new work."**

There it was again - ***"banding together and sharing"***. Smart people are beginning to talk to other smart people.

There are plenty of fun, eager, and interested people who share your same concerns, challenges and anxieties. Go find them and talk to them. Meet with them. Brainstorm with them. And if you are fortunate, you will find one to "project" with.

There is a good chance that you are making life harder than it has to be.

**This week, get out of your box and into the game. Contact an enthusiastic entrepreneur in your home-town and invite them for a cup of coffee. Be open. Be willing to share information. Be a leader and look for a working alliance.**

## 19. Be Empathetic

**Em\* pa\* thy:** *The experiencing as one's own the feelings of another.*

This is important to remember:

✍️✍️ **People think in different ways.**

✍️✍️ **People interpret events in different ways.**

✍️✍️ **Some give more thought to *their* words than yours.**

A day does not go by that we don't pick up a newspaper and read about some incredible, unbelievable predicament somewhere in the world. These stories must be true because you can't make some of this stuff up.

Before long, you find yourself in discussions where you don't agree with what is being said and what others consider 'true' and 'obvious.'

It is not necessary to win these debates.

Some people are angrier than others and may have a right to be so.

Listen to these people with empathy and understanding. But when they begin to appear agitated with their own words, be bigger than the situation dictates and stay calm.... while trying to understand their point-of-view.

People have different opinions, and interpret things from their viewpoint, which is not always yours.

Listen. Reflect. Feel their pain. Try to see their picture as they explain it. But do not fuel their anger.

Today, more than ever, we need leaders ... and leadership.

We need strength and resolve. Direction and focus.

Past events have proved, and future goings-on will continue to prove that we are a country made up of exceptional human beings, but who see things from different sides of the room.

**Be patient. Be understanding. Be empathetic.**



## 20. Be A People Magnet

At a recent trade show, I found myself questioning what it was I was “bringing to this party”.

I was speaking to a room full of hard working exhibitors who had dumped a bundle into the opportunity of finding new clients.

Trade shows are the ultimate "crap-shoot". People pay for the privilege of having nine out of ten people walk past their booth. With any luck, an interested prospect pops in and leaves a forwarding address.

So what could I tell them that would be worth their time?

Most people believe that dogs can tell when humans are frightened of them. I decided to focus on the phenomenon that people share this same psychic power. I reminded the audience that most humans know when they are approaching a genuine, sincere, interested fellow human being.

Trade show attendees are attracted to those who magnetically draw them into their "space". If those people in the booth aren't standing right, looking right, and feeling right, this magnetic field flips and actually repels potential visitors from stopping in .... interest or no interest.

Too mystical for you? I don't think so.

You can take this to the bank: You either attract or repel others. Just like a magnet.

I attempted to deliver the fact that most people can't be fooled when it comes to animal magnetism. If you aren't proud of yourself ... proud of your work ... proud of your company and proud of your staff, your clients and prospects can tell and they will vote with their feet.

Be proud of yourself, proud of your work, proud of your company and proud of your team ... and then remind your facial muscles of this pride.

This week, work at becoming a people magnet. And remember that you don't "have to" go to work this week, you "get to" go to work this week.

Likewise, your clients don't have to do business with you. They want to do business with you

## 21. Something Special

Little things make a huge difference in the way we are perceived among strangers.

When I ask the women in the audience if they recognize the courtesy of a man walking around to the passenger's side door to open it, virtually everyone woman in the room nods in the affirmative.

Woman certainly do not NEED this sign of respect, but they certainly appreciate the courtesy. And more importantly, they NOTICE.

Like it or not, we all have become lazy with our manners, and it is for this reason alone, that I call your attention to this enormous opportunity to position you and your company as something special.

The door thing was just an example. I am sure you can think of many other positioning statements. How about simple eye contact. Or opening and holding a door... any door. Or walking people to the door. Or calling people back in a timely fashion. Or sending thank-you cards. There are a million examples of forgotten courtesy. And thanks to our laid back society, each time you make an effort, you will be noticed for it.

I would never tell you what to do. I am simply offering a reminder that if you put a little more thought in your actions, you will personally benefit.

**This week, focus on doing the little things well. Be polite. Be courteous. Be kind. Be alert. Be attentive. Be considerate. Be sincere**

## 22. Take Nothing For Granted

A large advertising agency lost a very lucrative account after 70 years of service and \$70 million in annual billings.

The well-known agency had been respected for nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a century. Employees walked the halls thinking that this account was in the bag... for another 70 years.

I know most of you don't care about advertising agencies but the message should be hitting you loud and clear.

It's a mess out there and relationships, although having become the popular buzz-word of the new millennium are as fragile as people's self-esteem. I am not sure if the word "loyalty" even exists in today's encyclopedia. I think it has been replaced by the word megabyte.

You can't afford losing a good client these days. And today's client is playing by a new set of rules. There are no guarantees and the sure-thing is a thing of the past.

Your future is up to you. Don't open yourself up for any unnecessary surprises.

This week, I want you to list your top ten accounts. Then, I want you to phone each and every good account to thank them for the business ... and to remind them that you are there for them. While on the phone, ask them if there is anything you can do for them at the moment.

This call should take no more than 3 minutes and will help prevent what happened to the agency highlighted in this week's message.

70 years of service. Gone in an instant. Go figure! Don't let this be you.

## 23. The Dancing Bob Cat

I love to watch professionals ply their trade.

The man I hired to dig a hole in my backyard used a machine called a “Bobcat”. A Bobcat is a hole digging machine on 4 wheels ... a mini bulldozer. I was digging to hole for a swimming pool and this guy could make that machine “sing”.

Within minutes of arriving he was bobbing and weaving while a perfectly smooth and level hole was being introduced to my backyard.

This hole (conservatively) would have taken me 7-days and a whole lot of back pain

As I watched him work his magic I thought of what professionalism really means.

This guy not only knew what he was doing but he probably knew it better than 99% of the people in his business.

Do you know what you are doing?

Better than anyone else?

Can you save your clients time, pain and stress by plying your trade with skill and dexterity?

Do people stop and gawk at you while you are performing your skills?

Do people want to pay you extra for a job well done?

With time and a little pain, most people can probably accomplish what it is you do for a living. But can you do it better, faster and with greater skill?

Can you make your Bobcat dance?

I marveled at the way this man worked. He was good and in addition to paying the invoice price, I tipped him an extra couple of bucks as my way of saying, "Thanks for the show."

Make it your business to work your magic in whatever it is you do. Strive toward making your clients marvel at your skills in the way you get the job done. There are too many people who are simply taking up space. Don't be one of them.

Be good at what you do. Know what you're doing.

Go out and make your Bobcat dance.

## 24. Come Prepared

People exhibit at Tradeshows ready to do business and wanting to do business.

They come to the SHOW wanting to meet new prospects. They come to the SHOW with very good intentions. But on more than one occasion, when I ask someone for their business card, they tell me they don't have one. Not only that, but it doesn't appear to bother them.

No wonder salespeople have earned such a poor reputation over the years. They feel that their "gift-of-gab" will get them through the day.

This lack of professionalism always catches me by surprise. How can anyone invest in a Tradeshow and not have calling cards at the ready? This is almost as ludicrous as going to answer a telephone without a pencil and note pad. This is more common than you might think but incredibly insane just the same.

Coming prepared is a professional skill. Prepared in every way.

My message to you this week involves "**preparation**".

Come to the party prepared. Come to work ready to play. Come to the phone with a pencil (you just might need it.) Come to the Boat Show with plenty of calling cards. Greet each day knowing you are ready, prepared and ready to do business.

What the world does not need is another person who forgot his/her calling cards. What the world does need is an upbeat person who cares enough to come to work prepared.

## 25. Competence

You don't have to venture too far to witness an example of **IN -competence**

I hear myself asking no one in particular all the time, "how did that person get into that position?"

Don't companies, organizations, associations etc. realize that it is employee competence that makes or breaks organizations? And don't these very same people realize that it only takes seconds to judge the competence of an individual? And yet ...

- ☞☞ "Good enough"
- ☞☞ "We are who we are"
- ☞☞ "Training costs too much" and
- ☞☞ "What you see is what you get"

seem to be popular mantras of 99% of the companies I am introduced to today.

And then we all moan and groan about the current problems associated with today's business. And then another week passes without our paying attention to our own level of "competence".

Exhibiting competence in knowing what you're doing (or knowing how to get something done) is communicated in a number of ways.

- ?? There's the obvious level of actually being able to do what you say you can do. (Saying what you mean and following through)
- ?? Your "non-verbals" - how you look, the sound of your voice - go a long way toward conveying competency.
- ?? So does the style of behavior you choose -whether you come across as a very casual person, or as someone who's a professional and takes him/herself seriously. Notice I said "the style of behavior you choose," because you do have a choice.

Yes, you do have a choice. You can choose to behave in a way that exudes competence, or you can choose to undercut what skills you do have by looking and acting as if you're not sure of yourself.

People today (you and me) need people who know what they are doing and are ready and eager to do it. And once we find them, these individuals go to the top of the heap. So while you are looking for more competent people this week to deal with, why not spend a few minutes trying to become a more competent individual yourself.

Think in terms of small improvements. A little at a time. If you can manage to improve your **competence** by 1% every day, in a quick 70 days, you will have doubled your **competency**. **Think 1% this week.**

**Competence** is fast becoming the "name-of-the-game." **Be a player.**

## 26. Be The One Who Cares

It is not all about fame, and money and notoriety. Far from it.

Not because I say so, but because you are about to say so.

Take a lesson this week from the founder of the Peanuts cartoon character, Charles Schultz, and make a difference in other people's lives. Here is a reminder that it is the "ordinary" people who make a difference.

### The Charles Schultz Philosophy

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America contest.
4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.
5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

\*\*\*\*\*

The truth is, none of us remember the headliners of yesterday.

These are not second-rate achievers.....they are the best in their fields.

But after the applause dies and the awards become tarnished, achievements are forgotten, and the accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

\*\*\*\*\*

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.
6. Name half a dozen heroes whose stories have inspired you.

### Here is my message for the week:

The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that cared. Now go out into your world this week ..... and be the one who cares.

## 27. "Down-Time" Is Learning Time

What do you do when you find time on your hands?

- ?? **Clean the files?**
- ?? **Drink coffee?**
- ?? **Chat with fellow workers?**
- ?? **Complain?**
- ?? **Take a smoke-break?**

I was recently reminded of "wasted down time" when I rented a device from Home Depot. It was not until I returned home that I discovered that the man responsible for renting me the gizmo gave me two parts which were not meant to operate together. I had wasted a good hour of my Sunday morning thanks to this "oversight" and I was not pleased.

I thought this man should have known better. After all, he was the "pro" when it came to renting gizmos. I found myself (right or wrong) questioning the proper use of his down-time. How could he have been so careless? His mistake/error/oversight certainly did not make my life easier, and after all, isn't that what we sales people are all about ... making life easier for clients.

I thought that if he was the "rental guy", that he should have had a firm grasp of his "rentals". And since he did not use each and every tool himself, shouldn't he be studying his wares every chance he gets..... during his down-time. If he is the "pro" rental man, then I expect him to be the "pro rental man".

### **How do you use your downtime?**

- ?? **By improving your skills?**
- ?? **Or are you simply apologetic once you make a mistake and foul up somebody's day?**

How many mistakes can you avoid by using small increments of time throughout each day learning more about what you do for a living? How can you save your customers time and needless "do-overs" by being just a little better at what you do?

Becoming the best won't come easily. Studying is not a common trait. Being good at what you do takes concentrated effort. It is time we all make a little more effort.

**Down-time. Look for it. Cherish it. Use it.**



## 28. Drop The Rock

As soon as I heard the gentleman from Indiana mention this phrase during Friday evening's welcome reception, I knew I had just heard my new "battle cry".

### LEARN TO DROP THE ROCK!

He was a very successful man. Full of life. Full of fun. Full of ideas. And more than financially sound. We were talking about why some people are more successful than others when he began to wax eloquent on the subject.

He said, "Most people are just too scared to drop the rock". I knew I had just heard a "keeper".

The reason that many people are not more successful today is because they are holding onto self-imposed limitations ... as if they were anchored to a huge rock for stability. They are burdened by what others may think and shackled by a bunch of negative "what-if" energy-sapping scenarios.

- ?? **We can't do that.**
- ?? **We have never done that before.**
- ?? **That is not the way we do things.**
- ?? **Don't be silly!**
- ?? **What would people think?**
- ?? **That isn't me.**
- ?? **Sounds like too much work.**
- ?? **What if it doesn't work?**
- ?? **You're kidding...right?**
- ?? **That would never work.**

**Bottom line:** They become one of the ducks ..... plain vanilla ..... predictable ..... moderately successful ... one of the gang.... invisible.

To follow the advice of an "entrepreneur" blindly is an invitation to flirt with disaster. But to listen to the advice and wisdom of a "successful entrepreneur" is something I recommend.

Show me a successful entrepreneur, and more often than not, I will show you a person who has "dropped the rock".

Don't be foolish. And don't be too impetuous. But this week, focus on identifying the rock(s) you are tethered to, and see if it would make sense to you, to yours and to your future, if you managed to **drop them.**

## 29. Marketing Works

I don't consider myself an impulse buyer but .... I have purchased a vacuum cleaner from a TV infomercial... at 3:30 am.

I am usually sleeping at this time of night but on this particular Saturday, I was "tuned-in". Something caught my attention and before I knew it, I was the proud owner of **The Stick Shark**. This thing sucks up screws and bolts like nothing you have ever seen. **How did this happen?**

**Later that week...**

I read about a new book titled **The Tipping Point** in the New York Times, by Malcolm Gladwell. It looked like something I might be interested in but I didn't give it another thought .... until I was browsing at Barnes & Noble on Saturday afternoon and I spotted **The Tipping Point** in the business section. I was soon reading The Tipping Point. **How did that happen?**

In both instances, "*it happened*" because I was introduced to the product. In both instances, a product was brought to my attention and I was given a few reasons why I might want to consider owning this product. I was not shopping for a vacuum nor does my office library need another business book.

I am not sorry in either case, but the point is that it wasn't in my plans to purchase either product until the product was brought to my attention.

In my mind, this is proof-positive that marketing works. It doesn't work all the time on every single prospect, but in the long run, it works. But I can promise you that it won't work unless you do.

This is what you have to do. Introduce yourself and your product/service to people ... and give them a few good reasons why they should have/own/use one of your "things" or some of your "stuff". Then let the cards fall where they may and follow-up when appropriate.

Not every sleep-deprived New Jersey-based marketing guy provided their credit card number so they could be the proud owner of a bolt-sucking vacuum named after a fish at 3:30 in the morning. But I did. Marketing works folks ... but only if you give it a chance to work.

This week, go connect with people and simply tell them what you've got. Go do a little "marketing". Some people will pay attention, others will not. Some may even give you their credit card number.

Stranger things have happened.

**PS: It really does suck up bolts.**

## 30. Having Fun

While grouting my bathroom tile of all things, the following question popped into my mind.

### "When was the last time

**I actually had FUN?"**

It seems the older we get the less time we spend having, or looking for fun.

Chores... work ... obligations ... duties ... sleeping and eating fill up most of our days. And the days turn into weeks and on it goes.

### **FUN!**

What an old fashion concept.  
I think I liked having fun.

Maybe we should adopt a new mantra.

### **FUN IS US! Or FUN IS ME!**

Here are a few ways to introduce some fun back into your lives:

1. Meet a new person and "get into" their story.
2. Lose the deadbeats in your life.
3. Close a new piece of business. (Making money can be loads of fun)
4. Call up an old client simply to say hello.
5. Write a "who gives a damn" letter just to see what comes of it.
6. Make an attempt to meet your role model.
7. Pick a role model, then go back to #6.
8. Surprise somebody (anybody) by writing a "thank you" note for a service you are still enjoying today but was rendered some time ago.
9. Dig in and finish the day's work by 4pm. Then go out and take a Power Walk.
10. Be nice to yourself. You may like it.
11. Shed three extra pounds in the next month. (This isn't fun at the moment but may prove to be the best fun of all in the years to come.)
12. Learn to enjoy the process of doing business.

We are all going through difficult times. Lighten up. Learn to enjoy the journey.

Quite honestly, in this day of overloaded in boxes and to-do lists, I am writing this week's message expecting that very few people are reading it. It is easier to lament the times and continue to get bum yourself out.

As for me? I am going to finish up the grouting project and make sure I have more fun in the 30 or so years I have left on my dance card. I challenge you to do the same.

**Let's go have some fun.**

# 31. How Things Work.

Things work when you make them work.  
Your job is to make things work.

If this thought is so logical, then why isn't there more of this kind of stuff going on? Here are three ideas to think about this week.

## #1. The Lunch Meeting

Last week out of the blue, an unknown subscriber of mine called and asked if they could meet over a salad and a cup of coffee....just to brainstorm and explore a few opportunities. My calendar was clear so I agreed. I enjoyed lunch immensely.

How'd this meeting materialize? Someone asked me to lunch.

## #2. Referral Introduction

A client thought I would enjoy meeting an associate of his. He called and asked if I would be receptive to a meeting. Sure! I was soon meeting with a marketing director of a small firm to discuss how we can fix the world by coupling our marketing wisdom. (Only kidding) All I know is that somebody asked for a meeting and they got a meeting.

How'd this happen? A client asked.

## #3. Telephone Conversation.

I received a phone call that uncovered an attractive opportunity that propelled me into immediate research mode. I soon uncovered a Special Report on the internet that I thought would aid in my education. I hesitated when I questioned my knee-jerk response to type in my credit card number. "What if the material is not right for me?" I asked myself. I picked up the phone and dialed a Houston phone number knowing that this was going to be an exercise in bottomless voice mail. Wrong! For the next 60 minutes I had one of the most refreshing and stimulating conversations I have had in a long time. I had stumbled on another key resource.

How did this happen?

I dialed a phone number.

This week's message: Things will happen when you make them happen. Ask for a meeting. Dial your phone. Good things will happen.

## 32. Focus #2

People are not more successful because they dilute their efforts and try to do too many things for too many people in too many ways. We often try to achieve a level of proficiency that may be beyond our grasp.

**FACT:** There is only 24 hours each day. How you decide to use your time (resources) is entirely up to you. Your choices will determine your success.

Bigger! Better! Faster! Leaner! Meaner! More! Less! Service! Quality! Relationships! Innovative! Smarter!

These words all have meaning and all make sense. These are this year's popular buzz words ..... responsible for more debt, more stress, more anxiety, more doubt and more sleepless nights. They are all the right words ... but they could be watering down your daily efforts. Pick one.

If whatever you are doing isn't working for you... maybe it is time to try something else. Something easier .... and yes, even more logical.

You can take this or leave it. But if you manage to plug this concept into your daily routine, and give it more than lip-service, it will serve you well in the months and years to come.

It might not be easy depending on your personality. It might appear to be counter-productive for some of you. But it will ensure that you are in business for a long, long time.

The word is **FOCUS**. Focus on your customers.

- ?? **Focus on your strengths.**
- ?? **Focus on your business.**
- ?? **Focus on your target market.**
- ?? **Focus on today.**
- ?? **Focus on your career.**
- ?? **Focus on your sales & marketing tactics.**
- ?? **Focus on the results.**
- ?? **Focus on what you do best.**

Whatever it is you decide to focus on, stop giving time to chores, ideas, people and things that offer limited benefit to your well-being. **Only focus on that which promises the most likely return on your investment of both time and money.** The clock is ticking. The economy is what it is. The world is spinning with no immediate relief in sight. Your success lies in your hands. **Focus**

## 33. Failure

If your profits are below the break-even mark, your business may not be failing .... you may be failing at "doing business". You may not be giving your business a chance to fail.

Business involves a number of activities that need to be implemented on a regular basis. Are you being faithful to these activities?

If you are not doing them, you can't be failing at them. You simply are failing to do them. (You are not giving your business the chance it deserves.)

Here are some things you may be failing to do.

- ?? **Clearly define your service and understand what it is you are bringing to the party.**
- ?? **Build a growing, meaningful database of qualified prospects and future clients.**
- ?? **Contact prospects on a regular basis.**
- ?? **Be creative while trying new ways to attract favorable attention.**
- ?? **"Blow your customer's minds" with service... and then deliver some more "unexpected" service.**
- ?? **Understand and accept that a certain number of clients will "drop you like a hot potato" for no good reason whatsoever, now and then.**
- ?? **Focus your attention on finding just one more new client each and every week.**
- ?? **Look to build alliances with other smart people in your town or industry.**

If you are failing in these areas, then yes, you are failing at the game of business.

But, if you are not taking these steps to build your business, you are just .... there.

So, snap out of it. Do what needs doing. Start to "build your business" today.

There is work to do and fun to be had. Get started. Your business is probably not failing. You may be just failing to do business.

## 34. Visibility

### *This week's story has everything to do with you.*

Macy's Department Store (Federated) closed a number of facilities for reasons related to profits. This came as no surprise, (it is tough out there) but the fact that a major department store was destined for moth-balls and was situated close to my home was a major surprise.

Why? Because I didn't even know it existed.

I often drove by the location of the store hundreds of times, but I never remember seeing the store. And how could Macy's management expect me to shop there if I didn't know there was a Macy's there? No wonder it had to close.

What does this have to do with you? For years I have been telling business owners that their biggest problem was that not enough people knew they were alive. If I am going to do business with you, I have to know you are one of the choices before I can choose. If you are going to do business with me, you have to make your presence known.

But after you tell people you are alive, you have to tell them again..... and again .... and again. As difficult as this is to comprehend, you are not high on other people's agendas. People are concentrating on doing their personal "Happy Dance" to the beat of their own drum. As soon as you are out of sight you are out of mind.

How many of you reading this message woke up this morning wondering how your good old friend Mike Marchev was doing? Nuff-Said.

So don't let what happened to a major department store last year happen to you and your business this year. Starting today, shout it from the roof tops: ***"I am alive and well and I am here to help you."***

**Your Visibility is "Job 1".**

## 35. Make The Call!

There are people out there you want to "catch up" with. People you want to talk to. People you still care about. People who you have lost touch with for some reason or another.

Stop procrastinating and make the call.

Your waiting for them to call you and they're waiting for you to call them. You probably have little memory of how this distance unfolded, but who cares? **Call em.**

I made two of these calls last week.

One to a former business associate (friend) who I haven't spoken to in over 15 years.

The other to an old friend I tried to give up on. I could not understand why he didn't return my calls. [It didn't work. True friendship and caring is pretty solid stuff.] I made the call and we mended the fence even though it really didn't need mending. I learned that he was simply embarrassed to call since it had been such a long time. This excuse may appease others, but not you. **Make the call.**

People are busy. You (we) must become the exception when it comes to holding relationships together and we must be big enough and confident enough to make the first move. And the second. And the third..

Be in the driver's seat. This is a good place to be. A place where we feel good about ourselves knowing we are doing everything we can to keep our personal world in tact.

**Pick up the phone and make the call** that will make both of you feel better.

Call a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, mother, father, friend, business associate, or anybody else who has exited your life .... creating a feeling of uneasiness.

If you don't care, don't bother.

But if you do care, take the bull by the horns. **Make the call.**

Be confident. Be concerned. Be the exception. **Make the call.**



## 36. The Mind Quits First!

Remember this throughout the year when things don't make sense to you: **THE MIND QUILTS FIRST** .

Under the pressure of day-to-day activity, it will seem like a good idea to throw in the towel. For some, this may very well be sage advice. For most of you, it will prove to be a big mistake.

Regardless of your industry, job, position or experience, there will be times when you will decide that a Hot Dog Truck sounds like a better plan.... a breath of fresh air .... a much needed 'walk-in-the-park'.

Ask a Hot Dog Wagononeer if they have problems? I'm betting they do. I know that they do.

As cliché-ish as this sounds, there just isn't any easy way out of this called life. And you are not alone.

- ☞ We are all in this together.
- ☞ We all go through doubts.
- ☞ We all question the sanity of it all.
- ☞ We all wonder....
- ☞ We all second guess....

When your mind starts to play games with you (and it will) fight back by doing something positive.

- ? Define in concrete terms whom you would like to meet and eventually do some business with.
- ? Polish up your outdated database. Get rid of "yesterday's news" and add "today's opportunities".
- ? Begin writing a rough draft for that Special Report you know you should be "rough drafting." Title: **WHAT EVERYBODY SHOULD KNOW ABOUT .....** "

These are just a few ideas kick-start your imagination.

Don't allow your mind to negatively get in the way. Trust me. It will try. In fact, it may be the only thing your mind is good at... bogging you down.

I learned this lesson while training for the Ironman Triathlon a number of years back. The mind quits first. Just when it seems that your body can't take another step, when you are so fatigued you feel that you are going to fall down and never get up, you find some inner strength to keep going.

It is the mind that quits on us first. So it is the mind we have to train and continue to strengthen.

"As a man thinketh, so he becomes".  
Said James Allen.

Work on the mind and all else will fall into place.

## 37. One Good One

When David Ogilvy, the great advertising genius was beginning his business, he found himself "pitching" his new one-man agency to a large company. The smug buyer informed Ogilvy that the competing advertising agency was offering 30 people to handle his account. "How many people will you put on my account?" asked the buyer. "**How about one good one?**" replied Ogilvy.

The rest is history. Ogilvy was awarded the business.

Fast forward to the present.

This past weekend, I got around to calling my cell phone company to cancel my account due to poor service and a monthly bill that I failed to understand --- for 24 straight billing cycles. The customer service woman (Donna) somehow convinced me by professionalism and apparent understanding, to simply change billing plans, which I agreed to do.

Later, to confirm what I had just done, I decided to call to make sure all was in order. Three subsequent calls failed to contact (Donna), resulting in new frustrations and a serious question as to my decision to hang with this particular cell phone service. During a fourth attempt, I managed to connect with a friendly representative (Tracey) who acknowledged my frustration and made it her business to solve my problem in relatively short order.

So, what's the message?

There are good people out there and there are less than adequate people given the opportunity to deal with customers.

You can't change the world -- but you can be on the lookout for the good people. Once you find them, your life is bound to improve. As for the "marginals", try to circumvent them without allowing them to upset your day.

But perhaps more strongly, I am suggesting that you and your people be one of the "good guys". Work at it and realize that there are folks out there just waiting for you to freshen up their life ... help them with their predicaments.... and help them solve their problems. Show them what enthusiasm sounds like, looks like and feels like. Go the extra mile. Share your sense of humor. Be empathetic. Be fun to be with. Be fun to be around. Be fun. Be creative and a little "off-the-wall". Fail a little faster. Don't take yourself or your job so seriously. Take your customers more seriously.

Once I found a person who could help me, my day brightened up.

Go out there and brighten up someone else's day.

Be one of the "Good Ones".

## 38. Poor Service

I was all ears when my host at a dinner party began sharing stories about his driveway service.

He mentioned how he and his doctor golf cronies spend much of their Saturday morning golf game sharing war stories about how their service providers are screwing life up for them. From lawn services to baby-sitters. From yelling matches to small claims court. I heard them all.

Even though I don't belong to a golf club, I don't hire baby sitters, and my driveway is a functioning slab of asphalt, I do consult with service providers who feel that the competition is getting too severe for them. My advice to them: "Get over it. There are people out there who need you".

As a general rule service stinks today and the lousy service one receives is over-priced. This is the gospel according a bunch of wealthy New Jersey "swells" who are in need for people they can trust.

### Message:

1. Jesse James had it right when he told the judge he robbed banks "cuz that's where the money iz". **GO WHERE THE MONEY IS.**
2. There is a good chance that the people who hold the purse strings are not enthralled with their current provider. (Very often the case.)
3. BUT, if they don't know you are alive, they don't have the time to go out and find you. **GET UP. GET OUT. GET VISIBLE.**
4. If you are good, honest and hard-working, there is plenty of money out there for you.
5. **STOP WHINING** ... and simply go out and earn it.

Saturday night's dinner was a great evening. And I will say it again: Interested and wealthy consumers are spending lots of time and energy bad-mouthing their current vendors and suppliers but aren't doing anything about it because they don't know what their options are. Or, worse yet, they are being driven to small claims court and ending up doing it themselves. Pretty soon, this may become an Olympic Sport – bad mouthing customer service.

The opportunity looms large my friends. This happens to be more than simple lip-service. **POOR SERVICE PREVAILS.** Now go out a do something about it.

## 39. Be “Happening”

When I return to speak to the senior class at my high school I advise them to run away from negative influences in their lives. I remind them that it is easier to neg people out than to lift them up.....that misery loves company..... to stay away from downers at all costs.

The flip side of this advice is to migrate toward “happening” people. When you come across a person full of ideas and who is not frightened to try new things, make an attempt to hitch your wagon to this stabilizing force and explore the possibilities.

The power of positive people and positive comments is an interesting phenomenon. Just talking to a "positive" person on the phone or enjoying a few minutes in their company has a tendency to lift one's spirits. (Just yesterday I spent time with an 85-year old woman, high heels and all, who had the mind and the quick wit of one of today's 20 year olds. It was both refreshing and stimulating) I have a number of associates I call on a regular basis and I find myself laughing and cajoling and brainstorming myself right out of a less-than-positive mood. It works every time.

So, if and when you find yourself heading for the doldrums,dial up one of your "A Team" associates and "snap out of it". We are all in this thing together and we will all get out of this thing together. Try something new. Attempt something bold.

Oh! One more thing. When somebody calls you, it may be a disguised call for help .... to pump some life back into their world. So, don't let them down. Answer the phone this week like you have it together. There are people out there who need you. And they are counting on you.

## 40. Stop Bowling Alone

In his book titled “**Bowling Alone**” Robert Putnam shows how we have become increasingly disconnected from family, friends, neighbors, and our democratic structures -- and how we may reconnect.

Putnam warns that our stock of social capital - the very fabric of our connections with each other, has plummeted, impoverishing our lives and communities. Putnam draws on evidence including nearly 500,000 interviews over the last quarter century to show that we sign fewer petitions, belong to fewer organizations, know our neighbors less, seldom meet with friends, and even socialize with our families less often. We're even bowling alone. More Americans are bowling than ever before, but they are not bowling in leagues.

Putnam shows how changes in work, family structure, age, suburban life, television, computers, women's roles and other factors have contributed to this decline.

In fact fewer members are taking the time to attend club meetings. (Down 58%) Family dinners are down 33% while friends coming to dinner is down by 45%.

I've caught myself labeling myself a “social bafoon” on more than one occasion. This is not a good thing.

Make it your business to add more High Touch to your High Tech world. Get out of your cozy comfort zone and get into the faces of people who mean something to you. Prospects. Clients. Employees. Family & Friends.

Make a few phone calls. Stop cocooning thinking that email is all you need to maintain sound relationships.

And for heavens sake, stop bowling alone.

# 41. Stuff Happens!

The "East Coast Black Out" story was big news this past year.

One minute, there was "juice". In less than a blink and without warning, there was none.

This is another example of how quickly things change .... and can change ... and will change. One minute you are sailing nicely, the next you are hung up on a sand bar. One minute you have all the business you can handle, the next your pipeline is drier than an Arizona mid-summer's day. One minute, life is grand ... the next you get snake-bit by an unexpected phone call from a distant relative.

**Stuff Happens.** The lights went out in Georgia .... and they went out in New York. You could be next. And as a matter of fact, you should plan on it. Someday ...one day ... your lights will go out. And my question to you is "will you be prepared to handle it?"

Ask yourself, **"What is the absolute worse thing that could happen to me this week?"**

Then, do everything in your power to make certain it does not happen. Here a few examples to help grease your thinking.

<b>Worse thing:</b>	<b>What you can do now:</b>
Pulled back muscle?	Stretch more.
Lost account?	Call them now and ask to talk.
Spouse leaves you?	Roses, dinner out and a few romantic words.
Kid goes on drugs?	Take in a ballgame and show genuine interest in their lives and opinions.
Get fired? (1)	Get to work earlier, stop whining and bust your buns.
Get fired? (2)	Start that networking campaign and update your resume.
A blackout?	Buy batteries and another flash light.
Roof leaks?	Patch or replace ASAP.
Pet runs away?	Fix that hole in the fence.
You trip and fall in the garage?	Clean it up once and for all.
Can't find an important paper?	Clean your files.

You don't have to be caught in the dark if you just exercise a little emotional intelligence. Make it your business this week to make certain you are prepared for the worst by not allowing it to happen. This simple exercise will most definitely position you as one who is truly "the exception".

**PS. To avoid losing your business as a result of a computer crash, back up your important files today. And store them off-property.**

## 42. The Ideal Strategy

I was asked to stop by an automobile dealership to share a few ideas with their sales team. The monthly sales target is to sell 300 cars. (That's a lot of cars). Each salesperson in the room carried a gold marker in their pocket reminding them that they were the best in the business. The dealership's one word mission statement caught my attention.

### **LOYALTY.**

This point was driven home in every sales meeting and their single objective was to hold on to their customers for a long time.

Their objective was to sell 300 cars, but their strategy was determined by how well they treat their current clients.

**TREAT YOUR CLIENTS AS IF THEY HOLD THE KEYS TO YOUR FUTURE**.....because they do.

We often treat our neighbor's child with more respect than we treat our own children. We are often more polite to strangers than we are to our loved ones. We go out of our way for prospects more readily than we do for seasoned clients.

The real winners in a winning organization are the customers. They are treated as if the company sincerely wants them to return.

This week's message:

**Focus on the needs of your current client base and make it your business to hold on to every single one. Build your business based on a 100% satisfaction level of those you are currently doing business with.**

## 43. Think

Be an activity role model this week.

### Think - Do - Achieve

*(1) Write one letter to a person in your community who has made a difference. You can pick out this person from your morning newspaper. (Acknowledge their contribution and invite them for a cup of coffee.)*

*(2) Write a "Thank-you" note to one of your treasured clients. (A sincere thank-you note)*

*(3) Write the opening paragraph for the article you have always thought about writing.*

*Think about a catchy title (Headline) Example: "10 Sales Lessons I Learned From Watching The Animated Movie - Shrek."*

*(4) Catch an employee doing something good this week and applaud them. (Make a habit out of doing this.)*

*(5) Pick one file from a bulging cabinet and clean it out. (Do this preferably after hours)*

*(6) Pick up a sales related book and read a single chapter. (Highlight a single point that catches your imagination.)*

### Beware

You probably have never focused on it, but we are about to enter a period that is ripe for the "blahs".

A slight depression can easily enter your life.

I didn't make this up. It happens every year.

It may be a "star alignment thing" or just a "cold weather" thing. But it is for real.

If it does happen, don't panic.

There is no better way to fight negative thoughts than with positive "action". (See this week's suggestions)

If you don't like these suggestions, fill in a few of your own. The key is forward moving "activity".

Your next good client is out there wondering where the heck you are hiding. Go find them. Go meet them. Go help them. You have five fresh days this week to make a difference. What are you waiting for?



## 44. What Gets Measured .... Gets Done!

**Editor Note: Needs date check prior to Christmas. June or July**

by Mike Marchev

Here is one for you .. a bit out of season.

There are 267 (?) days left until Christmas. I know this to be true and most of you either did not have a clue or have no way to be sure until you pull out a calendar and start adding up the days on your fingers. I know as a fact. There are 267 days left.

How do I know? Because Christmas is a very special and important occasion in my wife's yearly event schedule. She has a countdown calendar on our kitchen wall right next to the breakfast table. Every morning, religiously, Barbara subtracts a single day and .... "VOILA" - we once again know the time remaining until Christmas.

### **What Gets Measured .... Gets Done!**

Once you determine what is important to you, I strongly recommend that you begin "measuring" in some form.

- ?? You want to lose weight, start measuring your calories or your time on the treadmill.
- ?? You want more sales, start measuring the number of contacts you are making on a daily basis.
- ?? You want to become more intelligent in any one particular field of interest, start measuring the time you spend reading about the subject matter.

As we all know too well, time has a habit of passing us by. **Let's agree to the following:**

For the next 90 days, (Q2) decide what is meaningful in your life and begin to measure your progress. I promise that if you try this simple, effective maneuver, in 90 days, you will be miles ahead of where you are today ... as your position relates to what is important to you.

### **What Gets Measured .... Gets Done!**

Have a great week moving forward ---- toward your personal goals and objectives.

## 45. What The World Needs More Of

*Professionals know what they're doing.*

I was recently reminded how a professional can make a difference.

Last week, I found myself flirting with disaster. Not knowing a worn ball bearing from a left-handed steering strut, I was not sure what was happening when my steering wheel started to shimmy. My car suddenly veered to the left and the steering wheel was shaking wildly. I immediately jumped to the worse case conclusion. I figured my steering gizmo must have broken and my life was in danger ... as well as everyone else in my proximity. Worse yet, it was 6 a.m. when I "started to shimmy" and I heard myself repeating to no one in particular "Just get me to the airport. Please get me to the airport."

Good News! I waddled into the airport's long-term parking lot and caught my flight to Atlanta. But as soon as I got back home, I made a bee-line to my friendly auto mechanic.

Jorge, the owner and master of his small one-man shop, greeted me with a friendly gesture as if he was actually glad to see me. I am always amused how some shop owners act as if customers are a nuisance. Don't laugh. This is probably very close to the truth for some of you out there. It is a very common practice, even in today's uncertain economy. Not Jorge. He makes his clients feel welcome and comfortable in a hectic, confusing and anything but sanitary environment.

"Jorge. I think I have a problem" I said.

*I would have been more accurate if I had used the words BIG PROBLEM.*

Jorge began to investigate the problem. Then asked a few more questions. Then he asked me if we could "put her up on the lift."

I told Jorge about the sudden shimmy and he said he thought he knew what the snag might be. Once my car was off the ground, Jorge ran his hands over the front tires as if he knew exactly what he was doing. And with a big smile on his face, he confirmed his diagnosis. He was obviously pleased with his findings, as most learned professionals are when they score some points. "You tore a steel belt in the left front tire. Fell right here. All you need is a new tire. Can you wait". At first, I couldn't see or feel what Jorge had uncovered, but when viewed from a different angle, I could clearly see the problem.

Jorge performed his magic ... and I drove away in a smooth running machine.... thinking to myself how wonderful life is to have a handful of professionals positioned around the world.... who know what they are doing and know what they are talking about.

I enjoy just being around professionals. Watching a professional in action, whether it be on an athletic field, in an operating room, in a classroom or in a garage, is a beautiful thing. True professionals are fun to be around.

Professionals make the world go 'round. Professionals make their business look easy. Professionals ask questions to get an honest understanding of the problem. Professionals diagnose the problem and they use all their experience and know-how to make life easier for

their clients. We rely on professionals when our own skills fall short. Professionals know that in most instances, their business is spelled "p-r-o-b-l-e-m-s". We gladly pay their fees once we appreciate what they do for us.

Professionalism doesn't come in a box and it doesn't grow on trees.. Professionalism comes as a result of trial ... and error ... and study ... and practice ... and focus ... and years and years of hard work.

This week, work on your professionalism. Think like a pro. Act like a pro. And get paid like a pro. Here are some questions that might help:

- ?? Are you studying your trade when you are not practicing it?
- ?? Are you treating clients with respect and speed?
- ?? Are you always asking questions to arrive at a clearer solution?
- ?? Do you listen with all your senses when others are speaking?
- ?? Do you challenge yourself to get better each and every day?
- ?? Do you realize that "others" are always watching you?
- ?? Are you working at becoming the exception in everything you do?

An automobile mechanic reminded me last week what a professional looks like, sounds like and acts like. And my life is better having this man on my team.

And so I ask you: Do your customers feel better knowing that you are in their corner? If yes, keep up the good work. If not, it is time to get to work.

It is Monday. The perfect Monday. A great day to get focused and jazzed about all the possibilities out there waiting for you. Now it is up to you. Go out there and make others glad they know you.

## 46. The “Yootes” of Today

Young people have neither won nor lost the game of life. Their game will be getting started the moment they graduate from High School. And even then, many will postpone ramifications from poor judgment for another four years. But just the same, I found myself sharing a number of ideas and suggestions with a group of High School seniors.

Like what?

- ?? That their "win" column will be determined by the choices they make and the company they keep.
- ?? That failing faster while failing smarter is still the quickest way to the success circle of fame.
- ?? That having fun is acceptable as long as you earn the right to laugh.
- ?? That there is more than one road to the winner's circle.
- ?? That everything worthwhile began with a dream. That dreams transform into a goals ... which enforce well-grounded beliefs ... which result in confidence ... which leads to success.

Last week, I became excited when I spotted clusters of teenagers seemingly "connecting" with my words. But I became less than enamored when I thought other young people were missing the point entirely.

With today's "yootes", I suppose a certain hit or miss ratio should be expected. But with you, and other adults, I am not so quick to forgive.

- ☞☞**Fact:** You will sink or swim by the choices you make. Do your homework. Train your people. Target your prospects. Deliver the goods.
- ☞☞**Fact:** Once you get out of your comfort zone you will learn and grow faster.
- ☞☞**Fact:** Fun is a pre-requisite for a balanced life.
- ☞☞**Fact:** Your strengths will get you where you want to go.
- ☞☞**Fact:** Dreaming is a good thing. Acting on your dreams is a better thing.
- ☞☞**Fact:** "If you don't know where you are going, you might not get there." Yogi Berra said it. I endorse it.
- ☞☞**Fact:** Have goals. Set priorities and take steps toward your goals daily.

**Fact:** Developing a more confident you is "job one". Self-Confidence is a must.

The largest difference between High School seniors and today's business professionals is that today's young people have more time to rebound from judgment errors. You and I must be more calculating. Every decision counts. Every missed opportunity hurts. Determine what makes you different from today's yootes? Then act accordingly.

**PS.** For those of you have not had the pleasure of viewing the movie "My Cousin Vinny", starring Joe Peche and Marissa Tome, "Yootes" = "youths".

## 47. You Have To Show Up

***"A record Belmont Park crowd witnessed the biggest upset in Belmont Stakes history as Sarava, at odds of 70-1, upset War Emblem's Triple Crown bid and returned a record \$142.50 to win for every \$2 wager. "***

I love to read about upsets and beating the odds. This is what makes life worth living.

Games worth playing. Businesses worth running.

70-1! Those were the odds that this unknown horse would win the Belmont.

The smart money was on War Emblem. But life doesn't always unfold the way the newspapers and *"those-in-the-know"* predict.

The GOOD NEWS is that your odds for success are a lot better than Sarava's where.

The message: *show up every day ready to run.*

You say you can't relate to sports? Or horse racing? Go to the business section of your Sunday paper.

See all the "smart guys and gals" who were supposed to win taking gas in those big companies.

Big doesn't mean didilee-squat these days.

Favorites are not sure-things.

This is what makes it all fun and worth while.

?? Showing up - ready to play.

?? Showing up - ready for action.

?? Showing up - with a *sense-of-fun*.

?? Showing up - expecting that you may get tossed around now and then.

?? Showing up and taking a stand.

?? Showing up and working like hell.

?? Showing up ...that's the key.

You won't always win but you will never win .... if you don't show up.

## 48. Go Fish

***"Chivas Regal and Johnnie Walker start preaching to the choir in campaign aimed at Scotch lovers."***

This headline grabbed my attention not long ago.

The gist of the article is "**Fish where the fish are**".

It appears that there is an intense competition going on between "white" spirits and "brown" spirits. This competition is heating up and apparently, there is a need to change the strategy for selling more booze.

***"Rather than remaining focused on stimulating demand among consumers who do not already drink Scotch, the campaigns now getting under way concentrate on wooing consumers who already do."***

This is called "swimming down stream" and it makes good sense to me. Sell cruises to people who already appreciate the smell of a mid-night buffet. Sell lawn rakes to people who do not see the value in hiring a gardener. Sell computers to people who already know how to reboot. Or, on a personal level, "Talk to your kids when they come to you with a question". Get the idea?

Go with the flow. Swim down stream. Fish where the fish are. Pick the low hanging fruit first.

Why would you waste time trying to impress, explain, coerce, sell or cajole somebody who does not speak "your language" when you could be bonding with someone who is prepared and eager to give you a tumble? You want to sell Scotch? Talk to the scotch drinkers.

## 49. The Rolling ... Who?

The Rolling Stones is a rock group .. a really old rock group.

They are still doing their thing. After nearly 30 years of Rocking & rolling. Incredible. They still have "the juice".

**Here is a quote from the New York Times as the boys prepared to take on Madison Square Garden:**

**" Rock and roll requires a certain amount of energy", said Mr. Jagger (Mick) "You just can't do rock 'n' roll sitting on a bicycle going 10 miles an hour. You really have to wind the energy level up - that's part of the main ingredient. It's not like you have to be a brilliant musician, but you need a kind of explosive kind of musical energy to play rock 'n' roll well. And we have that."**

These lads aren't the best in the business. They are not the best singers, dancers or musicians. They certainly are not the best looking people on stage. But they still have "the energy".

And it is "energy" that still sells. Always has. Always will.

Whether you are 15 years old, or going on 60 like Mick (or older), the key word is ENERGY. That is what people buy. That is what we want to see. That is what other people need and want to see. ENERGY.

You don't have to be the best guitar player in the world. You don't have to be the best anything in the world. But you do need ENERGY. And, ENTHUSIASM. Show me both. ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM. Then you've got something working for you.

Hey, if Mick Jagger, at 60, can show me a little juice, perhaps there is still hope for you and me.

This week. Let's get jazzed. Let's rev up those engines. Let's show people that we are alive, happy and glad to be seen.

**This week, make others glad they know you.**

## 50. Showing Up

*Your chances for success may be better than you think they are. How does 70 - 1 sound?*

**"A record Belmont Park crowd of 103,222 witnessed the biggest upset in Belmont Stakes history when Sarava, at odds of 70-1, upset War Emblem's Triple Crown bid and returned a record \$142.50 to win for every \$2 wager. "**

Another "sure-thing" bites the dust!" I love to witness this type of upset. This is what makes life worth living. Games worth playing. Businesses worth running.

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Go to the business section of your Sunday paper.

See all the "smart guys and gals" who were supposed to win taking gas in those big companies.

Big doesn't mean didilee-squat these days.

Favorites are not sure-things.

It is all about showing up.

?? Showing up - ready to play is step one.

?? Showing up - ready to take action is step two.

?? Showing up - with a *sense-of-self* is step three.

?? Showing up - expecting that you may get tossed around now and then is step four.

?? Showing up ...that's the key.

?? Showing up and making your stand ... that's the secret.

?? Showing up and running like hell ... that's the answer.

You will never win .... if you don't show up.

?? Last Saturday congratulations went to Sarava.

?? Last Saturday night congratulations went to Lenox Lewis.

This week .... congratulations are going to go to YOU



## 51. A Pep Talk!

According to the New York Times, women have a difficult time promoting themselves.

**A Pep Talk For Women.** . . . read the headline.

**"Regardless of occupation or seniority, women are often quite poor at self-promotion --**

Women don't hold an edge when it comes to a deficiency in self-promotion. Most men are poor at this valuable skill as well, and the reason is clear. Bragging has always been considered a less than attractive trait for both young boys and little girls.

In fact, when asked what the word "bragging" brings to mind, the response includes "selfish", "blowhard", "know it all", and "insecure". No wonder few people feel comfortable talking about themselves when doing so invites this type of labeling.

But think about it. If **you** don't tell people that you are alive ... and what you can do for them ... who will? And if people don't know you are alive, how can they make up their minds to do business with you?

Competition is too severe today to think for a moment that our future will all line up in a tight neat row once the stars are aligned and we eat a healthy breakfast. But there is a "technique" that is worth learning, and that is to focus on how your targeted audience will benefit from your place in the universe.

If you want more business, more clients or more net in your paycheck, you have to enhance your visibility factor, and that begins with promotion, and more specifically, self-promotion. And as long as you're not a jerk, dishonest, running from the law, or have something to hide, your personal PR program should unfold quite effectively. But it will pay if you focus on your audience, and not you specifically. It is

here where PR campaigns break down, crash and burn.

The bad news is, you must do something and you must do it regularly.

This week's message urges you to begin feeling better about **spreading your word**. Your success will not come by accident. Talk to me. Tell me what you do and how I will benefit from what you do.

Ladies and gentlemen, start your promotion engines.

Enjoy this work week by remembering you don't have to go to work ..... **You get to go to work.**

## 52. Keep Your Word

Here are three questions to ask yourself:

?? "How Can I Add More Value To My Relationships?"

?? "What Makes Me Different?"

?? "How Can I Get and Keep My Client's Attention?"

The answer consists of only seven words, and I arrived at this answer having witnessed two recent events.

The first revelation came as a result of meeting a man at a trade show booth. After swapping business cards I told him that I would be getting back to him. When I called him the next morning, he said the following:

***"I never thought in a million years you would actually follow through. I thought your words were the typical sales chatter .... meaningless."***

What did I do that was so exceptional? I called the guy back like I said I would.

The second instance was a bit more taxing. I answered the telephone when I heard it ringing. When I did, the voice on the other end quickly said, "So you actually do what you say you do. You do answer your own phone."

I remember saying to myself, "You must be kidding?"

In fact, these two fundamental customer services have become remarkably noticeable, and I am sorry to say, very much of a BIG DEAL.

The answer to the bulleted questions above consists of just seven words:

**Do what you say you will do.**

Simple? Yes.

Profound? Absolutely.

You will find this to be easier said than done ..... but very much worth the effort.

Starting this week and until the end of time, **do what you say you are going to do.**

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The End