

MOTIVATING TECHNIQUES TO INCREASE SALES AND PRODUCTIVITY FOR THE SMALL BUSINESS OWNER”

“Do you know what the most rewarding part of my day was today?” a manager said to me. “It was hearing the excitement and seeing the passion in the eyes of the trolley boy during our staff meeting. In fact, his input was so valuable and innovative I have documented it and will take further action.”

What this manager observed was not something obtained from a systems or procedural manual. This young man still had a passion about his work which kept him motivated and excited about his daily duties of assisting the customer. His additional acts of kindness not only made the customer feel good but it was he who reaped the greatest reward. He still loved his job.

Do you still feel passionate about your work? If not then ask yourself why not. What has changed? Remember the excitement when you first had the ‘idea’ about what you wanted to create and commenced your business?

Make a note of how things were then for you, not only professionally but also personally. What is different now? How would you now rate your level of passion? Ask yourself this question. “What single change can I make that will have the biggest impact on my Professional life”? (You may want to extend this also to your personal life.)

In today’s world there are many resources available to small business owners and managers to assist them in creating change. The first step however is acknowledging the need to.

One thing we all enjoy about the inorganic collection is that it provides us with an opportunity to clear out any debris which is clogging up **our lives**. Once space is made available isn’t it interesting how we feel motivated to put everything in order and wonder why we tolerated the clutter for so long?

Having a cluttered work environment is similar and can lead to frustration as you spend valuable time over handling documents or even trying to find them. It is also important to have an inviting environment for colleagues or customers to be welcomed to. When you are next in your office have a quick scan and ask yourself what might you be **tolerating within your work environment** which may be affecting your productivity, creativity and motivation? Once again, extend the question to your personal life.

Another interesting exercise is to ask yourself what are the five things you spend most of your time doing whilst in your office?

If you have recognised the need to take action in this area, rest assured that any time taken to clear up the clutter will soon be recovered with increased productivity and renewed enthusiasm to be at work.

As an owner operator, in addition to prospecting, generating new business and maintained your current clientele one also needs to keep on top of administrative and financial duties. This requires discipline and an **understanding of the value of your time**.

A common scenario I assist my self employed clients with is to stop them using 'office work' as a means of procrastinating from doing some of their less desirable core duties, such as follow up calls or generating new business .

Conversely, there is a common trap of 'not having enough time' for the office work thus running the risk of not having your finger on the pulse of the daily activities of your business.

This is why **quantifying your time** is a valuable tool to discover how efficiently you use it, therefore, ask yourself these questions. "What five things do I spend most of my time doing during my day? Which of these are not urgent and how much time does this take? Do I accurately prioritise in my day? What else could I doing which would lead to increased sales and growth?"

If you could turn 15 minutes each morning and 15 minutes each afternoon from unproductive to productive time, this then equates to 2 ½ hours every week. If you could place a monetary value on this time, what would it be worth? Assuming it is \$250.00, this equates to \$12,000.00 per annum. If you were to pay this off a loan, how much interest would you save per annum? Alternatively, how much additional income could you generate during this time per week?

Another scenario is this additional time could be invested in running the business more efficiently. For example, with the right computerised accounting system you could use this time to introduce and maintain proper in house systems. This would enable you to make management decisions based on accurate and timely management reports. **Time management makes time.**

At 16 years of age after 10 driving lessons, one Saturday morning I was given my driving licence. By Monday morning I was driving down Auckland's busiest street during peak hour traffic in a company vehicle. Naturally I was somewhat terrified as my white knuckles firmly held the steering wheel at precisely 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock.

Suddenly out of nowhere came the thought "no one else knows this is your first time in the car on your own so what is the problem"? Immediately I relaxed and was the first time I experienced and understood the importance of managing my own thought process.

Many of us have read this quote, *"A man is but the product of his thoughts, what he thinks, he becomes."*

When you are your brand it may mean pushing yourself beyond your normal limits and **leading you out of your comfort zone**. When the brand is good, people want to know more. Susan Boyle from Scotland comes to mind who recently swept through the internet.

She looked her greatest fear in the eye and went towards, whilst at the same time holding on to her dream. When you go there in your mind first, step out of your comfort zone and have a belief in self you will be astonished at the results. 'Act as if' and you are on your way to 'becoming', an people will want to know more.

Early in my career a client told me that after six weeks of working in his practise he took one week to recoup and spend with his family. He understood the importance of his greatest investment, i.e. himself, and how it would directly and indirectly lead to a successful business.

If you are your brand, authenticity is essential as you live by example and demonstrate to others how you achieve your results, especially if you are in the business of assisting others to do the same.

Perhaps you are not using your strengths or skills to your greatest potential? If not, what might be stopping you? When we address our barriers in life then stepping out of our comfort zone is an everyday occurrence.

This is why it is an absolute necessity to take the time. Not only to invest in yourself and your own motivating techniques but also your employees. Each day read something useful and motivating. Educate your mind. Regularly review your personal goals and targets. When you first went into business, what was your definition of success? What was your original idea? Are you still on track with this or has it changed.

Take the time for your employees to assist them with all of these areas. Take the time to understand who they are and what their goals are. Listen to them and really hear them. Put people before profits and be astonished at the value this will place on the entire organisation.

Take a leaf from the book of the special trolley boy, who is now a young man and has what I call a PhD in People. On the odd occasion when I see him I am still greeted with smile and a very loud “good day ma’am, how are you today?”

