

A Little Philosophy...on Change

It's time for Uncle Joe to do a little venting about some things I am seeing in the market place. The textbook definition of insanity is as follows...

I will do what I have always done (and get different results).

My take on that topic is more like this—if **you do what you have always done, you get what you have always gotten...or worse.**

If you are a sales manager or a professional salesperson, I want you to ask yourself two questions (and answer them honestly):

Am I satisfied with the results I am getting? Do I believe that my actions influence my results?

The reason for asking you to ask yourself these questions lies in some of what I have been seeing as I work with people. There are many people today who are (apparently) satisfied with flat (to declining) sales and income. Or, if they are not satisfied, they (apparently) think that their actions have nothing to do with their results.

This is one of my major beefs with talks about the economy. When you are told that the economy is off, it provides a major justification for accepting lackluster results. And some sales managers (and salespeople) appear to look for justifications that are out of their control—the economy, my unreasonable boss, poor quality products, production departments that don't produce, on time, and a host of other issues.

For most of us, we are not (and never will be) totally in control of our destiny. Our job is to sell and we can always sell more if we are not getting everything in our territory. So if a salesperson tells me that they are getting everything they can get at all the accounts in their territory and the business is shrinking at 5-10% per year, then I agree there's nothing they can do.

But answer this question: How many of you are getting 100% of all available sales at all of the customers in your territory? How many of you are even getting above the 67% mark?

I want you to take a real look at your worldview. Are the results you get in life something that you make happen or something that happens to you? You can see the real difference in how you would approach life (and your profession) based on how you answer the question.

Now, I acknowledge that there are some things out of your control. But how many things do you have absolutely **no** influence on? Darn few, right? We even

know that we have some influence on our health based on what we eat and what we do, right?

I've mentioned these concepts before but I wanted to remind you of them as you begin to think about the things that you want to be different next year.

If you want your results to change, you have to change one or more of the following:

STOP
START
DO MORE
DO BETTER

Stop. There are some things you are doing now that are not producing the results you want. What are they? Calling on customers that will not buy? Quoting every opportunity even if you really know that there is no way that you will win the business? These activities take time away from doing things that might actually give you more of what you want. Stop doing them. Now.

Start. There are some things that you know you need to do. They might be personal—walk two miles three days a week; or professional—always trying to schedule the next step on sales calls. List three things that you will do and start doing them. Now.

Do more. There are some things that you do now—occasionally. You plan good sales calls—occasionally. You send out confirming e-mails for upcoming appointments—occasionally. Do them more often. Now.

Do better. There are some things that you do often enough, you just don't do them well enough. Fill out your account profiles. Update your opportunity tracker. Take the extra minutes to do the things you are doing better and you will see improvement in your results. Now.

One thing I can assure you—if you want different results, you will have to do some things differently. What are those things? When are you going to start?

And one final point....Do you have a plan? Is it working, have you compared it to the best plans out there? Take a minute to compare your "plan" for betterment this year with the key points of the best plans in the world.

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