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Send a New Message... **So What Business Are YOU In?**

“I help you get from where you are, to where you want to be.”
- Mitchell Axelrod

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hen I started my first business in 1978, I answered the question, “What business are you in?” with a one word answer:

“Transportation!”

Then I’d say, “I help transport people from point A to point B, financially! Where would you like to go?”

What business was I in? Financial planning!

When I started a consulting, speaking and training company, I answered the question this way:

“I help companies attract, convert and keep more customers!”

Then I asked, “Which of those would you like to do better?”

Whatever product or service your company sells, you are in the transportation business. You help people get from where they are to where they want to be. Your business is attracting, converting and keeping customers... for life!

When describing what you do, or what business you are in, experiential, outcome-driven, results-oriented language impacts people more powerfully than any label you use to define yourself, your products or services.

People buy products or services when they purchase commodities. For everything else they want customized solutions. They favor merchants who give them a unique and memorable experience.

People want to feel good when they work with you.
They buy YOU!

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Who you are speaks so loudly I can’t hear what you’re saying.”

Who you are and how you are influences people more than what you know and what you say. How you present yourself carries more weight than how you present your products and services.

So what business are you in? I submit...

You are in the *I.T.C.H.*TM Business!

Whether you work solo or inside a big company the more people whose *ITCH* you scratch, the more valuable you are.

The old game motto was,
“You scratch my back, and I’ll scratch yours.”

The new game motto is,
“Scratch my *ITCH* and I’ll make you rich.”

I.T.C.H stands for...

Information!
Transportation!
Communication!
Help!

Information:

People need information, or so they think. Actually, they don’t need more information because they can’t absorb it all. They need knowledge and wisdom. There’s no time to gather all the information. They want shortcuts. They want you to find them a vehicle. They want...

Transportation:

Offer people a vehicle that takes them from where they are, to where they want to go. To do that, you want to know a person's preferred way of travel. If he wants the quickest trip and the fastest vehicle, charter a jet. If she wants the scenic route, the answer might be a train ride or a slow boat. People want to reach a destination. YOU to provide the transportation.

Ask yourself, "What vehicle can I offer to help my buyer get her from where she is to where she wants to be?"

Communication:

Your business is communication. If you have the cure for a deadly disease but don't communicate it, you can't help the minions of people whose lives you might save.

I show companies how to attract, convert and keep more customers. If I send the message over and over again that I can help you "attract, convert and keep more customers," you are more likely to remember me when you're ready to attract, convert and keep more customers.

What are you communicating? How can you improve your message?

Help:

The reason for being in business is to help people. When businesses stop helping people, they go out of business. Commerce is a willing exchange of money for a solution that is delivered in the form of a product or service. If you can't help me, you won't get my money.

Even if you can help me, you still may not get my money.

Attracting people is tough. Getting them spend their money with you is tougher still. Keeping them coming back for more is the most profitable part of business, and toughest of all.

The best compliment I ever got was, "I want more of you." It became the service standard I aim for every time. I want people I serve to feel that they want more of me. If they've had enough, they won't come back again.

The most profitable relationship you have is with a person who continues to buy and spend more money with you. Repeat sales are the lifeblood of business. You want people to sing your praises so you can invest more time getting paid to serve, and spend less money to prospect and market.

You're in the *I.T.C.H* business. Send a message that reflects your desire to inform, transport, communicate and help.

Information opens the door; transportation is the vehicle; communication is the medium; help is the name of the game. How well you scratch their *ITCH* predicts the success of the enterprise.

Communication as a Leverage Point

Communication has serious upside potential, or severe downside consequences. Your business can rise and fall on the quality of your communicability, and your personal market value can rise and fall on the messages you send and receive. As your company improves its inside and its outside communications, business value increases.

Communication bridges everything we do. Language distinguishes humans from animals. Even though he can't speak, I swear my bulldog Bruiser understands everything I say to him. I'm can't say the same for humans.

A business is built on the tensile strength of empathic, two-way communication. Screaming may be good for radio and TV talk show ratings, but it destroys trust and confidence in business. Nobody wants to be yelled at by a frustrated worker, or feel demeaned when they need help and seek guidance.

In the new game of business...

“Who you are speaks so loudly, I may not hear what you're saying.”

What do you stand for that separates you from the pack?

What do you say that causes the buyer to feel a connection with you? If you simply parrot the words, “quality and service” you sound like every other bird in the flock.

Communication is a reflection of your state of being, your peace of mind. The way you communicate verbally and non-verbally tells a lot about you. People make judgments about a business based on how it communicates its message.

Whether on television or on radio, in print, in a post card, or email, on an Internet web site, on the phone or in a face to face encounter, communication deeply influences every experience. First contact, a side conversation, a look or a non-verbal gesture can make a lasting imprint.

Communication is about content (what you say) and context (how you say it). Context is often the critical distinction that separates you and your message from others. People buy the message, and they buy YOU, the messenger. How you look and carry yourself when you communicate is as important as what you say and the words you use to say it.

In the old game, you “never let them see you sweat.” In the new game, you ask them to “throw you a towel.” People want the truth; they want the real you, warts and all. The marketplace is forgiving; it doesn’t expect you to be perfect. More than anything, people want you to be authentic.

Chapter 5: So What Business Are YOU In?

Admitting mistakes immediately and correcting them quickly are high value qualities. It's front-page news when a company admits a serious mistake and does the ethical thing by coming clean.

“What a tangled web I weave, when I practice to deceive.” What goes around comes around. Anything but the truth tends to come back to bite you.

When communicating with children, tone and body language speak so loudly they really can't hear what we're saying. How we look when we speak transcends the words we use.

When I raise my voice to my son Adam, he turns off. As I get louder, his listening gets lower. He dials down the volume knob until he tunes me out altogether. He shuts me off until I calm down and speak with him, not at him. He is wise beyond his years.

Children are open and brutally honest, and can teach us a thing or two about business. We'd be smart to listen to them more, and talk at them less. They have a valuable perspective we can easily brush off and dismiss as childish, but it's that child-like view that is fresh and new.

If there were ever a time for fresh and new, it's NOW!

Listening is the more valuable part of the communication connection. Empathy and compassion are the heart and soul of communication. The more I understand you, the better I know how you feel.

Understanding is as important as being understood. How can you improve your listening?

What does your company say to the marketplace? What are your customers saying about you and your company?

What message do you send to people at work? What do you convey to your family, friends and loved ones?

What *NEW* messages would you like to send?

What do you say with your money? How you spend it is what gives money its life. If you have no money left over at the end of your month, the message is “there’s not enough.”

If you are wealthy beyond your wildest dreams, the message is “there’s plenty more where that came from.”

The messages you communicate come alive.

Whatever you think about his politics, Bill Clinton is a master communicator. The words “I feel your pain” touch the heart. This simple, soulful message resonates at the core of your being. His quivering lip and snoop-dog eyes convey a deep personal connection that bypasses the conscious mind and imprints directly on the subconscious.

More than 40 years later, John Kennedy’s words still ring true: “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what...?” If you’re an American, you can finish the sentence even if you weren’t alive when those words were uttered...

“Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what YOU can do for your country.”

This kind of message touches the soul and transcends time and space.

Find your voice. Speak your message. Take a stand for it. Continue to hone it, and keep refining it.

Here's a suggestion:

STOP LABELING YOURSELF!

What you do is NOT who you are!

You are NOT an accountant. You help people maximize tax deductions and save money.

You are NOT a doctor. You help heal sick people.

You are NOT a real estate broker. You help people find the home they are looking for.

You are NOT a salesperson. You help people get what they want the way they want it.

I am NOT an author. I write books that inspire people to be happy and become more prosperous.

I am NOT a speaker. I give lectures and workshops that teach people how to be more marketable, leverage-able and valuable.

I am NOT a consultant. I help businesses, large and small boost sales and increase profits (quickly, I might add).

I am NOT a coach. I offer advice and counsel to business owners and corporate executives.

I am NOT a sales trainer. I help companies attract, convert and keep more customers.

Stop saying what you are (accountant, doctor, designer, construction worker, engineer), because what you say you are, you are not. You are not your work. You DO your work.

Tell people what you DO, not what you SELL.
Tell them how you SERVE, and what you LOVE!

Explain the emotional link people feel with you, the outcomes and results your customers achieve. If you tell them what you do from their perspective and not from your company's product or service angle, you are less likely to box yourself into a corner or label yourself out of the game.

Instead of conveying your USP, Unique Selling Proposition...
Focus on your USA... Unique Service Advantage!

The best way to find out what business you're really in, discover your USA and know what you do best is to ask your customers:

“Why do you buy from me?”

Few businesses ask:

“Why do you buy from us?”

It is the single most important business question to answer. You can turn a one-time buyer into a lifetime customer, and leverage that customer into many more like him simply by knowing why he buys from you. It’s obvious, yet so easy to overlook.

This question gives you insight into why people buy from a buyer’s perspective, the only one that matters. You get their testimony, endorsements and referrals. You can follow the first question with the question, “who else do you know who would like what we give you?”

You can identify your strongest advocates, and enroll the most fervent among them to spread the word about you. This one question can open the floodgates of new business opportunity.

If you work for someone, ask your boss, co-workers and the people you serve internally:

“What do I do best?”

“What are my greatest strengths? My shortcomings?”

Here are two questions we ask our clients:

“How can we serve you better (today, tomorrow, in the future)?”

“What important decision can we help you make?”

Instead of brainstorm, “*Gamestorm*TM!”

Gamestorming is less tiring, more liberating and enjoyable. It’s “no-box” thinking on rocket fuel. If you want great input, Gamestorm with kids. They’ll tell you like it is. No Success BS comes out of the mouths of babes.

Start asking people you serve how they feel about your service, and how you can serve them better. They will be happy to tell you.

Ask all your customers why they buy, how you can serve them better, and watch your business transform.

Enhance and improve your communication skills every day. Send a new message from your mouth to my ears, from your heart to my heart, from your soul to my soul. Your message has one overriding objective; to attract, convert and keep customers for life, and engage people who you can serve, deliver and serve some more.

Send a *New Message*...

So What Business Are YOU In?

Note: The book and audio series, “Get MEGA-Referrals, Powerful Testimonials and Ringing Endorsements!” is a proven customer care and service strategy. It includes the, “Five Questions of ServiceTM” that will get you new business, referrals, testimonials and endorsements. Visit our website to learn more about MEGA-Referrals: <http://thenewgame.com>.