Why Are You Waiting to Win?

10 MUST-HAVES TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN BUSINESS
Jim has been successfully financially advising people in San Diego for 35 years. He founded SOFA, The Society for Financial Awareness, 20 years ago. SOFA’s mission, then and now, is to end financial illiteracy in America, one community at a time. Jim coaches hundreds of members on a daily basis to go out in their respective communities and spread financial literacy to all.

Jim’s vision is to create “significance” through financial education, available to all, in schools, workplaces and communities across the nation. From adolescents to adults, SOFA will continue helping all to find financial comfort.
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I try to do the right thing at the right time. They may just be little things, but usually they make the difference between winning and losing.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
All parts come together for a greater good. In your daily encounters, don’t focus on only winning in the big things. Put as much focus, energy and pride into all the little things that matter significantly but simply are put on a lower scale or pecking order. Remember each part of a moving machine has a purpose. It breaks down, the entire machine stops.

Anyone can be busy, the question is are you productive? Create significance!

"Being busy does not always mean real work. The object of all work is production or accomplishment and to either of these ends there must be forethought, system, planning, intelligence, and honest purpose, as well as perspiration. Seeming to do is not doing."

Thomas A. Edison
CHAPTER 2:
Prepare Diligently

“Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.”

Mike Murdock
Do you think of different scenarios occurring in your business – good or bad? When opportunity comes knocking are you prepared to capitalize on it? Is your staff ready? On the other hand, a catastrophe or crisis pummels your enterprise, are you just as ready?

Entrepreneurism and coaching an athletic team are quite similar. You’re constantly making adjustments on the fly. The proverbial fumble – the key mistake, whatever. The coach, his assistant, the players, all have to ride it out, stay within themselves, keep their wits and respond to the moment.

Preparing is more than daydreaming for the answer. It usually involves communication, identifying strengths and weaknesses, having a plan to follow, and an understanding of what to do at that moment...

All of this takes foresight!
A very famous coach once said at a Press Conference after winning the championship...

"To win is not about the act of actually winning... that's the by-product. Of course, everyone wants to win. Rather, the key to winning is the preparation that comes from constant practice, ongoing communication, and demanding excellence in the performance at practice. What happens in the game is simply the by-product of the practices."

I'd have to agree.
CHAPTER 3:
Stay True to Yourself, Understanding What You Do Best

“\nIt is not enough to know what you do best; you must know what to do, and then do your best. “

W. Edwards Deming
Understanding what you do best is a key element of leadership inside a business.

Often, many leaders create their own downfall by doing everything, thus, taking their time, focus, and what they do best and relegating it to the back of the line while they’re “fighting fires” in the details and non-essentials. BIG MISTAKE!!

Delegate everything to trusted staff – or outsource it – who will then do the job and get it done for you right and in a timely manner.

Every time you are pulled away from what you’re great at doing, your forfeiting your skill to doing something that the others probably could do. Not only do you forsake excellence, but all the creative juices and passion get "ground up" on stuff that just doesn’t match up to what you should be working on. You're "majoring in the minors".

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I guess the President of the United States could put out the pens and note pads at a Summit meeting; make sure there’s enough chairs at the meeting; check the room temperature...got the idea here?!

You’re the leader, the cause of the business. Drive it! Then delegate all else to competent staff. To "let loose" of control for many of us is a tough, tough issue. However, when you compare what you're giving up to what you could be achieving, it really is easy to see. Stick with what's vital and make the most of it.

The other stuff? Probably small potatoes!
“Quit looking for the people you’re looking for and start looking for the people that are looking for you.”

Doug Firebaugh
Products and services are indeed important, but without enough qualified prospects - future customers who need your product or service - well, you'll probably be dressed up and unemployed. It's not about being busy.

On the contrary, it's about you daily getting out and about and letting the folks know:

- Who you are
- What you offer
- Why they need your product or service
- The value and quality you bring to them
- Where you work and how to contact you

Until your enterprise is humming, you gotta get outside and -

"Run for Mayor"

Become known, gain a solid reputation of reliability, friendly, dependable, affordable and trustworthy.
If you share a good idea long enough, it will eventually fall on good people.

Jim Rohn
When your customers leave your place of work they absolutely need to begin their feedback about you, to who they know with a "Wow, let me tell you about...", "That place is phenomenal...” See, the idea here is taking care of your customer in a "wow" sort of way. As an example, say every time a customer came to see you at your office they had great service and while they were with you, you got their car washed. Probably quite rare - but they wouldn't forget!

The concept here is "killer, over-the-top" service.

In this age, most people would and do settle for mediocrity. Why? It's abundant. Quality, top-of-the-line service has become a lost art. No one wants to put out to that level. Try it, you'll enjoy watching your client's face!
As an example, in one of my blogs, I talked about taking a car into the dealership for service. I was definitely blown away.

- Shoe shining service
- Listening post of various CD’s
- Three different flat screens
- A gal creating different types of coffees
- Brand new rental cars

The point? Not your “average” car dealership. The place was packed!
CHAPTER 6: Don’t Get Down

“Attitudes are contagious. Are yours worth catching?”

Dennis and Wendy Mannering
Everyone has tough times and brutal days in their career - it's not rare, nor unusual. There's an old saying that is as true today as it was when it was first spoken...

"Winners never quit, and quitters never win".

All of us face:
Deception, apathy, a changed mind, betrayal, treachery, being cheated or lied to. Happens every day, in every way!

However, it's how we deal with it. Our attitude absolutely reflects our altitude. How high we go, or how low we sink, is totally dependent upon our viewpoint, our self esteem, and the environment we let ourselves work and live within.

Face your fears, live your dreams. A successful coach once said about having the proper perspective - "Nothing is ever as bad as it seems, nor is nothing ever as good as it seems. Somewhere in-between reality falls."
The only difference between a rut or a groove is depth! It's how you look at it.

Don't get down!

Another key point here is who you are “hanging with”. Are they winners? Do they achieve often? Are they honest? Got a work ethic? How about a sense of humor and are loyal? If so, you’re in the right mix. If not, find your track shoes and sprint as fast as you can away from them.

It only takes two to create a “pity party”. Avoid them! Stay positive and focus on solutions.

There are no victims, so don’t become one.
CHAPTER 7:
Always Ask for the Order

“The key to success is to focus our conscious mind on things we desire not things we fear.”

*Brian Tracy*
In our day to day interaction with our prospects and customers there usually is a moment, a strategic time, that we get to ask for the business.

When the hole has been shown (need), we need to provide the cork (solution)!

This "give and take" in the marketplace is a usual occurrence between the seasoned professional and the buyer. Learn to find this moment and capitalize on it. Most sales are created by customers who demurely state, when approached, "I'm just looking". Ok, so help them find it!

Nurture the need. Draw them in, be totally truthful in your pitch, emphasize the solution and ask for their business.

You'll be surprised how easy and successful it will be for you.
Another thought here is, are you guiding them to what their needs are? If you are the expert and the road they’re on is going to create future issues, why wouldn’t you point out the future problems and share with them why acting today could help eliminate that future challenge?

If your presentation or chat seems logical, is affordable and is easy to implement, maybe they’ll buy in to your suggestion. On the other hand, if you do not recognize the opportunity before you and seize the moment, why would you expect any kind of good result?

Be aware when you’re with a client, it’s game time and you have to be on your game!
CHAPTER 8: Talk Less and Listen More

“I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen.”

Ernest Hemingway
God gave us only one mouth, but two ears. That's got to tell us something! We need, we must, we should listen at least twice as much to our customer than talking "at" them. Allowing the prospect, or your client to reply, open up and start to go on and on, to the trained ear, creates some terrific "bonding" with your person. Most importantly, they love to talk.

Building lasting loyalty to our customer base involves:

- Getting in-tune with their wants, needs, desires
- Creating solutions to their problems
- Providing economical, easy to know ideas or products that will help them down the trail

Letting people talk is a classy, selfless gesture of individual maturity. Master it.

You'll come across warm, empathetic, and quite sincere to your buyer.
CHAPTER 9:
Creating Prices that Are Fair and Showcase Value

“To be fair isn’t enough anymore. We must be ferociously fair.”

John Hay Whitney
People spend money every day. Some are cheap, some frugal, some throw it away, some have no concept of being thrifty. Whoever is your customer, they must "perceive" that your prices are fair, your products or services are outstanding and dependable. "Value" is usually a foundation principle of retail.

It doesn't matter what your service is, the idea here is -

- It's the marketplace, so
- Is the price comparable to your competitor?
- Yes...then it's competitive
  No...it's not competitive -

**The perception of the buyer to your "delivered value” is all that matters.**
A huge negative needs to be pointed out here as well...the perception of greed by you or your business. If this appears, it’s no different than the scent of a skunk. Nothing sends people packing faster than if they think they are being gouged. Fact is, the only news amongst people that travels faster than good news is bad news. True or false, it doesn’t matter. The perception that your goods or services is “ripping off” the public is a death wish, a pox now placed upon your business. Beware!!!

Always create value and be fair in your pricing.
Think about our society and the unbelievable frenetic pace most Americans go at. Is it really surprising that everyone’s talking and very few are listening? Most people are so fanatical about driving their message home, it comes across as a monologue or filibuster versus a true conversation between two people.

If you want to impress people and “sway” them over to appreciating you and what you offer, “pipe down” and let them talk.

"Quality in a product or service is not what the supplier puts in. It is what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for. A product is not quality because it is hard to make and costs a lot of money, as manufacturers typically believe. This is incompetence. Customers pay only for what is of use to them and gives them value. Nothing else constitutes quality."

Peter F. Drucker, American Management Guru
CHAPTER 10:
Follow Up and Follow Through

"It was character that got us out of bed, commitment that moved us into action, and discipline that enabled us to follow through."

Zig Ziglar
This is an "absolute" of any successful venture. All of us are busy, stressed out, worried, hungry for the next quality customer to come to us. These feelings are commonplace.

So why is it, so many sales are lost or prospects are forgotten along the way in our busyness? Easy, we forget to follow up and follow through in a timely manner.

Buying and shopping is like romance. When the time is right are you ready? If you're so, so close to closing a deal but your potential customer, for any reason, just isn't quite there yet, DO NOT FORGET ABOUT THEM! Stay in touch, be available. They probably got a couple of questions they still need answers for. Good follow up creates many good opportunities for the seasoned professional. Opportunities are too hard to come by, so never ignore your future buyer. They may not buy today, but possibly tomorrow. Keep your name and contact info in front of them at all times.
The fine line here is being professional versus bugging, hounding, or pressuring the prospect to buy.

Polite follow up is fine. Constant contact, smothering the poor guy is not. Use discretion, common sense. Why do you think so many people hate salespeople?! Easy, they're annoying. So, (here's a terrific concept), don't be.

Act like you have lots of customers and that is fact, this next sale is just another jelly bean going into the jar....nothing special, just routine. Stay professional, not pushy!
We are in control of our destiny. How we think absolutely affects how we act and respond in the marketplace. Be positive, upbeat, confident and you'll do great. Become responsible, friendly, trustworthy, honest. Avoid lousy products, rude people, being greedy and solid, profitable relationships will begin for you.

Waking up each day with an attitude of expecting "great things" is rare for most. But for those who "have it" and "do it" radiate a success - a magnet to the customers.

Over time, your business will gain a favorable reputation as a "must-go-to" business. A place where your customers will continue to do business with you and, as well, refer others to you for your products and service.

As exciting as it is, it begins with the germination of a simple seed inside you - Solid Self Esteem - grow it, nurture it. Let no one take it away.

Do this and you'll find that "Winning" will take a permanent residence in your business!
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