

September 2007: The Getting what you Want Edition

It's Just the Old "Give and Take": the Currency of Influence

Have you ever turned up at a Christmas party, arms full of gifts. You exchange gifts and start opening yours, full of expectation. And then your heart sinks.

One of the gifts you've been given is so much better than the gift you gave to that person.

Do you feel guilt? Maybe you feel cheap. Maybe you feel sort of cheated. If you've ever had that happen to you and felt something uncomfortable, you know the power of one of the greatest sources of influence there is: **Reciprocation**.

That's right, the old "give and take." The need to reciprocate - and do so fairly - is a powerful urge in the human psyche. So much so, in fact, that charities have been using it for years to try and get us to contribute.



Free pens, stickers, posters, even a 2p piece taped to the letter have all been mailed through the Kent Trainers door. They work on the principle of Tit-for-Tat: when we receive a gift, it triggers the urge to give something back.

And if you say: "*but I never do*" bear this in mind - others do. And if you say, "*I do - but not just because I got a free pen*" then: really? **Are you sure?**

Look at advertising. Something like 10% of British print adverts contain the subtle message "we, or someone, has given you something: what are you going to do about it." Scary, but it really does work.

So how can you put it to work for you. Do favours for people, concede points in an argument, offer concessions, give recognition - better still, respect, offer help and support.

Each time you do this, you are making a **deposit in the bank of influence**. The more deposits you make, the more you will be able to withdraw, when you need agreement, help, or support.

Learn more, because your business depends on it: [Influence & Persuading Skills](#), 19 Sept

Take your Selling Skills for a SPIN

*"the best sales people have
a 4:1 listen-to-talk ratio"*

Neil Rackham of the Xerox Corporation discovered this astonishing statistic and, if you want to influence people to get more of what you want, you'll do well to apply this knowledge.

Rackham is best known for the concept of SPIN Selling. Here's a quick run down of how it works.

S for Situation

Start by asking searching questions of your potential buyer - what are their needs?

P for Problem

Listen very carefully to your potential buyer's response and encourage information flow. People buy to meet a need. You want to identify what their problem is so you can ...

I for Implied need

Demonstrate your understanding of their need - show them you know what their pain is, so that you can ...

N for Need-payoff

Show your potential buyer how you can meet their need, solve their problem and take away their pain.

When you have done this, they will want to buy. If you can quote a price that they can afford, you are ready to close the final sale.

Learn more, because selling is key to your business success: [Sales Essentials](#), 12 Sept

Assertiveness: Getting what you want, with integrity

Care to guess what is the most effective Time Management tool? It's actually the quickest to use - if only we found it a little bit easier to implement!

Guessed it yet? No? Well, here it is? It's the word "No". Using this powerful word, you can **free up time** to focus on doing what you want, because here's the thing:

Saying "yes" may make you feel good for a short time, but it leads to stress. Saying "yes" may make the other person happy for a short time, but will they like you better for it? We doubt it. Will they respect you for it? No. It's just a sure fire route to becoming a door-mat.

We're not saying: always say "no". We are saying: always make a conscious decision - is "yes" the right thing to say? If it is, then say it, if not, say "no".

Making a decision based on doing the right thing is what assertiveness is all about. Respect is a much-used word these days and it lies at the heart of assertive behaviour. Here's the summary:

Aggressive behaviour

I have plenty of respect for me ...
... but very little for you.

Passive behaviour

I respect you a lot, and me ... just a little.

Assertive behaviour

I respect you and I respect myself:
enough to do the right thing by both of us

Learn more, because assertiveness helps with everything: [Assertiveness](#), 18 Sept

A Winning Attitude is the Source of all Influence

We all get a pretty sound "feeling" about people. So your attitude and personal impact are vital in influencing anybody.

This is particularly so if you want people to follow you. Leading from the front and setting a positive example is an essential

feature of any leader. One of the greatest leader of the 20th century, Gandhi, said:

"Be the change you want to see in the world"

People will only be persuaded by you if they really believe in your integrity and commitment. Attitude is everything.

Learn more, because leadership is a journey: [The Leadership Programme](#), 17 Sept

Remember our Career Edition in April? Then, we said:

Recruit for Attitude: Train for Skill

Learn more, because your staff are your business: [Recruitment & Selection](#), 19-20 Sept

Essential Ideas

"Getting to Yes"

In 1981, Roger Fisher and William Ury published one of the all time classic business books: "Getting to Yes".

This introduced four powerful principles to the world, from the authors' tremendous experience of negotiating at all levels. These can apply in all business negotiations and are well worth study.

Separate the People from the Problem

Be soft on the people, hard on the problem. Don't let personalities get in the way of getting what you want. Look to build understanding, and find ways to let off steam when emotions run hot

Focus on Interests, not Positions

Interests define the problem, and behind opposed positions lie shared and compatible interests.

Invent options for Mutual Gain

Avoid premature judgement so you are free to be creative, and search for multiple answers (more options = better solution)

Insist on Objective Criteria

Principled negotiation is based on objective criteria. Frame each issue as a search for objective criteria. Never yield to pressure - only to principle.

Learn more, because we all have to negotiate, every day: [Negotiating Skills](#), 5 Sept

Contribution: The Ultimate Business Win-Win

You may have read a lot about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) recently. Many of us assume it is only for large organisations with huge resources: it isn't.

YOUR BUSINESS YOUR COMMUNITY?

CSR represents an approach to how you involve yourself in the local community, which can bring **enormous business benefits**. You can do this by supporting local charities, employee volunteering or action days and other initiatives.

Businesses like yours who have got that involved have achieved a multitude of benefits. These include:

- developing skills within your business and increased morale and motivation
- building networks with potential clients and partners
- creating effective ways to develop your people and their team-working
- enhancing the public perception of your company
- the pride of bringing real benefits to your local community

Sevenoaks Volunteer Development Agency is running a programme to promote CSR throughout West Kent. They can provide advice on how to establish a policy or action plan, through to arranging “**action days**” where staff can get involved in teams to help local organisations. For example, creating a sensory garden for children, painting a playroom, redecoration for older people living alone. or helping to establish community computer facilities.

If you would like to explore what you could do, email David Mckee at davidmckee@sevenoaksvolunteers.org.uk.