



tip

The Independent Publisher





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"...it can be independence forever for those who value it sufficiently... if they give their allegiance to an association such as this one, they will be dedicated to keeping the spirit alive, and they will be doing it by helping each other."

— Victor R. Jose
IFPA Founding Conference
September 20, 1980

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On the cover, Joe and Mary Nicastro work side-by-side on their 17 publications.



Doug's Dribble

by
Doug
Fabian



THANKFULNESS

Below is an article that is copied from Trish Hoskin, a writer and PhD. A couple weeks ago, I was having a tough day. Physical ailments have made me adjust more things than I would like to admit to this year. I have been a handful even to myself. I was whining about just about everything a few weeks ago and called my wife to "vent." Those of you who know Connie fully understand that this was not a smart thing to do if I wanted to stay in a sorry state. She quickly told me that I needed to be focused on being thankful for what I had, not for what I didn't. Obviously, she is a smart woman. I hung up feeling much better, spent a minute of quiet time, and searched for the article below. I had found it years ago with a simple Google search. I thought it may be good for you all to read as we head into the holiday season.

Being thankful opens us up to receiving all kinds of wonderful blessings. When in a state of

gratefulness, we acknowledge our true selves & radiate this energy to others.

What does it mean to be thankful? I'm not talking about being polite after someone's opened the door for you. I'm talking about feeling thankful for the true blessings in your life. "True Blessings" mean the things in your life that resonate importance in your life - the things that touch your core.

You may be wondering why it's important to feel thankful. Oprah talked about this concept a few years ago and she suggested having a thankfulness journal. This is a great idea because it keeps us focused on the positives in our lives. It helps us see the great things we have and do, and puts our frustrations and worries into perspective. But even if you don't have a journal, you can see the benefits of being conscious of thankfulness - again, it keeps us

focused on the great and wonderful things in our lives.

How does being thankful affect your life? Let's look at it in terms of someone you may know. Imagine the person who is usually in a bad mood. They are always complaining about something, there is always someone who's done something to them and they're always getting the bum deal. This person is hard to be around and it takes a lot of energy to maintain a relationship with them. By the end of a visit, you're exhausted! Do you think this person is a thankful one? Probably not. In fact, if you asked them what they're thankful for, they may have a hard time telling you.

On the other hand, think of someone else you know. This person is energetic, and has a certain spark to them. They laugh a lot and have a "can-do" attitude. They may be afraid, but they are willing to try

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new things. If you ask them what they're thankful for, they will be able to list off many. And when you visit with this person, you feel energized, inspired and thankful to know them. It's safe to say that this person is more fulfilled in their life than the unthankful one.

Of course our lives are never perfect but we still strive for perfection. But you know how it is. You reach the top of one mountain and lo and behold! there's another mountain to climb! Don't feel discouraged by this. Be sure to look back at all the mountains you've climbed and acknowledge the growth and progress you've made. Be thankful for the experiences because without them, you wouldn't

be where you are today.

And what if where you are today is not where you want to be? Again, be thankful that you are where you are - because now you have a very clear idea of what you don't want. You can now work towards what you do want.

If you are wondering how to get started on this, begin with a list. Write down every little thing you're thankful for. Nothing is too small to put on this list. Include the mundane things like the first cup of coffee in the morning or the birds that were singing. Tell yourself that you're going to add to it all day as ideas

pop into your head. Keep this idea in your mind all day. You don't have to be totally focused on it, just be open and know that at the end of the day when you read over your list, you're going to see that there are so many wonderful things in your life that you have to be thankful for.

You can even add things that you don't have, but want. This is important in manifesting our dreams.

Have fun with this and enjoy the light and love it will bring you.

Now, go and give someone a hug... Have a blessed Holiday Season, full of thankfulness! Doug

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Joe & Mary Nicastro: Chapter Two In New Jersey

By Bob Munn

“My father and my grandfather were peddlers...,” Joe Nicastro begins the story that he calls his ‘path to publishing.’

Let’s hold that thought and consider where this unique story of an even-more unique individual rests today.

Joe Nicastro grew and sold his first set of Bergen County, New Jersey-based weekly publications from 1987 through 2003. He built an industry reputation for technical innovation and creative thinking (to put it mildly). Today, he’s at it again...17 monthly publications with over 185,000 mailed circulation. Today’s products adhere to the same format and basic philosophy that inspired him in the eighties.

The difference in his two operations is the lessons learned over eighteen years and the opportunities that technology offers.

But, it all started on a fruit truck. The Nicastros sold fruit, vegetables and



“I would not be in business today, if not for IFPA. That is the truth.”

groceries door-to-door from a re-purposed school bus. They operated a physical store, as well, and Joe’s childhood was a master’s degree in entrepreneurship, dealing with consumers, suppliers and—above all, selling.

Right out of high school, he opened his own store. It was such a success that after one year, the landlord gained a new appreciation for the value of the location and spiked the rent to an exorbitant level. (This is New Jersey, after all.) Joe closed the store and headed

Above:

Joe and Mary only recently moved their 17 publications from their home to commercial office space.

for community college.

He funded his college career by going back to the street and selling produce from his own truck. He built a following that grew into a new larger physical store. Joe's Fruits and Vegetables opened in 1980.



Joe learned to serve customers at his father, Mike's, fruit and vegetable store.

And that's when he started advertising. Let him tell the story.

"The local ad rep would come in to sell me ads and I would complain it was too expensive. One day I gave him a shot. We offered veal cutlets for \$1.99 per pound. The store was packed. Sales went through the roof, and many new customers came through the doors. Then in typical advertiser style when the rep came back in to rerun the ad, I told him I couldn't afford to. I would run ads from him periodically, but never committed to a regular schedule."

The store was a success despite Joe's neanderthal approach to advertising. After three years, he sold and got out of the grocery business. He and a friend went together to purchase a local bar and restaurant. Joe was the cook, and things went very well from the beginning. Again, let Joe pick up the story here.

"Only problem was being 23 years old and owning a bar, I wanted more young people in the bar. After losing my older customers who paid to eat (not like the kids who would buy a 50¢ beer) the business went downhill and we closed it. Shortly thereafter, I decided to find the one

"I have always believed that my mission is to help small business owners grow. If I could do that, my business would prosper, as well."

and only job I have ever had. In late 1985, I interviewed for a sales position at the *Wayne Today Newspapers* and got the job."

He already had the sales part down and had

seen the value of consistent advertising. It didn't take long to become the company's sales leader. But that small pond became much bigger when *Wayne Today* was purchased by Ingersoll and Joe was tapped to train others at locations throughout the Ingersoll chain.

Again, let's let him tell the story.

"This was a huge company that had no idea what it was doing. I watched them destroy the small successful papers they bought up. With my less than 18 months of newspaper experience and knowing I couldn't do any worse, I left and began publishing in the areas where I had once sold for them. *The Independent News* was born in 1987.

"My motivation wasn't that much different from what I hear from publishers across the country. Large companies approach communities with a corporate mentality. The bottom line is all that matters not the businesses or communities.

"I have been using the same formula for all the years I have been publishing," Joe explains. "The technology has changed but one thing that has not changed is what the public wants."

The former restaurant cook lists

Continued, next page

Joe & Mary, continued

his community publishing recipe: "Local news, events and information. Local market readers crave local. Local sports, school news, scouting news, events and good local features on people who do good in the community.

My wife, Mary, and I grew that first small group of weeklies. In 2003, we sold them to the daily papers.

While they were closing down our original operation, we started two more weeklies in adjacent markets and sold those to the same group in 2005. That time, I stayed on as General Manager of their weekly division. Meanwhile, Mary started a single monthly publication, *The Black River News*, on her own, working from home. Around 2007, the daily closed the two papers we sold them the second time. So we added those two areas to the monthly *Black River News*. One thing led to another, and in 2015 we merged our papers with NJ Marketeer group owned by Darwin Oort, another long time publisher. That partnership became New View Media Group, and we wound up with 17 titles and 185,000 in the mail. Recently, all that growth forced us out of Mary's home office and into commercial real estate.

I have always believed that my mission is to help small business owners grow their businesses. If I could do that, my business would prosper, as well.

"The key to our success is that we can help local business grow by providing our community with valuable family friendly content. Everybody wins.

"I don't think what we do is unique. There are IFPA publishers all over the country who prosper by putting their communities first. That's why IFPA has been so valuable.

"I joined IFPA the same year I started my own paper. I came to my first meeting in St. Louis a youngster, knowing nothing. I hit gold. Gary Godfrey and Joe Duval taught me more at that meeting than anything I knew prior. Gary taught me about



zoning while Joe and Lynn taught me about graphics and Mac computers and changed my papers and how we did things, forever.

“The opportunity to serve IFPA—and eventually become President—enabled me to give something back, but also provided life-long friends like Gary Godfrey, Joe Duval, Gary Rudy, Tom Aird and countless others, who have been vital to my business and personal life.

“IFPA gave me something that I could not get anywhere else. Absent the sharing and support I got there, I would not be in business today if not for IFPA. That is the truth.”

Joe takes pride in his focused and highly efficient new organization.

“We produce 17 monthlies with 2 graphics people. My wife Mary runs the graphics side. Nine sales people, mostly part time, are supported by one telemarketer who sets appointments for my sales reps. A very small staff. One location. Our sales reps work remotely from their homes. There is rarely a reason to come into the office except for a meeting or if they need to pick up supplies.”

He continues, “I handle every aspect of the company, except for editorial & graphics. I take care of all finances and bookkeeping, payroll, health benefits, printing and distribution and everything else that goes along from the business side. I also manage our website and online, as well as sales.”

“There will always be a way for a community newspaper to tell a different story that is fresh and exciting never old.”

When asked if he is still the company’s top seller, he smiles and explains, “The funny part is that I still sell the most and all my sales are done online and on the phone, with 90% online. I just do not have to leave the office.”

And yet, get out of the office he does. He was recently reelected to a second four-year term on his town’s, Mt. Olive, NJ, Council and has his eye on becoming Mayor after that. He also chairs the Board of Health and serves as Council President.

“Like most of us, I’m always looking for new services and products for my customers. I currently offer customers printing services, an online business directory, apps for their business and online services that I provide through my other company, *CoolerAds*, that was created to help fellow publishers back in 1998.

“Finding the right online products is a challenge. Many have tried online directories, coupons services like *Groupon*. The issue for me is finding the right product that can help them, as well as generate additional revenue. It is easy to sell someone an online banner ad, but they only have “x” amount of dollars to spend, overall. If they spend an additional

\$200 per month for an online ad, they might reduce the print side by \$200, and there is nothing gained from the paper’s side. I would rather offer an online ad free with the ad in print, then my advertiser can feel like they are getting more with their print ad when they do run in print.”

We asked Joe what he saw as his greatest challenge, and his usual ebullient mood turned serious.

“Time. Not just from the standpoint of the things I need to do for my business, but running out of time. At 55, I feel I have so many more ideas for our industry and things I would like to do, like teaching others how to start local publications and building toward a national community newspaper brand. I get so much out of talking with fellow publishers, and I welcome anyone to contact me any-time. There are so many possibilities and they are exciting to think about.

The only limiting factor is time and how we choose to use it.”

Joe can be reached at



joe@newviewmg.com



Graphic Hooks

by
Ellen
Hanrahan



WHEN SPACE IN AN AD IS LIMITED, THIS TECHNIQUE CAN BE A BIG HELP...

Type on a Path

Type on a path can be a big help when you have a limited space to work with—and in today's market, limited space seems to be the norm. I found a simple heading in the *Metro Newspaper Service* (December 2009, page 66) that I believe will work for my purposes. It's not exactly what I want, but the idea is there. I will deconstruct the original heading and just use elements of the original that will suit my goal of a badge or "tag" that I can use in a number of ways.

Cookie Recipes

This bears repeating. This is the time of year when cookie recipes are big! For gifts, for parties, desserts—for sharing! I liked the "Santa's Cookie Picks" header, but I want to make it a little more generic, I don't know, maybe just "Holiday Cookies" will be enough. By the way, I am using the header at 36% of its original size.



I liked the casual type that was chosen for this heading, however, if I am going to use type on a circular path, I need to be a little more discriminating. Type on a circle path looks best in all caps. Descenders that hang below the baseline become a distraction as you'll soon see. I have used the typeface *Postino Italic* because it comes closest to the type used in the original heading. I have used the TYPE ON A PATH OPTION "Rainbow," but I'm really not liking it already and I haven't even added the cookie art. Anyway, the first version is upper and lowercase and it looks a little "messy." The second version is all caps and while it suggests the outline of a circle better, I think I will choose another typeface altogether. (Typeface size is 20 point in both cases.)



At this point, I'm also making the words run in just the top portion of the circle. I decided to let the artwork stand on its own, so my type for "Holiday Cookies" is *Myriad Pro Black Condensed*, plus the words are now 32

point. And rather than base align the text to the path, I chose center align because I tinted the inside circle and wanted the "parts" to seem more connected.

I also chose to add a stroke and small dark shadow to just the text area. The amount of space you have to work with will dictate the size of the heading.



Heading with lots of cookies!

In the next column, I offer some variations on this item. Some will work well smaller, as a "badge" or "tag" to unite similar items. This type of heading can be done with Happy Hours, Gift Baskets, Brunches... whatever! Just use appropriate artwork and scale to balance the heading.

Type size is now 26 point, but the circle is reduced to accommodate a smaller area. We don't need as many cookies either!

Same as above with just a few of the items shifted. 2 CIRCLES were required, so I repositioned "Cookies" to the bottom of the circle, and choose "flip" on my Type on a Path options. Since I did not base align the text, I also had to delete the color from the circle on "Cookies" so both "Holiday" and "Cookies" would appear to overlap the tinted bottom circle. And once again, I had to shift the cookies to create a more cohesive look.

I was able to do all of the type on a path in *Adobe InDesign*. Before I would have had to do the work in *Adobe Illustrator* and go back and adjust. *QuarkXPress* has similar features, and the procedure is pretty much the same, so you should be able to accomplish this technique in that program as well.

The only *Illustrator* work is the cookie art and I can shift, modify and import very quickly.

If you are planning on using the art as a header or a "tag," you can place it in a library, or create a PDF of use whenever you need to. Once the initial work is done, you can reduce, reuse or recycle... how great is that!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! HAPPY HOLIDAYS! HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Back in the old days, I did a "Sale" border very much like this one with the font *Bermuda Squiggle*. I was using *QuarkXPress* at the time, so I made some adjustments—like not doing a real type on path! So I have updated the type on path for use in *InDesign* and this is truly one long rectangular path. Did I have to do a little tweaking? Heck yea! But it wasn't too bad nor did it take much time—maybe 5–8 minutes to get the text to come out even. Probably about the same amount of time it took in 2004 to create separate boxes and place them around the border. So it's a wash.

Now experiment with other shapes. I use *Adobe CS 6*, but I've been using this technique since *Adobe CS 3*.

Well this wraps it up for another year and I also find myself craving some Christmas cookies! I will be back in January, BUT, I still welcome your ideas, comments and concerns, so e-mail to the address below.

A Blessed Holiday to all!

I welcome your input and suggestions. I entered the publishing business after nine years as a high school art teacher and taught software programs at technical school. I also write for *The Independent Publisher*, and I'm still learning. E-mail: hanrahan.in@att.net
Ellen Hanrahan ©2015

The New Truth About Closing the Sale



Every salesperson is looking for the fastest way, the best way, and the easiest way to “close” a sale.

More than human nature, for salespeople, closing the sale is both a desire and a need. And the results are totally measurable. Either you win, or you lose. There is no second place in sales.

Many people think that “closing the sale” is the fulcrum point of the process. All of those people are wrong. Closing the sale begins when the sales presentation begins.

A SALE IS NOT “CLOSED.” A SALE IS EARNED.

In my career I have learned two powerful words that complete the selling process. They allow me to complete the sale without a feeling of discomfort or hesitancy. When it’s time to deliver those words, I know in my heart of hearts the sale is mine.

The two words are: fair enough, and they are delivered to the prospect in the form of a question. “Fair enough?”

“Fair enough” are the most powerful words to affirm the prospect’s intention to buy. You may be erroneously referring to the prospect saying “yes” as “closing a sale.” Not good.

“Fair enough” asks for a commitment and validates the value and the fairness of your offer. If your offer is valuable, or perceived as valuable by the prospect, then the words “fair enough” will always be followed by the prospect’s affirmative answer. And vice-versa.

The words “Fair enough” are also a self-test. Do you perceive that your offer is so valuable, that when you ask the prospect, “Is that fair enough?” you know in your mind and in your heart that in fact it IS fair enough. Always ask yourself the “fair enough” question BEFORE you give a sales presentation. If you can answer “yes” to your own offer, it’s likely the prospect will answer “yes” as well.

The words “fair enough” ask for a “yes” and a confirmation to move forward. They are direct, completely understandable, and are non-manipulative. They don’t contain the phrases, “Can you see any reason not to move forward?” or worse, “Is there any reason you could not do this today?” Those are old-world, BS sales expressions of the worst order.

“Fair enough” is pointed, powerful, and positive. And you don’t have to wait until the end of your presentation

to ask. You can slip it in once or twice as you’re presenting to make certain you and the prospect are in agreement and moving forward.

“Fair enough” gives you a transition from your presentation to earning the business.

THINK ABOUT THIS: If you have a bunch of presentation slides and offer to send some kind of proposal at the end of your presentation, you can never use the words “fair enough.” Your job as a salesperson is to figure out how your presentation can culminate with the words “fair enough” and that there’s enough perceived value in your presentation for the customer to say, “Yes, that’s fair enough.”

If the prospect says, “That sounds fair enough,” or gives you some form of yes, that’s not just a purchase, it’s also a report card that your offer was perceived as valuable enough to move forward.

START HERE: Review your

Continued, page 14

Launch Your Own

How It Works



Rebrand Our Platform -

Add your own company name and logo. Use your own domain.



Sign up Local Businesses -

We'll show you how with proven sales techniques and marketing materials.



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New Truth continued

entire sales presentation and see where the words “fair enough” fit into it. If there’s no place for them, then your offer is most likely not fair enough, and will be met with some kind of resistance or stall.

This review process requires work on your part, and may mean you have to revise your sales presentation. This is a good thing! It will most likely mean you have to ask more questions, discover what the buying motive of the prospect is, and make certain you have value offerings that are in harmony with their

true needs and motives to buy.

If you are able to give prospects the answers they’re hoping for, you will have created the ultimate buying experience. Asking the question “fair enough” will become a joy. A financially rewarding joy.

I just provided you with a major secret of selling – a secret that, when mastered, has the potential to double your sales and increase your earnings significantly. All you have to do is create a strategy to incorporate it. Fair enough?

Jeffrey Gitomer is the author

of twelve best-selling books including The Sales Bible and The Little Red Book of Selling. His best-selling 21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling is now available as a book and an online course at www.gitomerVT.com. For public event dates and information about training and seminars visit www.gitomer.com or email Jeffrey personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

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Quick Pitch Selling

- Can you capture a prospect’s curiosity in 45 seconds?
- Does your sales call have a headline?
- What do you say when they say, “Whaddaya Got?”

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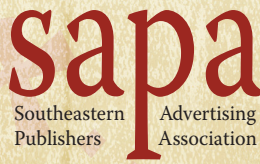
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The IFPA has formed the sales managers Share Help and Resource Exchange (S.H.A.R.E.) peer group, and found it to be one of the most valuable benefits you – and your sales manager – can receive.

WHAT IS IT?

Every sales manager faces day-to-day challenges that are unique to leading a sales team. "How can I grow my team while still being an individual contributor? Why is finding good sales people so difficult? How do I stay motivated and motivate my team? Where can I go to learn from my peers, or when I have challenges?"

Each S.H.A.R.E. peer group enables a group of 8 to 10 front-line sales managers to work together as a team to develop their skills, share best practices, and solve common problems – while making each other more successful.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The S.H.A.R.E. sales manager peer group was limited to 8 to 10 members. Monthly hosted telephone conference calls (59 minutes max) are conducted with planned agendas, plus time to address member requests. Skills development, networking and shared successes will be the focus.

The connections will continue beyond the monthly calls with email groups, and direct communication between the members is encouraged.

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Instead of investing in more after-hours chamber networking functions, invest in your sales manager's future with your company.

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by
Rena Reiser



If you're not sure this is a GREAT opportunity, pass this info along to your sales managers and see what they think.

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News Station Not Liable For Airing Footage

by Laura Mallory, lmallory@kingballow.com

A husband and wife sued an Oregon television station and reporter for showing the husband on a morning broadcast, despite being promised his likeness would not be aired.

Gunshots were fired in the couple's neighborhood, with some of the bullets striking their home. Television crews arrived to report on the shootings. The husband is a sergeant for the state penitentiary. Through his work, he interacts with inmates, some of whom have been released and have threatened to kill him.

AN AGREEMENT NOT TO DISCLOSE

The husband told the reporter he was very concerned for his safety and his family's safety and asked he not be filmed or identified in any of the news reports. If he was shown on the news in front of his house, he believed current and former inmates may discover where he lives.

The reporter assured the husband his image would not be broadcast. After the reporter agreed not to use his image, he allowed the reporter to film him on his property. That same night, the news station broadcast the story twice.

Neither broadcast showed the husband. The story also aired the following morning and was recut for a different reporter.

The recut footage showed the husband for a total of 3.4 seconds in the morning broadcast. At least 25 inmates saw the husband on television. One of the penitentiary inmates even told the husband he had enough information to find out where he lived. This resulted in the couple suing the news station and the reporter under several legal theories, including breach of contract and infliction of emotional distress. Therefore, the couple tried to keep their home address private.

ANTI-SLAPP

The news station and reporter moved to strike the complaint under the Oregon anti-SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) statute, alleging the claims arose out of their conduct in furtherance of the exercise of their right to free speech.


The purpose of Oregon's anti-SLAPP statute is to permit someone who is sued over actions taken in the public arena to have a questionable case dismissed at an early stage. The statute protects conduct in furtherance of the exercise of

the constitutional right of free speech in connection with a public issue or an issue of public interest. A motion to strike a claim based on the anti-SLAPP statute will be granted unless the person filing the suit can demonstrate a probability he or she will prevail on the claim.

The trial court denied the motion to strike the couples' claims and concluded the filming of the husband was not protected expression. The Court of Appeals, however, reversed. Upon an analysis of the claims and facts, the appellate court held the evidence does not support anything more than a finding that the news station and reporter acted negligently by failing to make the station employees aware of the promise they made that the husband would not be included in the broadcast. As a result, the court held the couple failed to demonstrate a probability of prevailing on their claims.

Reprinted from "Comment," a publication of the law firm of King & Ballow, Nashville, TN. Mark Hunt is our consultant with King & Ballow and he can be reached at (615) 726-5497 or mhunt@kingballow.com. The foregoing column is explanatory in nature and is not intended to provide legal advice as to particular situations.

from
King & Ballow



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Unusual Attitudes & How to Fix Them

by
Douglas
Fry



Each month, as I write my personal column, I think of ways to let you know a bit more about me. Usually this is more than you want to know, but no one has complained loudly enough yet. In keeping with that, and not wanting you to know about my Chocoholic tendencies, let's talk about Unusual Attitudes.

When I took a job at the Exchange in Fayetteville, TN the owner, mentor, and friend Bill Thomas asked me if I would be interested in learning how to fly an airplane. It took all my self control not to jump up and down, giggling, clapping my hands. Instead, I simply said, "If that's what the company wants, I'm willing to help out any way I can."

I began taking flight lessons from a young man named Phillip Rutledge. He was younger than I and we developed a friendship. He was still in college and having trouble with math. I was having trouble with the whole "keep the airplane in the air" thing. So, we helped each other out. I took a flight lesson and then we went to our home where I tutored him in college algebra, trig, and finally calculus.

Each time we went up in the plane I learned something new. Navigation, Instrument Flight Rules, Dead Reckoning, Stalls, S-Turns, Take Offs, and we tried to do an equal number of Landings. Each time we went up Phillip did something to me to test how I would manage the plane when things went wrong.

He would pull the power, switch off the gas, add flaps, or even open the door. He did anything to distract me from the task of flying the airplane. After the first time I was caught unawares I watched him, the horizon, the gauges, and outside the plane like a nervous hawk.

I seemed to be doing pretty well

because after about 8 hours of instruction he got out of the plane and told me to take off and land three times, by myself. I managed to do all three of each and taxied the aircraft to the hangar.

I had done it! I was a pilot or so I thought. However, Phillip had lots more tricks up his sleeve before I could take my pilots exam called a check ride. After my solo, each time we went up he told me to "Close your eyes and put your head down." Just so you know, don't ever do that unless you trust the other person completely, nothing good can come of it.

After he said those words I felt the plane doing all kinds of crazy maneuvers. I heard the engine alternately rev high or slow down. Twisting and turning through the air Phillip's mission was to get me completely disoriented and panicked. At the height of confusion he would say, "Douglas, open your eyes and look up. The plane is yours."

The immediate feeling of alarm, anxiety, and near hysteria seized my brain as I looked out to see either nothing but blue sky as the plane was pointed straight up stalled out, or the ground rushing up at us with full power. Or sometimes he would add a twist of having the plane turned on its side doing the above mentioned acrobatics. I had to manage my fear, take control of the plane, and get it back on the straight and level as quickly as possible. Those maneuvers were called "Unusual Attitudes."

The idea of Unusual Attitudes is that the pilot is trained to handle stress and react to problems without having to deliberate about what to do. He or she simply reacts as trained without going through the long process of figuring out how to overcome the problem.

Switch gears now. When you are out on a sales call you will have all kinds of stuff thrown at you. Objections, attitudes (sometimes unusual), and outright dishonesty will be launched at you by your customers and would-be customers. How do you handle them? Do you try and figure out just the right response? Or do you simply react as you've been trained?

Most of us haven't been trained enough or well enough to simply respond as trained. We try to postpone an answer by asking "probing questions" all while trying to figure out why the customer wants her ad upside down on page three in full color or some other outlandish proposition.

My suggestion is that we go back to the basics of proper training. Proper training includes practicing Unusual Attitudes. Call it role play. Call it what you like. Most of us don't like it no matter what it's called. But the reality is that unless we practice how we will respond to unusual questions, attitudes, and objections we will crash and burn. No one likes to crash and burn, especially in sales.

During your next sales training session talk to your people. Get them to respond to "What would you do if John Customer asked you to go off the rate card because the competition did?" Have your people talk through what they would say or do. Get input and feedback from each person on your sales team. You'll be surprised at the interesting responses and fixes they come up with. Everyone learns from this process. It will help your people be more professional and more successful.

The next time you take a flight remember that your pilot had plenty of Unusual Attitudes so that you could play "Words With Friends" despite your seat mate's unusual attitude.

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Effective Team-Building, Part I

by Darrell Davis, Metro Creative Graphics

Media salespeople are no different from their colleagues in other industries. To be successful in their jobs, media sales professionals need to be both motivated and inspired. While many people use these terms interchangeably, there are important differences between them — differences that have a substantial impact on building successful sales teams.

Motivation seeks immediate gains — meeting a sales goal, signing a particular number of new contracts, winning a prize — and pushes from behind. Inspiration, on the other hand, is directed towards the bigger picture — having a sense of accomplishment, meeting a personal goal, earning the respect and recognition of colleagues — and pulls from within. Just as successful salespeople need to be both motivated and inspired, effective team-building strategies incorporate both motivation and inspiration at every level.

When recognizing the distinction between these two terms, it can be easy to see why some team-building efforts falter and others flourish. Money and prizes, for example, are motivators. However, studies consistently indicate that most supercharged salespeople are most inspired not by money, but by their desire to accomplish and receive recognition. Therefore, successful team-building efforts combine motivation — higher commissions, time off or prizes — and inspiration — mechanisms for sharing and celebrating accomplishments, rewarding creativity and recognizing the attainment of personal goals.

Taking note of individual sales reps' goals is a key element of team-building and a good way to link motivation with inspiration. For example, a salesperson who is a new parent may value time off more than a cash prize or increased commission, while a staff member who is closer to retirement may respond more positively to a travel voucher that can be used at some future date. Since

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it has been shown repeatedly that people tend to work harder toward goals linked to what inspires them, one effective team-building strategy is to work with sales reps to develop their individualized goals that go beyond the baseline quota. Very often, individuals will not only set higher goals for themselves, but also work harder to achieve them.

Finally, in addition to identifying individual goals (inspiration) and establishing a series of incentives (motivation), it is essential to visibly recognize team members' successes — both large and small — along the way. Recognition — in the form of emails, verbal or visual announcements or small “displayable” gifts — spurs selling, but it also creates the kind of friendly competition that encourages salespeople to keep at it.

While all of these factors are central to creating effective team-building activities, there is one more that deserves our attention — creativity. Check back next month for my thoughts on some stellar “outside-the-box” team-building strategies that have proven both effective and entertaining.

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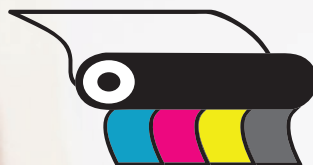
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