



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TRAINING PARTNERSHIP.

If you aren't training the people you rely on to gather the beans, you may as well sack your bean counter. If you're training them but not driving the training, you're probably better off not training them. Many companies that don't train or resist training have accountants running them. Executives who have never pounded the tarmac or worked the showroom may be qualified to run companies but often aren't ideally suited to recognise the tribulations a salesperson or service provider encounters on a daily basis. If you're an accountant, don't be offended by these words but do recognise that spreadsheets don't demand 'best price' and don't shop around.

This is not an advertisement to use my company. However, I strongly recommend that you research your trainer and ensure he or she has walked the walk. Do not be bullied by 'experts' who have MBA's and KPI's in their briefcases and little else. All they'll do is compare your team to 'benchmark operations'. The trouble is; you can't be sure those 'benchmark operations' did all they could (or all they should) to create those benchmarks. It's better to **be the benchmark** (and that's as close as I'll get to a plug)

I offer the following in the spirit of my own belief in the necessity to train **right** and my own experience on where companies go right and go wrong – regardless of whom they utilise to train. Here are 6 rules that will ensure your outcomes are positive.

1. Yes, you can afford training

In fact, you can't afford not to train. Think about how much money you spend to attract prospects only to have them turned into suspects by salespeople and service agents ill-equipped to extract the revenues and generate the loyalty your operation requires.

2. Don't kid yourself that you can train your own people.

Internal training is not as effective as external training and it's got nothing to do with your ability. Here's why;

- Training needs to be seen by the team as a gesture of their worth. Bringing a partner into your environment can be a fantastic way to value-add to the worth of your company and it respects the delegates.
- Kids often don't listen to their parents but they listen to their parents' friends. You can be too close. A trainer can be delegated to and used as a specialist resource between the formal sessions.

3. Understand that you need to drive the training.

Training should be as much about personal development as it is about professional processes; perhaps even more so. The reason is simple; your salespeople are people first. The quality of them as people will determine their quality as professionals. The trainer's responsibility is to provide your team with options that give them a strategic and tactical advantage in business that benefits your company and their lives. Your responsibility is to ensure that those options aren't just filed away in a folder and forgotten. Ensure your managers brief and debrief with both the delegates and the trainer. If the trainer isn't providing strategic advantages than change the trainer. If the management isn't driving the training by setting an example; change the manager.

4. Don't tolerate 'duckers and weavers'.

It's incredible how common place the 'ducker and weaver syndrome' is and how companies tolerate it and them. People who think they don't need training are usually the ones who need it the most. Ego has polluted experience to 'Groundhog Day status' instead of the evolution that experience should provide. Attitude can be cancerous. Your resistor can set an example to rookies and others that negates not only the training but your own business model.

- Give everyone plenty of notice. Do a roster or delegate that to your trainer.
- Wherever possible; no rostered days off, no customer appointments, no mobile phones and no interruptions.

5. Ensure your managers attend training

The middle manager can be a trainer's best friend or worst enemy – and yours too. I'm blessed to have so many fines ones as my partners but many managers are scared to attend training because the protocols offered under the banner of excellence are things they currently don't do. They feel like they are being exposed as imposters or they see hard work coming. Often, their feedback to you will be negative. If you want to judge the merits of the training – see for yourself. My best outcomes rely as much on the willingness of the management to drive the training by setting an example as they do on my own expertise.

6. Don't tolerate theories, stand up comics or trainers preaching aggression.

Your people need to have habits and tactical options that differentiate them from your rivals to your advantage. They don't need to be pit bulls nor do they need high fiving. Ensure they have words to say and things to do that put them in control. Service is not about being a servant; it's about being in control, creating momentum and selling the value rather than the price. Customers come back because they like you. Training should be about maximizing your team's potential to excel in these areas.