

## SALES CALL

# Why do businesses succeed or fail? Hint: It's not just sales

Someone from Success Magazine called and asked me for a quote about being a successful entrepreneur and salesman. Here's what I said:

"Everyone has heard the phrase 'The American Dream.' I look at it as 'The American Reality.' When you're in business for yourself, you write your own history, you write your own success story, you write your own legacy and, most important, you write your own paycheck. When you write your own paycheck, you control your own destiny. Being in business for yourself gives you the opportunity to work your heart out for something you love."

Nice 30,000-foot view of entrepreneurial success.

Fast-forward five minutes: Today's American Reality is that there's a day-to-day ongoing drama in the saga of business and, on this particular day, I was dealing with major drama. I was in an informal staff meeting trying to resolve the ancient issue of "why can't everyone just get along?"

The meeting was civilized. Apologies started even before I entered the room. By the time I walked in, resolution had begun. Everyone was talking about how to make things better — at least for the moment.

During the discussion with my em-

ployees I remarked (among other things) that I was looking for long-term harmony, not just a momentary truce or a week of peace. I wanted to get to the root of the issue, not just put a Band-Aid on the surface skirmish.

I decided to talk more about what it takes to have a successful business instead of a petty disagreement. I thought that if I got into more detail about how the whole business ran, maybe they would have a better understanding of what they did and how important it was for each of them to be harmonious with the other.

Below is the essence of what I said. These are the elements that have driven my business to success:

**1. Great people.** People who are excellent at what they do. Self-starters, smart, responsible — with a passion for excellence and a successful track record. Not just salespeople — everyone must be excellent. Reception, accounting, shipping and especially anyone who talks to customers.

**2. Harmony within.** Each person must decide to "get along" with everyone else. This means their attitude must be positive, and they have to understand and be able to get along for the common good — even through personality conflicts,



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minor disagreements and major disagreements will occur. They can get over it and get on with it.

**3. A continuous flow of ideas.** From everyone — especially me as the leader.

**4. Unless you have sales, you have no business.** Products and services that are understandable, have perceived value, have gained market acceptance and

are easy to purchase. There are lots of sales on the books because the product is in demand.

**5. Money.** Don't confuse sales with money. Money comes from making profitable sales. My father once told me: "You can have lots of business — but no money." Learn your profitability and transfer it to your sales and your salespeople.

**6. Creativity and willingness to risk.** Trying new things and new ways. Your customers demand it but your competitors hope you'll do "business as usual."

**7. Earn loyalty from everyone.** Loyalty is stability, growth, and profit all rolled into one. Loyalty has 3.5 parts. You must earn from (1) your customers, (2) your vendors, and (3) your employees. The best way to get loyalty is (3.5) to give loyalty.

**8. Wide open communication.** Speak

your mind and say your peace — truthfully. This may mean drop the PC and get real world, real life. Maybe that way you'll have a real business.

**9. Freedom to succeed and fail.** No one fails on purpose. I give everyone freedom to learn, freedom of expression (without fear of reprisal) and freedom to take risks.

**10. A respected liked (loved) leader.** I am the leader. The passionate, lead-by-example, cheerleader leader. I love what I do and it's contagious to all.

**10.5 A fun atmosphere and a fun environment.** We won an award a few years ago "Most fun place to work in Charlotte." Could your company win that award?

**Note well:** This list is by no means complete. I am certain that as you read this, you had some additional thoughts — please post your ideas for the benefit of all at [www.gitomer.com/salesHelp/SalesForum.html](http://www.gitomer.com/salesHelp/SalesForum.html).

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