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"How you think about your customers influences how you respond to them." »Marilyn Suttle



Never Def to Customers

I've noticed over the years that many interviews with successful musicians have lengthy periods of them talking about the business side of what they do.

I realized along the way that one of the reasons many successful performers remained successful was precisely because they understood (or learned) how their industry works.



Long Journeys, Small Steps

A funny comment I read a while back came to mind this week. Someone wrote, "When making 'To Do' lists, am I the only one who includes something I've already done so I can scratch it off right away?"

I remember smiling and thinking that it wasn't that unusual of a concept.

It's been my experience that lists creators derive something more from their lists than simple reminders.

Jay Mohr's great line from Jerry McGuire comes to mind: "It's not show friends. It's show business."

Regardless of the industry, successful folks tend to have a firm grasp of how money is made, where it is lost, who pays their bills, and what it is that their customers want from them.

I recently came across an interview of Joe Elliott of Def Leppard by Brian Johnson of AC/DC. Most would not expect that those two having a beer in a pub and talking about life on the road would have bits of business wisdom in it. It did.

Johnson said he admired Def Leppard because they always seemed to understand what their job was. "Rock Star" isn't a job description.

Johnson pointed out that Def Leppard consistently plays every song anyone who paid to see them would want to hear.

Some artists seem to practically resent the songs that made them successful. They feel that it's a burden playing the same songs again and again.

Elliott explained that they'll put in a couple of new songs to keep the band sharp, but they know what people came to hear.

Their job is delivering.

It may be the 5,000th time they play a song, but it's many folks first to hear it live. And if someone has seen them many times in concert, it's obviously those songs that keep them coming back.

While we may not use as much pyro or wear as much leather (I'm guessing), that mindset is a healthy one.

Customers chose and continue to choose you for a reason. They also choose their methods for interacting with you for a reason.

Maybe the interaction you are having in person or over the phone is one that can be handled digitally.

It's great to educate a customer of that fact. Saving them time and effort is always a positive, and one they'll give you lasting credit for.

More important, however, is personally engaging folks in a way that reminds them of why they choose to stay with you.

Bands and businesses succeed when they focus on the customer.

Rock on.

Having a visible record of even the small things you've accomplished is good for your mental health.

That funny comment was on my mind this week as I came across research suggesting that the distractions that tend to disrupt our work go beyond the usual suspects of digital (phones, computers, etc.) and environmental (noise, lighting, etc.)

Our emotional status can be equally distracting when attempting to concentrate on tasks.

When we are anxious, we often become unfocused. Our minds then tend to want to jump to other tasks.

Multitasking sounds like a more productive practice than it often is.

Researchers estimate that people lose 40% of their productivity when they habitually jump from one uncompleted task to another.

We remain busy...just not as efficient.

Any practices we can use to give ourselves an anchoring instrument, as well as a little shot of encouragement is useful.

Something as seemingly trivial as a short list of achievable objectives for the day can be a valuable tool. It's not silly. It's science.

I've spoken to scores of individuals over the past year about the challenges of altered working environments and schedules.

Long established personal and team routines remain modified for many. Anxiousness has not been in short supply.

The challenges of remaining focused on the activities that grow our businesses, develop our people, and unify our teams are real.

If ever there were a time to simplify, clarify, and focus on both our personal and our team's daily "To Do" lists, it's now.

Whether you utilize digital tools or simply jot things on a yellow pad, the process is beneficial.

Long term goals provide vision and motivation.

Completing and checking off daily tasks and achievements provide focus and momentum.

And, hey, if you achieve an item not on your list, it's okay to add it...just to check it off.

Long journeys are completed one step at a time.
Identify and acknowledge the steps you are taking
today.

"It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan."

» **Eleanor Roosevelt**

Dave Martin, author of [The In-Store Advantage](#), has become one of the most prolific writers in the banking industry. His keynote presentations, seminars, and podcasts have an authenticity and humor that brings teams of all sizes and seniority levels together.

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