
"Everything is either an opportunity to grow or an obstacle to keep you from growing. You get to choose." » Wayne Dyer

Some Assembly Required

I was reminded last weekend of the clear difference between having information and having experience.

During my adventure, I reflected on something I've frequently reminded folks taking on (or helping others take on) new tasks or projects or jobs.

Everything is hard... until it's not.

Most of us tend to forget the initial stress and difficulties experienced when learning tasks we now do routinely.

And the more comfortable someone is in with their current tasks, the more upsetting the frustration can be when suddenly feeling inept.

In this case, I found myself doing something that a few years ago I said I'd never do again. I set out to assemble a very large gas grill.

This time, however, I was able to find an amazing app that broke down the assembly process with 3-D enlargeable pictures and verbal instructions.

I was also able to find a YouTube video of a guy putting the exact grill together and referencing each step along with the paper manual.

I have seldom taken on a task or project with such solid instructions and resources. I even

Asking for a Friend

A banker made a comment at a recent conference that gave me a feeling of déjà vu. It rang in my ears because I once told similar stories to scores of in-store banking groups.

The funny thing about it was that back when I told them, I often got the feeling that some folks thought I was making these stories up.

And here was someone sharing similar experiences decades later.

In this instance, an in-store banker shared what happened when she finally got around to personally asking a customer she has interacted with for a year or so to consider banking with her.

That person paused for a moment and said, "You know, I guess I never gave it much thought."

When the young lady said, "Really?", the person responded, "Well... you never asked me."

That experience happened to me more than once back in the Mesozoic Era when I ran a branch. Over time, I wondered why some folks I had become rather chummy with never seemed to show interest in banking with me.

Then one day I joked with one of them that they were hurting my feelings.

When he asked why, I said, "I can't believe you

watched the video in its entirety before starting to make sure I had a mental image of what had to be done and in what order.

And then... I began. Suffice it to say, I required just a little more time than the 90 minutes the instructions suggested.

Three hours (and a lot of unfortunate language) into the process, I recalled why I had sworn this kind of project off years ago.

But after putting on the final touches and lighting it another hour or so later, I felt like I was lighting the Olympic torch.

I wanted to roll the new grill down the street for neighbors to admire my work.

I told my wife we should buy another one of these grills immediately as gift for someone. I know I can put the next one together in under 90 minutes (and with considerably less unfortunate language.)

Whether personally taking on new tasks or coaching and supervising others who are, always remember that the learning process often feels frustrating - or even demoralizing - at first.

It doesn't mean that the training is bad, or the person is incapable.

It's simply human nature to be uncomfortable when confused or frustrated by new challenges, tasks, and/or responsibilities.

Strive to recognize when that frustrated person is you... and to be supportive when you observe it with others.

bank with that place across the street and not with me."

He paused and said, "Well...uh...you never asked me."

And he was right. We'd had many chats over the months and shared pleasantries every time we saw each other.

In my mind, I figured that he was one of those never-gonna-change-my-bank folks.

Turns out, he wasn't.

But I had never actually...you know... "officially" asked him to.

Now in my mind, it was impossible for anyone shopping at our store not to know we wanted their business.

But in the following weeks, I realized there were more than a few folks I interacted with regularly who fell into the same category.

In my commitment to not being seen as a pushy salesman, I likely instead came across as someone who might be fun to talk to, but not especially interested in having your business.

That's a more common scenario than most would think and it's as true for traditional branches as it is for in-store.

Think for a moment of how many good acquaintances – new and old – you've never "officially" asked to bank with you.

With just a little effort, you may find there are more new customers than you imagined right there for the asking.

"We define ourselves far too often by our past failures. That's not you. You are this person right now. You're the person who has learned from those failures." » Joe Rogan

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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