

## "I hate conflict. I find it very stressful. But conflict delayed is conflict multiplied." » Jordan Peterson



### They're Wide Awake Now

During the period in which I worked primarily with in-store banking programs, I regularly suggested to bankers that store customers were not actually in their stores to "shop." They were there to buy.

In normal times, most of their purchases are done by rote.

They know the products and brands they prefer and place them into their baskets without spending much time or effort contemplating options.

If we were sitting around waiting to impress shoppers just as soon as they decided they'd shop for a new bank, we'd be waiting for a long time.

Of course, that dynamic was (and is) not only true of in-store locations.

During normal times, most banking customers are "happy enough" with their current financial institutions to keep them out of a shopping mode.

Because of that, too many bankers mistake customer apathy for customer loyalty.

Yes, statistics suggest that the longer customers have been with a bank, the more likely they are to remain.

Something has kept them there. Or...nothing has prompted them yet to leave.

All that said, there are times and situations in which folks are assessing their choices more than usual. I'd suggest these are such times.



### Degrees of Separation

I recently watched a clip of Elon Musk addressing a group of Tesla managers about their hiring practices.

He said, "If Nikola Tesla applied to Tesla, would we even give him an interview? Obviously, we should...but I'm not sure we would."

He went on to point out that he didn't think they were looking at the most important things in evaluating possible team members.

Musk said he wasn't interested in whether someone graduated from a particular school.

Continuing, he said they should be looking for evidence of exceptional ability.

The clip ends with Musk saying, "Like...three bullet points showing exceptional ability. And if you say 'wow' when you read those three bullet points, then great. That should be the approach."

Watching that clip brought me back to a conversation I had with the first bank president I worked for.

I was completing work on an MBA (in evening classes) when I was hired.

During a chat he said, "Well, we'll try not to hold that degree against you. I just hope it won't be too hard for you to unlearn some of the (bleep) they're telling you."

As the chat continued, I learned that was (mostly) a joke.

From grocery stores to gas stations to just about every retail outlet you can list, consumers are paying attention to their finances like few times in memory.

Widespread inflation and the impact it is having throughout all walks of life have gotten the focus of most Americans.

People are as keenly aware of their finances as any time in a generation or two.

They're rigorously assessing their providers of everything from food to energy to entertainment to housing to finances.

To wit, more of your competitors' customers are reevaluating their financial services providers than usual.

Keep in mind, however, that many of yours are doing the same thing.

In challenging times, we humans become more keenly aware of the people and places that are clearly looking out for us.

Businesses who show that they are proactively looking for ways to save customers money and/or provide support as they navigate rough financial waters attract attention.

Difficult economies present challenges. They also present opportunities to earn the attention of an awakened customer base.

Who are you reaching out to today?

They're paying more attention than usual.

He told me, however, that the part of getting an MBA that he respected most was that I was working at the same time I was in school.

It showed him a willingness to work long hours and take on additional challenges and stress.

He told me that is what impressed him. A piece of paper suitable for framing did not.

To be honest, he was the master of paying you a compliment...while keeping your ego in check.

He went on to make a clear point that none of us were being judged on diplomas or certifications, but on work ethic, ability, productivity, and professionalism.

It was a memorable, clarifying chat.

For a couple of decades now, I've given pretty simple advice to new and/or aspiring bankers and managers.

I tell them that I don't know what their long-term personal or professional goals are.

What I do know is that the best way to reach them is to focus on being remarkable wherever they are now.

Too many spend more time imagining what they'll do with future opportunities than on what they're doing with the opportunities before them now.

Opportunities to differentiate ourselves are before us now.

What will you make of yours?

---

**"It doesn't matter how great your shoes are if you don't accomplish anything in them." » Martina Boone**

*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.*

*For more info about having Dave or an FSI Consultant speak to your group, email [Tina Coleman](mailto:Tina.Coleman@SupermarketBank.com), [tc Coleman@SupermarketBank.com](mailto:tc Coleman@SupermarketBank.com) or call 800-992-4978.*

**Financial Supermarkets, Inc. • [fsi@supermarketbank.com](mailto:fsi@supermarketbank.com)**

383 Clarkesville Street • PO Box 1450 • Cornelia, GA 30531 • (800) 992-4978

[Click Here to Unsubscribe](#)