

**"Behave as if today is the day you will be remembered for the way you treat your customers."**

» John DiJulius



## Now That's Genius

Interactions last week with an Apple Store employee had me rethinking my attitude toward those stores.

I have not previously been much of a fan. Granted, some of the reasons I have not been a fan are ones that most retailers would want.

I often find them to have claustrophobia-inducing crowds.

Moreover, while I'm not a germophobe, I wonder, "How many people have touched this stuff today?"

That said, one of the bigger reasons I've not been an Apple Store fan has been my perceived disconnect between the hype surrounding the stores' "expert staff" (Geniuses or not) and my experiences.

Sure, they obviously have deep product knowledge.

More than a few over the years, however, have struck me as not especially helpful.

Here's a hint: Many customers don't know what we don't know.

The fact that an employee knows a lot about products alone doesn't help a person who doesn't know the right questions to ask.

On one occasion, I walked into a store fully intending to buy a laptop.



## Not Just Running in Circles

I often jog around a dirt track at an old football stadium near my home.

If you're going to survive as a runner in the Houston area, you need to develop an absurd tolerance for heat and humidity.

A friend told me a while back that if the highlight of your day is surviving your hobby...you need a new hobby. Some days, I agree with him.

However, I find motivation in the people I witness out there.

Whenever I see people putting in work in conditions that most would not, I wonder what their competition is doing that day.

I also know that many I encounter aren't out there to compete with anyone. They are striving for their own personal health and fitness goals.

Folks aren't there to show off.

This is not a private health club. It's a dirt track and old stadium.

Some are more notable than others. (NBA Hall of Famer Tracy McGrady was out there one day working out with college athletes.)

I've been equally impressed, however, by folks you'd never confuse for athletes, pushing themselves to be better than yesterday.

I interacted with an employee, became more confused than when I walked in, and walked out thinking, "Well... maybe I need to do more research before I shop this place."

I suppose you could say I've had trouble with the human interfaces of these technology stores.

Then last week, I visited with my son as we considered a college gift. When our turn came,

Alex walked over and offered to help us.

Over the course of the next 10 minutes, his tutorials and explanation of their various models was truly impressive.

I was most impressed, though, after we selected a model and were waiting for one to be brought to us.

Alex said to my son, "Can I show you some cool things this model can do while we wait?"

After he had already made the sale, Alex showed my son shortcuts and cool things his new computer could do that blew us away.

He taught him things he wouldn't have even known to ask.

I couldn't help but think of the evolving roles our bankers are called to play in helping customers fully understand the products we provide and the most efficient ways to use those products.

The extra effort made to properly educate a customer is quite often the difference between run-of-the-mill and exceptional customer experiences.

What additional information will customers learn from you this week?

If you asked most of the folks out there on particularly hot and humid days if they were enjoying themselves, it's likely most would say, "Uh...no."

They do it, however, for the end results. The process isn't always fun in the moment, but their personal goals become closer as they grind it out.

That goal-achieving behavior is not just relevant to sports or fitness.

Growing a business requires putting in effort on days when things aren't going our way or feeling particularly rewarding.

No one enjoys feeling rejected. Outbound calls can sometimes ding up our egos just a bit.

A day filled with hearing, "No thanks" and, "I'm good" and, "I'll consider it" can wear folks down.

People not returning calls or email can leave us feeling slighted. None of these things is particularly fun in the moment.

The folks who win in the end, however, know these things are part of the price paid for success.

Often, great new relationships are only to be found on the other side of setbacks and rejection.

There will be days when the wind is at your back. Enjoy them.

There are also days when you do everything right, and still feel like you're running in sand. With the right mindset, you can learn to appreciate (if not enjoy) those days, also.

Our tough days make our great days possible.

Stay on track.

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**"Striving for success without hard work is like trying to harvest where you haven't planted."**

**» David Bly**

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