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"If you avoid failure, you also avoid success."

» **Robert Kiyosaki**



"No" Motivation

During a recent conversation with a regional manager, we discussed helping his team members become less frightened of rejection.

I suggested that taking the stigma away from it is a good start.

I knew him well enough to ask, "When was the last time you were rejected by a customer or prospect?"

After a while, he was able to remember a pitch he was a part of a year ago that wasn't successful. Sure, he had plenty of stories from earlier in his career, but nothing recent.

We joked about the subject for a while, and then I made the point that it's healthy to stick our necks out now and then, even when it's not technically required in our job description.

Now, of course, no one enjoys rejection or being ignored.

However, it's a vital part of success and growth in business...and life.

We need occasional negative feedback and setbacks to keep ourselves sharp. Yes, I know that sounds sadistic. It's not.



Billboard Material

I drove through a busy section of our hometown last week that I don't usually travel.

It's only 100 yards or so from streets I'm on frequently, but it's not on my usual commutes.

As I drove it, I remembered there were two bank branches across the street from each other on that stretch.

I saw one clearly to my right, but then wondered what happened to the one on the left. I wondered if it was shuttered during the pandemic.

As traffic slowed, I looked over again. Turns out, it is still open.

However, it has become what I call a "duck blind" branch.

It's so tucked behind low-hanging tree branches and tall hedges that a duck hunter would feel safely camouflaged there. The outside signage was also largely obscured.

Even avid digital banking advocates acknowledge the value of the billboard effect of branches.

In a highly competitive industry with countless digital options, the visible presence of a

There are players in the game, and there are spectators of the game.

If you never face setbacks or rejection, you may have become a spectator.

As folks reach higher positions within organizations, they frequently are spared from facing rejection from customers or prospects on a regular basis. (Some call that process “sales.”)

No doubt, these folks have big jobs and responsibilities. However, they do not hear, “Not interested,” or “No, thanks!” very often.

I encouraged him to phone or email or stop in on a prospect – even with the assumption he was going to be rejected or ignored.

I told him, “You might actually generate a new opportunity. At the least, you’ll be an even more empathetic coach.”

After our chat, I realized I may have been a hypocrite.

I hadn’t personally received a “No thanks” in a few weeks. I set out to change that.

Well, I didn’t want to be turned down. But if you never strike out, you’re not stepping up to the plate enough.

Go figure. I was able to find a promising new opportunity while following up with a few banks I had been reaching out to for months.

Later that day, I did receive a firm, “Sorry, maybe next time,” response from a group I once considered to be a sure bet.

Sure, that rejection made me feel down for a minute, but then freshly motivated to find new opportunities and really deliver for the folks who have said, “Yes.”

Hit or miss, step up to the plate today.

branch (or branches) is a powerful differentiator and generator of brand awareness.

That is why “duck blind” branches have always been a mystery to me.

Now some anti-branch pundits like to claim that branches are the most expensive billboards imaginable. (That’s a discussion/debate worth exploring some other time.)

What’s not debatable, in my opinion, is the tremendous opportunities wasted when the visibility of and marketing messages delivered by branches are an afterthought.

I shook my head when driving by that branch sitting on expensive real estate.

If I were the manager, I’d ask the marketing department for a tree saw and hedge trimmer.

One of the busiest streets in town runs in front of that branch and it’s a fair bet that 99% of the traffic on it never notices it.

The same can happen even with in-store locations.

(Okay, maybe not with trees and hedges.)

Branches that remain static become ignored.

And in-store branches that look like dark storage closets at night waste unique brand-awareness building opportunities.

An in-store branch is a powerful billboard located in one of the highest foot traffic areas of any town. Yet, many don’t capitalize.

High traffic alone doesn’t guarantee high exposure. No matter where your location, regularly evaluate what your “branch billboards” look like both during and after operating hours.

Out-of-sight is out-of-mind to customers. Strive to be neither.

"Correction does much, but encouragement does more."

» **Goethe**

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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