



The Concept of the "Happy House"

One of our team members shared with us an experience he had when interviewing a very senior executive at a major corporation in the US.

He asked a question typically ask in an interview: *"What do you want your people to do differently as a result of this initiative?"*

The answer the customer gave ended with a surprising comment: *"I want my people to learn the importance of conveying to customers that they work for a happy house."*

Of course, our consultant probed to learn what the customer meant with that term. Obviously it isn't an expression you hear very often from senior executives.

The answer was fascinating. It went something like this: *"I've been in the business for 35 years. I've learned a lot about why customers buy. And if I know anything, I know that customers like to do business with people who like what they do, like who they work with, like who they work for and, quite simply, like their jobs."*

That was (and is) an extraordinarily powerful statement. As the executive spoke further, he discussed the importance of how salespeople must demonstrate day after day that they believe in what they do and who they do it for and with. Someone who enjoys and believes in their work is the best possible resource.

So what can we learn from this? As obvious as it seems, we can learn and review some key tenets associated with the sales process:

- Buyers buy the individual first, the company second, the products and services third. It is too easy to forget the importance of the organization when customers make decisions. Any time salespeople give the impression that they are not supportive of the company's policies, no matter how uncomfortable they may be, they will pay a price of it.
- Brag about your colleagues. Demonstrate pride in your team members. Let your customer know how good you feel about your colleagues on a consistent basis. Talk about how you work in teams to derive great solutions for your customers.
- Show passion for what you do. The old adage says that an enthusiastic salesperson has an enthusiastic customer; a lethargic salesperson has a lethargic customer. Anything you can do to demonstrate your belief in what you do and how you do it will always yield dividends.
- Remember that *you* are the company when you interact with the customer. Even when you have to deliver a message you don't agree with, you have to put on your game face. The salesperson who says something like: *"I fought for you but couldn't turn them around"* may be selling him or herself effectively, but is doing a horrendous job in selling his company.
- Don't ever minimize your job, your position, or your role. You are the liaison between your customer base and the company you work for. Demonstrating pride in what you do is a marvelous way to gain respect and admiration from your customer. Humility is fine, self-effacement isn't.

So think *"happy house."* It's not always easy but it's something we need to do. We join organizations for lots of reasons, one of which is to satisfy affiliation needs. Enjoying your job, your colleagues, and your resources, and yes, your customers will only make you more successful.