

Sunday 25th March

Weekly tips and ideas for business professionals



Negotiation Update

The search for value



The European Union is 50 years old this week.

Sunday morning...

Saturday morning in South London. Off to LA today. We're staying at Carlsbad on the coast for a training course then it's a week of R&R in Vegas. We're staying at the Orleans...it's off the strip and excellent value. It's got a busy poker room and that's where I'll be trying for my Vegas suntan.

I'll take an Easter break now so I'll write the next newsletter on Easter Sunday when we get back.

So cricket is a gentleman's game...not if you're the Pakistani coach. It seems inconceivable that he could be murdered in his hotel room. It's one of the more bizarre stories of the year so far.

Bought a piece of software this week called Prophet. It sits inside Outlook and creates a very decent CRM database. It's cheap (\$99) and if you're looking to beef up your Outlook and try to turn it into a database this is the business. I've tried Maximizer and Act and this does the job so much better all inside the one programme. I'm very pleased with it and recommend it.

Enjoy your week with 3 tips as usual ...

This week I...

watched Everybody Hates Chris...I'm a big Chris Rock fan.

I tried to book a budget airline ticket and failed. These guys are cheats. Check the sales tip this week.

I sold my first spare book for £20...or my nephew did. We actually made a profit on it and one of the books we're selling is now out of print and is evidently worth £200!. Dig those books out and sell them...that's this week's advice.

I joined the Route 66 preservation society. I'm gearing up for a second...and much more thorough attempt at Chicago to Santa Monica.

And finally...

Four wild elephants drunk on rice beer have been electrocuted in the north-east Indian state of Meghalaya, wildlife officials report.

The elephants are known to have a taste for rice beer brewed by tribal communities across north-east India.

But this is the first time some of them have died after consuming the drink.

A herd of about 20 to 25 elephants went on the rampage in a remote area in the West Garo Hills district earlier this week after getting high on the beer.

As panicky villagers fled for cover, leaving behind their freshly brewed beverage, the elephants drank to their heart's content.

The inebriated elephants then struck an electric pole and brought it down.

But their trunks took the brunt of the shock from the high-tension wire.

Four of the elephants were killed instantly.

Assam's elephant expert Kushal Konwar Sharma, a lecturer, said these elephants frequently consume rice beer and cause devastation when they become intoxicated.

Wildlife officials say in the last two years elephants have killed at least 180 people in Assam and Meghalaya.

And more than 200 elephants have been killed by angry villagers during the last six years in the two states, in what is developing into a fierce conflict between man and beast.

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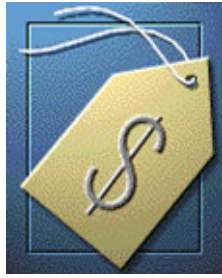
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The search for value

Management Tips

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Something must be done

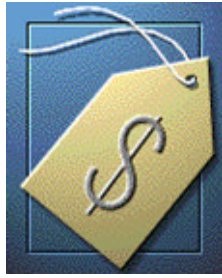
Plans are great things...they provide direction and focus. They tell people what needs to be done.

The key issue is actually translating the plan into solid achievable actions. Tactical implementation is the key step in making a strategic plan work.

So...when you start to strategise keep your action steps in the front of your mind. The question is: "what are we going to do about it?"

Sometimes it's the taking of the first step that presents the greatest challenge. It's fine to know that you need to break into a new market, for instance, but the question is always..."So what do we need to do to make it happen?"

Actions in this case always speak louder than words. You judge a company by what it does more than what it says.



The search for value

Sales Tips

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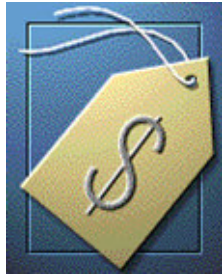
Bait and switch

A well known sales tactic is to advertise something cheap...or put a product in your shop window with a low price on it...and then when the customer goes to buy then it's miraculously disappeared to be replaced by something just a little more expensive.

Camera shops in Hong Kong are notorious for this. The latest Nikon in the window but now out of stock.

This week I tried to buy a cheap airline ticket. I looked at all the ads and made lots of phone calls and there was not one place that was actually selling flights at the advertised price. Every advert or sign said "from £299 etc. It's the "from" that lets them off the hook but it's bad practice and eventually I gave up and fortunately had enough air miles to get the job done with Virgin.

If you're only ever selling on a one off basis with no repeat business then bait and switch might work...but you'll never, never, get repeat business...or indeed any business at all...when you treat the customers so badly.



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Negotiation Tips

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Movement

I took place in the negotiation this week with a counter party who refused to move.

Their opening offer was the one and only offer. We talked around the subject and clarified issues but while I tried to find a flexible solution the other party gave me a variety of Broken Record repeat responses and a whole lot of Third Party Authority statements like “that’s all we’re allowed to do.”

After 90 minutes we buried the meeting and walked out. My side was thoroughly disheartened and rightly so.

Negotiation is about movement. If you can’t move...or won’t move...then you’re not negotiating. The other party would have done better by not attending the meeting. A note stating their position would have saved us all a great deal of time.

Every position can be negotiated. Flexibility is the key issue and when an implacable opponent is encountered it merely serves to sour the relationship.

I believe the other party thought that they had the upper hand and were playing hardball. In fact they’ve stored up a great deal of resentment that will rebound on them in months to come.

Always offer something that allows the other party to feel that they’re participants in a positive process. It creates value today and helps create a positive ongoing relationship tomorrow.

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