



The search for value

SDI Tips

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SDI and culture...

I met a lady this week and we did the SDI inventory and the main talking point about her score was the long arrow into the red in conflict.

She readily agreed that this represented her well. She rose to the challenge in conflict and wanted fiercely to fight her corner when life got tough. The problem for her was that she was from a culture where women cannot readily speak up and have their say. This frustrated her mightily and she had to find a coping strategy whereby she could express herself to her own satisfaction while at the same time satisfying cultural norms.

Every culture has rules about what behaviour is acceptable to them and our traits and motivations have to be shaped by that culture. In some cultures you can blow your top with impunity while in others you'd lose a great deal of face with that behaviour and it would largely be unacceptable.

While teaching SDI around the world I've learnt that we have to see the theory within the culture that we're dealing with. It adds an extra layer to the discussion. People feel the same but they can express it very differently.

Interesting stuff this and it's worth revisiting the work of Hofstede and Trompenaars who are the gurus of cultural awareness and can help us make sense of what we find in our travels.



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Sales Tips

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Sales prevention...

I've never worked in the marketing department of any company I've been with but I've been in a few sales departments.

Sellers around the globe always seem to have a healthy disregard for marketing...who carry the nickname "sales prevention department" wherever they go.

I've been to several product launches where the sales team were asked to sell a dog of a product to unwilling customers courtesy of a bright idea from someone in the product development team.

Of course I'm biased...I had to sell the stuff...not come up with a product nobody wanted at a price they couldn't afford.

If you don't believe me check out:

Midori, melon liqueur.
Archers Peach County Schnapps.
Kirin lager...(in South London!)
Miller Lite (at 4% alcohol)
Barbican

and the list goes on.

It was fun working in the drinks business....NOT.



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Negotiation Tips

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School yard bully...

I was working with some pleasant people recently who had to deal with a department in their own company that gave them a very hard time and who bullied them mercilessly. They asked me if I could give them some tips.

The problem wasn't really a negotiation problem but more a problem of confidence and assertiveness.

You must remember that negotiation can only start when you say "no" to the other party. We only negotiate with people who say "no."

If they agree with us then there's no need to negotiate. By definition we only negotiate with disagreeable people.

So...you must learn to say "no" with confidence and you must never give in to bullying. Bullying is bad behaviour and if you reward bad behaviour then all you'll get is a whole lot more.

If someone tells you to "take it or leave it" you've really got no choice. You must LEAVE it. It might be painful...and maybe it is...but, believe me, the alternative is worse.