

My Wish For You: Never Give In, Never Give Up!

(Originally sent on January 4th 2012)

So, ok... 2012 is here. What--if anything, are you... will you be doing differently this year (than last year), to propel your business to more success, achievement and greatness?

If you have a great answer, then--stop reading. If NOT, here are some thoughts to---maybe inspire you to seek more breakthrough thinking in the areas of marketing, strategy, innovation and self-management.

Winston Churchill is famed for delivering the shortest commencement speech ever recorded in college history:

"Never give in. Never, never, never--in nothing great or small, large or petty--never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy. "

What's the implication? Well (I think) there are many. If you're small and struggling---take a deep breath, draw in your second wind, dust yourself off and jump back into the ring -but fighting not against mere competition.

Rather, fight against mediocrity and commoditization--by making yourself and your business unique, desirable, valuable--far more valuable than your competition can possibly equal.

How? Don't allow us to be mere intellectual entertainment. Make my resources your propellant towards greater achievement.

Focus on your marketplace, not on your own self interests.

In everything you do online or off--sell leadership. Demonstrate to

people that you feel their pain or hopes or dreams or fears or needs.

Don't patronize or pander. Definitely don't self-serve! Provide people with ideas, advice information that have (and hold) true value or entertainment or purpose for THEM--not you.

Make your market, your client, your prospect, your recipient of whatever communication you're sending--make THEM the center of attention. It's not about you. It's all about them.

This may sound awkward--but--most people fall in love with their product, service, company or industry. Try--instead--falling in love with the people you serve, the people you're communicating and connecting with. Show people that THEY matter. Their lives, their interests and their situation truly matters to you and your business.

In life and in business, we are rewarded in direct proportion to the value, contribution and benefit we bring to others. Conduct a quick reality check. Do you bring meaningful value to others--in what your business does, certainly.

But do your communications, conversations, interactions, all bring people value?

Are they (and you) authentic, purposeful? Remember that the entire concept of value, benefit and contribution are all--totally subjective.

What YOU think may be appealing, exciting, worthwhile--your market may find worthless. So let THEM always decide with their response, their sharing, their positive--or negative feedback.

Always stop and ask yourself, your team, your marketing--do they and what you are doing and saying-- really add value?

I was reading a staggering article from legendary business guru--Peter Drucker over the holidays. It focused on the misperception most people have about entrepreneurs.

Drucker says most small business owners are NOT entrepreneurs. They are merely proprietors--who add no true value to the world other than perhaps diverting some of the commerce that their industry would normally generate over to themselves.

Stated differently, the vast majority of businesses are mere commodities, marginalized, non-distinguishable vendors of stuff--providing nothing unique, nothing superior, no greater experience, no distinctive benefit or advantage to the consumer.

True entrepreneurs--on the other hand strive to create something new or better for their marketplace in what they do. They create true value for the consumer. They engineer it or execute it...or present it...or purvey it differently than the maddening crowd of generic competitors do.

In small or larger ways, true entrepreneurs are the driving forces of positive upheaval in their industries, markets and business worlds.

They have passion, purpose--a keen sense of possibility. They are anything but ambivalent. They are anything but apathetic. True entrepreneurs love change. They live for the opportunity to flex their cerebral, creative juices.

Mere business proprietors are in it only for an income. All they do is what has been done and is being done before them a thousand or a million times, over. It's almost a job. But true entrepreneurs--true entrepreneurs create new satisfaction, new demand, new experiences, new

levels of dimension and possibility to (and through) whatever they do.

So here we are--at the forefront of the New Year, contemplating our fates, our futures. My question to YOU is this: are you content with mediocrity? Or are you game to create something (or some things) new, something different, something better for your market?

Do you have the willingness to transform your business and relationship with your market? Can you...will you transmute values (as Drucker says). Will your marketing/selling strategy trigger a positive upheaval that will transform the way your marketplace sees you, connects with you, relates to you, respects you, remains loyal and a fan of you?

Some final points to consider as we begin our 2012 adventure into marketing down the path of being preeminent.

True entrepreneurs relish the chance to surmount obstacles that their other competitors find daunting. An enterprise that does NOT commit itself to constantly innovate inevitably ages, dries up and declines, then dies.

INNOVATION, by the way does NOT necessarily refer to anything high tech--though it can be done that way.

It merely refers to anything tangible or intangible that brings greater value, benefit, contribution, advantage, enjoyment, understanding, protection or enrichment to a marketplace. That gives you an enormous array of ways to become an agent of change, a creator of value--through your marketing strategy and actions.

Finally--you must be willing to perceive change as an opportunity, not a threat! Stop holding onto what already exists. Breakthroughs only occur

when you are pursuing something better. Drucker says true entrepreneurs are awash with "rerum novarum cupidus." That's Latin for being "greedy for new things."

One more point. It's important: entrepreneurship, innovation, breakthrough thinking---none of it comes automatically.

It's not necessarily natural. And YES, it is work to accomplish that which your herd-based competitors won't/don't. But the rarified satisfaction and fulfillment that comes with wanting to innovate, reaching for innovation--for the benefit of your marketplace, working for it---is unimaginably rewarding. Happy New Year!

Jay

P.S. More to come on Entrepreneur vs. Proprietor.