



Likeability as a No. 1 Business Strategy
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Think of your last business transaction. Was it with a company or representative that treated you exceptionally well? Was it a pleasure to part with your hard-earned money?

Were you highly satisfied not only with your purchase but also with the overall experience? How did you feel immediately afterward? Will you do business with this company again? If so, why?

Conversely, think of a store, company or service provider with whom you've decided to no longer do business. Ever.

Did you give this decision much thought? Or was it a quick decision to go elsewhere? With your myriad of choices, it's easy to pass on one purchase in favor of another.

We've all heard the expression: "People do business with people they like." So true, especially in Central Oregon.

Bob Burg, Author of *The Go-Giver, A Little Story About a Powerful Business Idea*, gets more specific: "All things being equal, people do business with, and refer business to, people they know, like and trust."

In my practice, getting inside the heads of powerful decision makers, I find this to be true even when all things are not equal. We may drive that extra distance, pay more or get less because the experience is pleasurable.

Now let's move inside the actual business, to who's at the helm of this organization. The leaders at the top create the culture, the attitude and energy that flows through the entire organization.

Some leaders are easy to follow. They enjoy employee loyalty and company success. While others have high turnover and difficulty hiring people to work on their team. The latter likely comprise the businesses that you've chosen to no longer support.

Why this variation in leadership? Each leader, successful or not, may have equal education, experience and skills however one is 'likeable' and the other is not. In both cases their reputation precedes them.

So, what makes a company or leader likeable, thus successful?

Likeability skills are simply human nature. They involve self-awareness, listening skills, communication skills and relationship management skills as empathy, curiosity and compassion.

Peter Kozodoy, author of Million Dollar Marketers Handbook, states that: “Likeability is perhaps the most important element of business.” Kozodoy credits 50 percent of his entrepreneurial business success to strategies of for his clients and himself of being likeable.

“I can’t help but herald Likeability as my No. 1 Business Strategy.”

For example, Kozodoy shares the story of how astounded he was when a New York Times bestselling author spent an hour with him early in his career, mentoring him. Though this experience only cost the bestselling author one hour of his time, he gained a fan and lifelong supporter and admirer.

Though likeability involves the natural human nature instinct of being respectful, it goes so much farther. In this example from Kozodoy, the bestselling author saw a need in another to learn. And he then provided the solution, an hour of his time.

What are some of the other elements of likeability? Some may surprise you. Here are my **Top 7 Tips** to being likeable.

- 1. Connect People.** You know people who could collaborate or simply enjoy one another. Connecting them shows that you have an interest in helping both succeed.
- 2. Expand your knowledge base.** Some leaders stop growing after getting their dream job. Keep reading, expanding your depth of knowledge in a wide range of interests. You’ll not only be likeable, but also be more intriguing.
- 3. Anticipate wants, needs and desires.** Know what your followers, colleagues, customers and clients need before they do. Provide it. They will feel seen, heard, appreciated and valued.
- 4. Create loyalty.** Let those on your team know that you’ll celebrate their successes and support them in the hard times, no matter what. This sense of loyalty spreads throughout your organization and into the hearts of your customers.
- 5. Spread positive energy.** Our exposure to negativity is seemingly never ending. Your positive attitude, energy, insights and perspectives are a breath of fresh air. People will seek you out. Positivity is contagious, spread it.
- 6. Keep confidences.** Let people know they can trust you with confidential information. Everyone needs someone with whom to confide.
- 7. Be compassionate.** Especially when times are tough, compassion is critical. Is someone facing a challenge, feeling insecure or fear? Let them know you care.

The most fascinating thing about becoming more ‘likeable’ is that it’s human nature. You don’t have to take a course, get a degree or attend a conference to gain these skills. You already have them. They simply may have been buried under cynicism, resentment or anger gained from years of not paying attention.

I challenge you to increase your ‘likeability’ factor beginning today. You’ll soon see that it’s not only a strong business strategy that will bring you financial gains, it’s more fun.

Fun is also a likeability skill, just saying. Get out there and make it happen!

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