

7 big helpers for better results in business and private life

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1. Thinking and Acting in Options / Variations

...One of the probably most important techniques.

In times when quality, service and information are preconditions to play along and are no longer felt as distinctive features – thinking and acting in options / variations are probably the most important behaviour patterns.

At school and at work we are strongly educated to act solution-oriented.

‘A problem? – Well - there is a solution...’ (...the one that teacher, boss or parents are expecting)’

In a world becoming more and more complex it is better to step back first of all and to collect one’s thoughts: Which possibilities exist to solve this problem? As successful person you then choose YOUR solution out of the abundance of ideas – you do not take over the solution of someone else. Lots of motivation problems are caused by the complete takeover of solutions which do not really fit.

Here we go with Albert Einstein: “Our thinking and acting creates problems we cannot solve on the same thinking level.”

Let us have a look at this principle with an example of practical experience:

The new Head of Marketing had worked before in a Call Centre specialising in telemarketing. Facing the task to speed up the winning of prospect clients for his new company he directly works with telemarketing. This tool is familiar to him and did, after all, work for a couple of companies. This is the widespread solution oriented approach and the following citing shows the problem: “If I have only a hammer as tool then I will treat a lot of things as a nail.” Then screws will happen to be hammered into wood. The thread will break and, in the worst case, the piece of wood will split.

In this case, the new company was active in a market with high saturation and where ousting took place. Telemarketing as means of generating meetings proved inefficient and expensive. Potential customers were suspicious and the quality of the meetings was poor.

How could the option-oriented approach look like?

Our Head of Marketing sits down and asks himself: “Well, telemarketing is ONE possibility, was else can we do?” He puts down: mailings, newspaper advertisements, editorials in trade magazines read by his customers, PR, newsletters, fairs, etc.

He then thinks on: “Telemarketing for generating meetings was not efficient – for what could it be good?” – For winning customer loyalty, because especially in narrow markets, you have to work for the commitment of your customers.

Finally, a system is installed in which each existing customer is contacted politely every three months by phone and, if required, a meeting will be arranged. For short-term winning of new customers a mailing is conducted with several letters in intervals of four weeks.

At the same time, to assure long-term business coverage, our man occupies himself with building up a Public Relations department to publish editorial articles in connection with announcements in the two most important trade magazines. Herewith, long-term confidence is built up which becomes a more and more important economic factor in our complex and rapidly changing business world.

Finally, the participation at fairs will be checked out and the company aims for better quality and quantity of exhibition objectives.

Even if the example sounds a bit exaggerated, I know from experience that many companies tend to stick to once efficient methods, particularly in the domains of customer care and prospect winning – even though these methods have shown their ineffectiveness for a while.

That way, mailings are carried out although the feedback has been only 0.2-0.3% for years, or hundreds of thousands of Euros are invested in a fair without setting precise targets “because everyone will be there”.

In one concrete case we have supported the implementation of telemarketing to follow up mailings. The result: from 0.2 – 0.3% feedback of all letters before, there is now 10% appointments for sales representatives and precise information about most of the contacted companies available.

Still another example of private life:

Almost everybody wants to do more for their health, to do more sport etc. Recently jogging has come into vogue. Many people begin to jog. Unfortunately the motivation of most of them does not last long. Often something intervenes – a vacation, the flu, knee problems. Well, even if 30% of all people are happy with jogging, for the rest it is just not THEIR solution – but only one solution. In my opinion the point is not that you have to jog only because this is reputedly the best method to keep well and fit. The point is to find the best for YOURSELF.

„Bake your own cake!“ Your own creation provides you with more happiness and motivation for lasting success. Admittedly, it is easy and gets you off on a quick start if you follow somebody else’s “recipe”. For a continuous motivation and consistency, however, you will have to bring in your own experiences and create something personal adding your own perception of things.

This is one of the main reasons why many well-known formulas for success given in books or workshops are only realized by a small number of people. Those few people identify themselves completely with the formula given. They are often the people who, almost like missionaries, try to convince you of the advantages of their system.

Rather than simply trying to copy a system, why not see it as a way to widen your knowledge and of knowing a new option. For example, someone could solve the problem of the lacking motivation to jog every day as follows:

He rules out the one SOLUTION “jogging”. With immediate effect he goes to work by bike instead of by car. He organizes a jogging club which meets 2 or 3 times a week because it is much more difficult (e.g. when the weather is bad) to say “No” if somebody is waiting at the corner.

And instead of spending the weekends with his wife in front of television he starts to go out dancing with her – a thing much better for their relationship, too. When dancing our man easily has 3 to 5 hours exercise in oxygen surplus and he gets to know new people and has a lot of fun.

We are convinced that everyone of you already knows lots of “recipes” of other persons demonstrating how something can succeed. You should use these experiences, ask for details and then think of what could also be considered as an option.

“The smallest dwarf sees further when standing on a giant’s shoulders.” But he has to look by himself, he cannot use the giant’s eyes. Because the giant perceives his world his way and this world is not necessarily the same as the dwarf’s.

Compose you own solution and try it out.

I am sure that, with more and more people learning and executing this principle of “option oriented thinking and acting”, we will be better prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

2. Effective and active networking with clients and in favour of relationships

Expand actively your network of contacts. Collect some details of people you get to know in a thin booklet. A birthday card gives everyone pleasure. You will not get to know the boss of DaimlerChrysler, those people are too much protected and live in other circles. But you have the possibility to get to know hundreds of people who, in 10 or 20 years, might inhabit the top positions in their fields. You should not be jealous of people having "Vitamin C" (connections), create yourself your own network of connections for the longer term, using systematic networking.

On this subject some new suggestions for you:

The worldwide expert of networking is certainly Harvey Mackay. This American was the first person who managed to publish - as new author of a specialist book - a first edition of 100.000 copies. Only because he could impress the publishers with his gigantic, well-maintained network of 6000 business contacts of executives worldwide. He had built up these contacts over 30 years of practice as sales manager.

How could such a network look like in private or professional life?

At the beginning it is best to create a file about people we know and with whom we want to stay in contact. We all have experienced losing sight of a friend after school or university. If we only managed to contact this friend once or twice a year, this would not happen.

Some suggestions of things you could note in this file - depending on your needs (private or business life) those will certainly have to be adjusted:

First name, surname (+ nickname), address (business and private - sometimes one changes - then you can easily renew the contact), phone, fax, e-mail, website, date of birth, place of birth, education (which university, diploma), sports, hobbies, interests, favourite vacation spots, favourite topics of conversation, professional background, formation, company, principal office, position, busy with, name of spouse, of children, their interests

Which aims he/she would like to reach, which religion, what does he/she like to drink, eat, smoker/non-smoker.

Of course you cannot enquire this data and information in checklist manner. It often takes a long time until all information is compiled. Simply start - it will be worthwhile.

You should also note respectively when the last contact has occurred, regardless of whether by letter, phone or personal meeting and when you want to get into touch again at the latest, in case no other opportunity occurs. Registers are quite suitable for this and easy to buy in any stationery shop. Alternatively, for all computer freaks amongst you, there is diverse data management software available.

For the sales people amongst you it should be natural to maintain a customer file and there will be some additional topics, for example:

Company, address, Switchboard number, target market, customer structure, products/ services, suppliers, information about top-management, market position, colleagues - with following bullets:

Division, positions/tasks, contacts made (fill in on which date, via mail, phone, e-mail, personal meeting), extension, fax, e-mail addresses, birthdays, position in hierarchy/ superior etc., hobbies, family

Shipping address, associated companies/ operations, number of employees, business volume, return, production program, price setting, conditions of payment, payment behaviour, discounts, trading volume with this company, profits and their development with this company, visiting days, notes,

Naturally, socialising can't be expressed in figures. The point is not to see how many people you can meet – the point is to find people you can count on.

And, most importantly, it is not about “How can I make the other person help me?” but about – and this is the essential sentence – “How can I do something for the other person?”

Principle of success: “Give, give, give – and you will get everything back.”

If you have made this step – here some further considerations:
Organize a group of masterminds.

I owe the idea for this to Napoleon Hill who suggested this already in the twenties. It was then the American President Theodore Roosevelt who made it popular also in Europe. In which way can this be interpreted?

Firstly, it could be an executive surrounding himself with many experts handling things he does not know – something like a team of consultants – however, don't think of it as a one-way street, because also the executive will bring in his expertise for the others.

Secondly, it could be a meeting of like-minded people united by the common target to become more successful, to grow and learn permanently and to develop their entire potential.

With this alliance of masterminds you can exchange your thoughts, work on certain topics and talk about problems. Still another tip if you want to test this: from my experience it is favourable to meet regularly every three or four weeks. It will not be possible for everyone to be present at every single meeting but a fixed appointment is better than having to agree every time on a new date. This could even endanger the continuation of the project.

An enhancement of the network idea I have found in Alex S. Rusch's work. He suggests a “Power brain trust partner” meaning that, in special fields where you would like to develop further you should look for a partner longing for the same goal. You should meet or call once a week. Determine your targets and control mutually the

compliance. If you like the expression, this is a reciprocal coaching. This does also help enormously to conquer your weaker-self.

To establish a good network in the long run, you should also try to get to know:

- A very good doctor and as well an excellent dentist. Ask the people in your network if they could recommend somebody.
- A lawyer. It is nice if you never need one. But if you need one, it can become very expensive. A good friend in this profession will advise you on the first steps to undertake without demanding a high charge and he will also know the specialists in the individual domains. But as Harvay Mackay likes to say "Look for friends before you need them."
- Beneficial for self-employed persons or company owners is also to know a trustable tax accountant who merits this denomination.
- Nowadays craftsmen of all kinds certainly cannot be estimated highly enough.

In general it is important to look for contacts also beyond your sphere of interests. We all tend to enclose ourselves with people resembling ourselves. The only problem with that is that all my acquaintances might follow the same directions of thinking. The so-called good friend will more than likely give us the same advice we already thought of. Or - even worse - will confirm us in our mistakes. Especially with couples and in management you can often observe that the respective friends and colleagues have the same opinions and so they help to cement the problems.

Winston Churchill commented this: "If two persons are always of the same opinion one of them is dispensable." This has to be considered especially in organizations requiring change as daily survival factor.

With regards to relationships, there is never only pleasure but problems or even crisis are rather normal, so please think of the Far Eastern saying: "Somebody is either your friend or your teacher."

People who are really prepared can learn a lot about themselves from a crisis. Well, we have to admit, this is certainly one of the harder lessons in life (and I am talking from my own experience ;-)), but you do not have – like some people - to marry the same type of partner eight times.

In any case, I wish you many friends and a huge network of relationships.

3. Thinking, planning and working in writing

All big thinkers in history were and are people writing a lot. Manuscripts and letters of Goethe, Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci etc can still be found in their thousands.

“Having to remember disables intellect” – is a well-known citation.

It is rather improbable that these personalities have thought:

“Yep – one day I will be famous, so I leave behind a lot of paper for their research” ;-)

Today one knows that frequent writing increases creativity and even the IQ – at all times two pre-conditions for outstanding results.

During my enquiries for newsletters, consulting, coaching or workshops I see it over and over again: all successful people I personally know or who's work I hear or read about, think and plan in writing.

It starts already with planning targets: “A Target which has not been fixed in writing remains merely a desire.” For all domains there exists the principle of writing: generating ideas, problem solving, or networking... or could you keep in mind all birthdays of your clients or friends?

It is for a reason that mind mapping and lots of creativity methods work with paper and pencil. Of Einstein it is known that he always kept a notepad with him and he wrote in it continuously, even during a sailing tour. Often in everyday life we have an idea, get a stimulus or find a nice citation. How many millions of possible solutions have been lost because of failure to write them down immediately?

We can also free our mind by writing down things, so our brain does not have to store thousands of things any more. We forget less and thus we are more concentrated and more successful. In the age of technology naturally there are further options – you can work with paper and pencil or with PDA, PC or Dictaphone – everyone to his liking. A Dictaphone has the advantage that we can use it also in the car when writing down is not possible. I get lots of ideas whilst driving – and I am glad when I can record them immediately.

Now concerning motivation: Until quite recently scientists assumed the intelligence quotient (IQ) was an inherent factor which could not be changed. They thought as well that the neurons of an adult could not regenerate. New research shows that this is not true. Both the IQ can be increased and neurons can regenerate under specific conditions. An essential precondition is to get feedback. Without colleagues, friends, team members, partner and/or coach it won't work. Writing letters can therefore be useful. Or you write a lot for yourself (diary, success journal, etc.), so you receive feedback from yourself having the possibility to read through your work again.

Also all other “Helpers for better results” described in this article only work when the important principle “Thinking and planning in written form” is consistently applied.

4. Visions and goals

Many books and articles give account on the importance of goals and the development of a vision. Already ancient citations highlight this. However, you can and should again and again refer to this, reflect on this and act respectively – “Motivation is like washing – therefore we recommend it daily”

Zig Ziglar

Again the most important steps for the achievement of objectives:

- Write your objective down. It has to be your own target, not one for somebody else or one that somebody else sets for you.
- You have to be convinced to reach this goal. To believe in something can move mountains. Therefore, divide your targets into little and practicable steps. The achievement of these sub-goals raises your self-confidence and these sub-goals make you persevere. An Indian proverb goes: “How do you eat an elephant? The answer: bite after bite!” ;-)
- Again, write your targets down – see previous helpers! A target that is not written down is no target.
- A (written!!!) analysis of the current status helps you setting realistic targets. Write down at least 20 reasons for each target why you have to reach it. This will liberate unforeseen energies because you need a strong and passionate longing to reach this goal.
- Express your target as precise as possible. Formulate positively!
- Determine a date for the achievement of the target and also for your sub-goals.
- Detect also existing barriers. What is the biggest obstacle? During coaching and in my own experience I see it over and over again: in up to 90% of the cases, the person him/herself is the main reason for not reaching the targets (thinking patterns, routines, programs, behaviour patterns) and only in 10% of the cases the obstacles constitute exterior matters. However, people will certainly find at least up to 90% of external reasons and at the most 10% of personal reasons for failure. This is human and OK and therefore, we need friends, coaches, a network, brain trust partner etc.
- Who can help you with the achievement of your objectives? Whom you should get to know?
- Develop also a plan with a lot of activities ordered by time and importance.

Now you have in writing a precisely formulated goal – What next?

“It is not too little time we have but too much time we do not use properly.” Seneca already stated over 2000 years ago.

Most of you certainly know many examples of studies about the 3% of the population or of the students with precisely formulated goals in writing who later in life possess the same fortune as the other 97% together and who are also at large much more successful and happy.

During many “scheme of life and success workshops” these examples are told and it is undoubted that it is correct and necessary to set oneself precise objectives. How can it then be that always only a low percentage of persons really starts up and realizes big successes? After all, all participants have set themselves clear targets in writing...

What distinguishes the 3% of the studies and those people successful after workshops is that they do automatically and unconsciously the necessary second part of the success formula after the development of goals and plans.

The central question you have to answer daily is:

“TO WHAT AMOUNT DO I MANAGE TO ALIGN ALL MY DAILY ACTIVITIES WITH MY GOALS AND PLANS?!!!”

A good deal of goal plans ends up in the drawer after workshops or gets dusty on the shelf. In everyday life many plans perish or are reviewed only every few months.

Keep your eye on your goals every day and orient your actions towards your objectives. This does not mean that you should no longer watch television etc. You can continue with a lot of things but you have to keep in mind that the level of your success depends entirely on your focus on your activities (keywords: concentration of powers, laser principle).

It is not without reason that one says about a lot of well-known people: “They work day and night to achieve their goals.” That does not mean these persons do not have fun – on the contrary. But to pick up the above example, these people even select television programs consciously and only watch what brings them further. Naturally this can also be a programme of pure recreational value because compensation is also important.

Once this principle is clear to you, you will start acting and setting yourself clear, written goals for all important areas (if you have not already done so), you will keep track of them on a daily basis (e.g. with a collage of your objectives or with daily visualizations) and you will direct all your activities stronger and better towards these objectives and targets.

You will even carry out your routines more effectively and/or change them. Some programmes will be dismissed or substituted by new and better ones.

I wish you every success you strive for with the realization.

My last tip to conclude with: decide never to give up!

Walt Disney went bankrupt twice and then approached 360 banks before he found one willing to finance Disneyland. The rest is purportedly history.

5. Creating systems, methodical working

This is a law of success which is often not considered.

Why is McDonalds so successful although probably every one of you would be able to prepare a better hamburger? Well, McDonalds has created a system with which everywhere in the world it is possible to achieve the same results with the lowest qualified labour, every day and every minute.

There are lots of success schemes in hundreds of books. The challenge and the difficulty is to adjust one for yourself (see helper 1) and then to live accordingly and to realize it.

It is a widely spread misapprehension that one has to deliver always top-performances or that one becomes only successful with top-rate performances. If that was true, Apple would have never lost the “fight” of the operating systems against Microsoft.

First of all, no person can always give top-performances but at the most for some years and secondly, customers rather prefer predictable performances on a high level instead of every now and then the big shot and then again absolutely nothing. The emphasis lies on “predictable”.

Do you have a sales department or a distribution system? What is the difference? If you have a sales department, you are dependent on individual persons, their working humour, their daily condition or you are dependent on yourself, your highest commitment etc. If one of your sales people resigns you will have a problem. You have to introduce new people tediously, motivate them etc. If sometimes things don't run too well you have to try out many things to figure out why and then again to detect what does work.

With a distribution system you won't have much trouble if someone resigns. You know where and how you find, check and employ new associates. There are routines for the employment, for the vacancy adjustments, the “new one” obtains a folder with all information etc., there are routines for a continuing education and for supervision.

You have extensive examples of successful acquisition and “selling stories” for your sales. Self-study-, planning-, implementation- and organisation-tools are at hand. Your new associates are instructed what functions how and why because you know what as well as why it functions. You know the exact figures – number of calls to get an appointment, number of appointments for an order. On the basis of this benchmarking you can take counteractive measures if things don't run well at some point.

With a system you are able to predict a lot of things. You or a new associate do not have to reinvent the wheel every time. You have installed routines. You have fixed everything in writing – data about the clients, the course of working processes (who does what, when, in which way, with whom, why, in witch sequence and who checks

every year the pre-arrangements for the exhibition XY?...) New associates can fit in seamlessly.

All big and successful companies and individuals have become big and successful because they have created systems. Thus, they are able to generate outstanding performance with normal people.

And that is what it is all about! To guarantee continuously high performance with a high degree of innovation by means of normal people. This will only work on the basis of systematic work and operating with method.

You can manage "I, too!" Instead of asking yourself and brooding every year again: "Which way did I do this at that time with that client?", simply write down what you do and how you do it, organize it in categories and when the same task is pending again you use your notes. Certainly this is only the first step. The world does not stand still. Of course we have to change things continuously and introduce innovations. However, you will be able to identify the success of such measures faster and respectively you can further diversify them if you have a system e.g. an effective accounting.

And one more tip at the end. Even if you have to create your own system, you do not have to invent everything again, but only adjust many things for yourself (see also helper 1).

We have developed and tested hundreds of self-learning media-, implementation-, planning- and working-tools for sales, marketing, fieldwork and indoor service.

Do not hesitate to contact us and we will be glad to give you further information.

6. Very good personal time- and self-management

We all have only 24 hours a day. But out of experience we also know that some people manage to do twice or triple as much as others in the same time. Or that some people have a smile on their face for the whole day - the so-called “cheerful souls”. Observe those persons and ask them how they manage this.

In the following lines you will find several methods I use during my daily work.

Many companies still disregard totally the “body work”. Change consciously your facial expression (to a smile), your gestures (to big motions) as well as your posture (to a straight, open and laid-back posture). Don't forget your voice in the changing progress (speak louder if you normally speak quietly, and modulate more).

Breathe lower and more consciously (take deep breaths from time to time in the course of the day). When you consciously change one of these physical aspects, you will change your mood.

In the stress of everyday life we do not often get time to think about our respiration. Here helps the “post-it-method”: mark interesting points in books or magazines with small adhesive labels, and also use little mind supports everywhere reminding you of good intentions. It is great to be pushed again and again. You could e.g. attach a note with a smiley and the words “respiration” and “posture” on your PC.

Thus you will be reminded several times a day to stretch once and again, to lift the corners of your mouth a little bit and to breathe deeper.

A further effective method is to create time limits with a timer. Our weaker self barks and bites with pleasure if a big job is pending. Therefore, most of us hold off on those tasks. In such a case, you should adjust a timer from some minutes up to one hour and start working. When it rings you stop immediately. Thus you create regularities and complete not only the pleasant tasks but also the necessary ones. Furthermore this method leads to systematic working. It is undoubtedly better to work ten minutes every day than one hour once a week. This is enormously important for our power of endurance.

In this respect, I would like to point out how important it is to create daily routines for oneself (see helper 5). All well-rehearsed processes consume less energy and run almost automatically.

To reach an effective self-management the “72-hours-rule” is important: “If we take up something, we have to do the first step within the first 72 hours, otherwise the chances that we do it at all stand 1:100 against us.” The disregard of this rule is one of the main reasons for the failure of good intentions.

Clear goals and plans for plans in ones life will improve the achievement of ones wishes. Here again the principle of writing rules: only what is written in black on white is really a target and a plan.

One of the most important stories of all time-management trainers is the “Story of the stones”:

An American coach enters her workshops with a big glass jar, puts it on the table, puts inside stones big as a fist and asks the participants:

“Is the jar full now?” Thereupon the answer: “yes”.

The trainer takes pebbles and lets them fall in the interspaces.

“Is the jar full now?” It resounds: “yes”.

She takes fine sand and it trickles between the other stones and there fits in still a big amount. After that she asks for the moral of the story.

This brings us back to rule number one for time-management – “put first things first” – fill in important and big things first. Many people begin with “sand” – peanuts and wonder why they manage to do so little over the day. Effective time management means to plan first the big lumps, to complete first the important things and to integrate the many little and sometimes urgent things in the daily routine.

Try to create a balance in all areas of your life. On this subject you will find many authors and models. For myself I have classified the following important areas of life: profession, finances, self-consciousness, private relationships/family, learning/faith, hobbies, health/sports.

It is important to leave a buffer zone of 40% when planning your workload. All the little things like calls, letters, or advertising mail will take their toll and it is frustrating never to reach one’s own overstated day’s schedule.

And – as important visions, aims in life etc. are for self-motivation, we should not forget the many little things that make the path towards our goals more pleasant. It is often the little enjoyments and delights of life that let us forget occasional exertion and stress and help us keep the balance. Do something good for yourself, your partner and the children, then you will also manage the really big intentions more easily.

Now a selection of motivation tools, useful for combining, adding and animating imaginations:

The perhaps most efficient, however, in our culture least regarded method is the use of music. Music touches directly, affects the unconscious.

My tip: Take three hours of your time and compose a cassette with your favourite songs. You will already find the rummage in your own CDs or disks amusing. Listening to this music, on the way home or just in between tasks will work wonders for your mood. Besides – such a self recorded tape or CD can be one of the best presents for your better half – check it out.

Another good idea for motivation is to take beautiful photographs of your children or of landscapes. How blank or “decorated” is your office?

Recreation (almost) as during your vacation? A short walk has an immediate refreshing effect. The circular flow is activated and the change of air makes stress fade. Provide 10 minutes of your lunch time for a walk.

It is also good to re-cultivate a nice, fulfilling hobby. Another possibility to create good mood is to sing, whistle or hum. Try it out in your car – nobody needs to listen – I would probably make everybody leave the room...

Now follows a listing/ animation of lots of further possibilities and suggestions:

- writing a daily success journal (What was nice? Which successes? What was learned ?)
- massaging each other more often
- daily jogging
- learning to play a musical instrument
- learning a language (nowadays there exist excellent self-learning courses)
- learning to cook, the more exotic the better
- instead of watching television – watch the fish in the aquarium (but if you never had one: it makes more work than you may imagine – so attention with new acquisitions)
- getting married or divorced (“little joke” ;-), but sometimes the best solution)
- screaming powerfully sometimes in your car
- keeping silent, simply doing nothing for half an hour, especially for workaholics very interesting to see which thoughts thereby come up
- getting involved with in a good cause
- planting a tree (rose tree etc.)
- flirting once again with your wife/hubby
- founding a game group or a ‘table of success’
- starting to sing in a choir
- booking a dancing class and learning to dance (precisely a wonderful present for women, appeal to the men!)
- working in the garden (can be also the one of a friend, who certainly will be thankful)
- go to see an exhibition once again
- starting to paint
- re-arranging the apartment

What else comes to your mind? There are a lot of good possibilities to motivate yourself. To give you still more material to think about and as small, well meant push to pull yourself together, a citation from a Harley Davidson advertisement:

“A Job, a career. A tumble-dryer, a dishwasher. Tennis twice a week. Food with little cholesterol and a life insurance. Fixed-interest stocks and shares. Two weeks in Greece every year, of course with full board. A four-door limousine with two air-bags and a pension claim. Did your youthful dreams look like this?”

It is fun to leave one’s routines and comfort zone!

Contact to people, good friends, time with the family and your children are in the long run and for a fulfilled life more important than all titles and all job ladders together. This does not mean to do without a career but schedule this time from the beginning (big stone – first!)

And finally the rules for all big targets and real changing processes:

- slowly
- step by step
- do not skip a step
- look for helpers and people who mirror your acting and support you

Many successful people have “their” coach.

7. The secret of success par excellence: ASK

If you want something, ask, ask, ask.

Walt Disney was broke several times before he founded Disneyworld. He approached 360 banks – as already mentioned –before one was willing to provide financing.

Colonel Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, possessed only 1000 dollars and a recipe for chicken. Besides, he was more than 55 years old. He asked over 1000 restaurant owners until somebody said “yes”. It only took a few years until Sanders was famous and today KFC is on rank four of the biggest fast food chains worldwide.

Many people are afraid to ask somebody. Why is that? If the answer is “No”, you are at the same point as before. If it’s a “Yes“, a lot of things could happen.

90% of all sales managers stop at the third “No“ from a client. 95% of all acquisitions are concluded after the fifth contact (letter, e-mail, call, visit etc.).

When I talk about questions, I also mean those questions we ask ourselves again and again. And their quality. Many people ask themselves: “Why do I have to do this stupid job again and again?” And because our brain always works for us, it finds thousands of answers – only not helping ones.

Others ask themselves at the same point: „How can I do this work so that I can enjoy it (looking for options) and/or “How can I leave this work as soon as possible behind?” In this case our brain finds answers as well, but this time they are quality answers!

For sales purposes it is important to provide oneself with the right questions if one looks at the following results of research:

Why do clients switch to competition?

Only 9% of clients change because of the price, only 5% change due to a better product offer.

69% migrate because they do not feel treated as tier 1 clients.

38% of the commercial customers do not give a second chance to their supplier.

Here some power questions (questions that will bring you further) to ask yourself:

- Do I have a clear understanding of the market, of my surroundings and of the challenges and the turbulences?
- Do I possess lively, sense orientated visions as well as personal values and targets?
- Do I work to clear-cut company targets and are these targets harmonized with the new challenges and the change of values?
- Do I have precise marketing goals to realize my company targets?

- Is my way of leadership in line with the procurement of sense and values and do I have an organisation of trust in my company?
- Do I dispose of efficient methods and strategies, working – and planning techniques to realize my targets consistently?
- Am I already on the path “from selling to customer- and service-management” with the whole company?
- Efficient time management? Do I have sufficient time for my family, for hobbies and leisure time or for profound meditation?
- Is communication and information optimized to reach and assure the necessary winning margin?
- Do I have a creative company with explorers so that innovations with real customers benefit are developed?

Especially customer orientation manifests oneself in many every day, small things from “thanking more often” up to TQM-Certification.

Further questions you can ask yourself again and again:

- In which direction goes my further education?
- Which targets do I follow herewith?
- Whom would I like to get to know?
- How much time do I invest in the improvement of my communication knowledge?
- How can I ask more?
- Which habits do I have?
- Which of my habits do restrain my success?
- Which habits I would like to form?
- Which habits would I like to ameliorate?
- What can I learn next?
- What am I doing actually?
- What have I done properly?
- Who of my customers will testify this?
- Which proofs exist that my faculties are in accordance with the actual standard?
- Which new people far outside the company do I know who could help me in case of need?
- Will my annual retrospect be different from the one of last year?
- Which new faculties do I intend to acquire next year?
- Which old faculties I would like to amplify?
- How does my program for the next three years look like?

Ask potential customers for an appointment, do the necessary calls, ask for extras in the restaurant, ask, ask, ask, ask....

A small marketing tip at the end: you can ask us as well if your question concerns the fields of marketing, self-development, leadership, team development, sales, fieldwork and customer oriented company- and strategy planning! ;-)

I would like to conclude this article "7 helpers for better results" - for your personal and professional success with an amazing citation of Ralph W. Emerson:

"Success means:

To LAUGH often and LOVE much;
To win the RESPECT of intelligent persons
and the AFFECTION of children;
To earn the APPRECIATION of honest critics
and ENDURE the betrayal of false friends.
To APPRECIATE beauty;
To FIND the best in others;
To LEAVE the world a bit better
(whether through a healthy child, a garden patch,
or a redeemed social condition);
To have PLAYED with enthusiasm
And sung exultation;
To GIVE one's self;
To KNOW even one life has breathed
easier because you have lived;
This is to have SUCCEEDED.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



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