Disc Jockey News

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Q Corner: Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

With all due respect to the editor of this awesome publication, Mr. John Young, I have just returned from DJ Times DJ Expo in Atlantic City and I am reminded (for the thousandth time in my life) that there is no substitute for being there.

I reference Mr. Young because last month he put together something called "The Disc Jockey News Virtual Expo." People could log in from the comfort of their homes or offices and see videos of educational content. It was a great idea and I was happy to participate by contributing some content. And from the response I received, many people checked it out and got a lot out of it. Educationally.

But it's not the same as attending an expo.

I go to 3 or 4 throughout the year, so I know. There are benefits beyond the intake of education that one receives by actually packing a suitcase and traveling to a convention. I was reminded of those benefits this past week. Here are just a few examples:

You Can Catch Up With Old Friends. I rolled into Atlantic City on Sunday evening (August 10th). DJ Expo was starting the next day and since I was offering two seminars this year, plus hosting two evening events, I knew my time would be limited. So I made plans to have dinner with some great industry friends the night before everything began. It was a peaceful evening with a lot of catching up and a perfect way to start my Expo Experience.

You Never Know Who You Are Going To Meet. I had some people in mind that I wanted to catch up with in Atlantic City, but I was also pleasantly surprised to meet a few unexpected industry peers. With social media you get to know people you've never met (which is beyond weird when you think about it) and in Atlantic City I actually got to shake hands with some people I'd only ever seen online.

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Talkin' Bride: Ask Better Questions

By Tamara Sims

In the height of our busy wedding season, it is easy to fall into the pattern of being complacent when it comes to honing your sales skills. After all, we are overloaded with events every weekend and planning meetings every day during the week, not to mention the day-to-day business activities (payroll, equipment maintenance, scheduling, accounting… the list goes on and on). I found myself feeling a bit "stale" and then I received an invite to WeddingWire World Chicago's one-day conference and it was just what I needed to rejuvenate my sales and marketing skills.

I attended two seminars with Alan Berg, and even though I have seen Alan speak many times, I always seem to have many "aha" moments during his presentations. He reminded me of the importance of the questions that are asked during the initial e-mail correspondence, and in today's millennial society it is best not to "force" a phone call, as this generation would prefer to ask their initial questions via e-mail or text. I am still trying to embrace this generation, as when I was growing up my parents could not keep me from talking on the phone with friends! But if you gain their trust and pique their interest during your e-mail conversation it is much easier to schedule that face-to-face meeting sales meeting we all strive for. Alan

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In The Booth: A Quick Question

By Brian S. Redd

When someone hits me up on Facebook with a "quick question", there are rarely quick answers to go along with them.

For instance, last week someone wanted to know the easiest way to control their LED par fixtures when using them for uplighting. To answer this question, I had to gather some information. First, what type of LED par fixtures are we talking about? They were simple RGB LED pars with digital LED menus. Cool, how are they currently being controlled? DMX cable and a 512 DMX controller. OK, how many fixtures are we talking about? 30

30? Wow. What type of events are these 30 DMX controlled uplights being used at? 150-250 person wedding receptions.

Sure, I could have offered some wireless DMX dongle options, but it was my opinion this DJ needed some other advice.

When we are hired to do something like an uplighting job, too many DJs just stick a bunch of lights around the room. I feel we should be approaching these jobs

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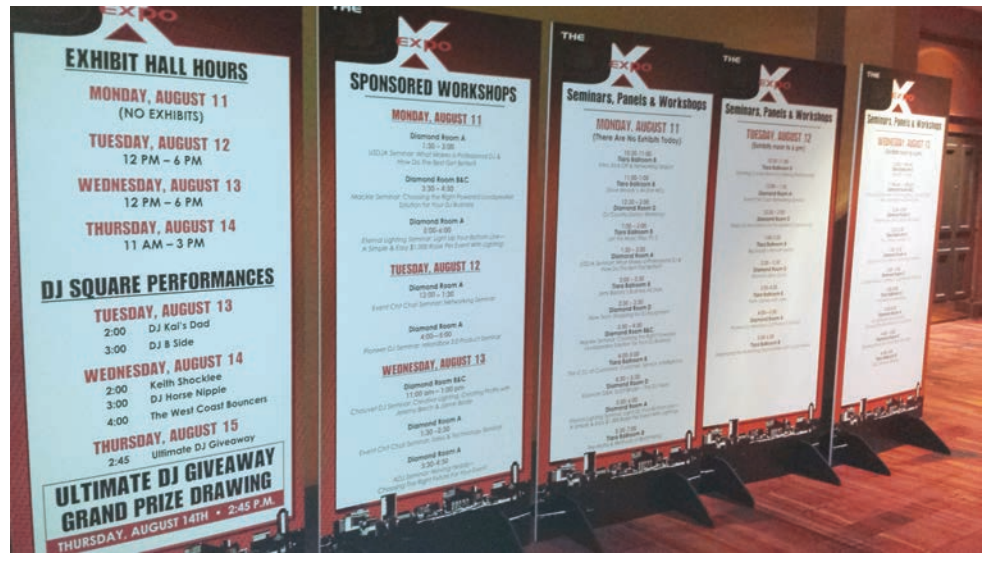
Plus I met some people I'd never been connected with before. This is what happens when you not only attend, but attend with an open mind and a willingness to shake some strangers hand and get to know them.

Nuggets Come From Many Places. As a seminar presenter I tend to get a little perturbed when people say "you hear the best nuggets in the hallways." That's a broad sweeping statement that shortchanges a lot of work and preparation that goes into all those seminars. So while I wouldn't say "the best nuggets" come from the random conversations you have in the hallways and over lunches at these conventions, I will admit, some awesome ones can be found this way. This is another reason why you not only attend a convention, but attend with a flexible schedule that allows for that random conversation to happen.

So, having stated my position for attending DJ Conventions, allow me to briefly recap what was an awesome week in Atlantic City. The seminars were out of this world. That might sound braggadocios coming from a guy who presented two of them, but my own seminars notwithstanding, this was a great year for education. From always awesome seminars like Steve Moody's All Star MCs, Big Daddy's Mitzvah Mania and Party Games with Jake, to new-comers like The ABCs of Sales by Jason Klock and Spinning Connections into Lifelong Relationships by Doug Sandler, attendees who were there to learn certainly went home with notebooks filled. The Expo floor was also mind blowing with industry icons like Chauvet, Denon and Pioneer impressing the attendees with incredible looking booths.

Evening entertainment is always a huge draw at DJ Times DJ Expo as well. And while this years' Promo Only party was scaled down in many ways, attendees still got to enjoy some great DJs spinning in some awesome clubs. For those that wanted to hone their MC skills, the Monday Night Mobile Party and the Wednesday night DJ of the Year competition offered over 20 routines to not only enjoy, but to learn from. And a quick congratulations goes to Vinny Liotta of Events by Cool Cat who took home the coveted DJ of the Year Award.



If this article has moved you in any way to attend a future DJ Expo I'd like to suggest two of them that will be well worth your time. Depending on when you read this article the first may be about to happen or already under way: The Las Vegas DJ Show which is taking place September 7th-10th (theLasVegasDJShow.com). The other one I can recommend will be hosted by this very publication: The Disc Jockey News Writers Conclave (November 9th-12th in Bloomington Minnesota.) I will be speaking at both of these events but that's not why I recommend them. They'll be chock-full of great education AND they'll offer all the benefits of being there; the networking, the catching up with old friends and the random encounters with new ones. I hope to bump into you, dear reader, during at least one of these.

Mike Walter is the owner of Elite Entertainment of New Jersey and a nationally recognized expert in the area of multisystem company development and staff training. You can contact Mike at mikewalter@discjockeynews.com.

Conclave 5.0 information: http://www/djnewsevents.com

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also suggested ending your e-mail with a question to keep the conversation going, and I must admit, I very rarely do that.

Once you are in the sales meeting, don't forget to engage with your clients. I know this sounds simple, but asking open-ended questions, being a good listener and not overwhelming your couple during the initial meeting will produce better results. One thing I am guilty of is talking about too many choices, confusing the client and in turn ending up with no sale. My excitement for our DJ Services and Lighting and Décor sometimes get the best of me, so one of my goals is to work on discussing one element of the wedding per consultation. I do pride myself in "selling with the heart" and not just looking to increase my bottom line. And according to Alan, "the heart has no budget!" I also loved how Alan said that we should all focus on selling the client "what they need." An important tip, as it is easy to get caught up in the bottom line.

An example of this happened recently in one of my meetings. The bride and groom were having a very small reception (less than 100 people), where most of the guests were in the 45-70 age range. When I was discussing the length of the reception they told me it was 8 hours long (4:00PM-12:00AM) which in our experience is much too long for this type of wedding, as older guests will usually say their goodbyes around 10-10:30. I asked them why is your reception so long? They said they hadn't really thought about it, but the venue said they could have the room until midnight. Our package is 6 hours, so we would be making quite a bit of money in overtime, but I truly believe that this was not in the best interest of my clients. I suggested ending at 10:30 with the option to extend that evening if the majority of their guests were still there. They really appreciated that I was looking out for their best interest and not simply trying to make more money. And yes, they happily booked at the end of our meeting.

Taking a day or two to refresh and rejuvenate your sales skills will help your business, elevate your confidence and as a result increase your bottom line.

Please feel free to share your comments with Tamara at: tamarasims@discjockeynews.com

Tamara is the Director of Sales and Marketing for Something 2 Dance 2 DJ Entertainment in Schaumburg, IL, which she proudly owns along with her husband Jay Sims. She has over 20 years experience in the wedding industry and loves creating wonderful wedding memories for her brides and grooms.

Brian S Redd Continued from Page 1

as professional lighting designers who know how to do things like create focal points and highlight (or create) architectural detail.

With 30 fixtures in an environment such as your standard sized banquet facility, it's hard to imagine anything other than lighting up the entire room with LED fixtures. With this, you have no focal point.

Have you ever walked into someone's garage that was full of stuff from floor to ceiling? All your brain sees is a mountain of crap. Imagine walking into that same garage with nothing except a single box sitting in the middle of the floor. Your brain sees a box. There may have been 75 boxes in that mountain of crap, but with all the clutter, they went unnoticed.

If we want to focus people's attention to anything with lighting, such as columns, wedding cakes, or even a Bride and Groom, get your lighting on what matters and forget about everything else. If there is nothing to highlight in a particular area, then don't throw any attention-grabbing light on it.

Speaking of the Bride and Groom, they should be the focal point of any wedding. I've seen head tables uplit with several fixtures, usually in even numbers. What I've found the most effective in these situations is actually an odd numbers of fixtures. Why? Because when spaced evenly, this puts a light right at the center of the table, which is where our Bride and Groom will be. Just 3 fixtures, one in the center and the other 2 on the ends of a table can be very effective.

It's my opinion that the only place a wedding reception should have moving or color changing lights is on or around the dance floor. Choose a static uplighting color or two for the rest of the room to accent and beautify the space. Let the dining area be tranquil compared to the excitement we'll create near the DJ booth once dancing starts.

Oh, I almost forgot. What's the best way to control uplighting at a wedding reception? Usually, it's a matter of self-control. But seriously, static colors are usually best. The good news is this can easily be done internally with your fixtures LED menu via RGB color mixing or color macros.

How do you access RGB color mixing and macros? Crap. Tell me again which fixtures you have? Like I said, rarely a quick answer.

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Are You Naked In Front Of Your Clients?

By Mitch Taylor

Are you naked in front of your clients? You should be. But Mitch...I don't want to be naked in front of my clients...

are you kidding me? Of course, I'm not talking about actually physically being naked but letting yourself truly be exposed. Sharing the real "you". Many of us put up a "business" front for who we are. Your clients (the ones who still choose to book you even though you weren't genuine in the first place with them) are missing out. You miss sales, you miss referrals...you miss connections...you miss LIFE. Why? All because you aren't comfortable in your own skin, to let someone in to know the real you.

Let's face it...you're giving up your Friday/Saturday/Sunday away from your loved ones and family to spend it with a stranger and their loved ones and family. Yes you may LOVE what you do but shouldn't you also LOVE the people you work with (not for). Don't miss that last statement. Work WITH - NOT for. When you work WITH your clients you come together to collaborate and create an experience that is uniquely them. You partner with them because you WANT to - this isn't just an opportunity for you to make a few hundred dollars on a Saturday night. When you are REAL with them and they with you, you get closer to the understanding and meaning of their event. You get closer to the golden opportunity that sits before you that evening with your clients surrounded by all of their friends and family.

Before you speak a SINGLE word with your potential client...PAUSE. I got an opportunity to see my sales idol Jeffrey Gitomer speak recently at a live event and also at a meet and greet before he went on. Jeffrey took time out while he was going over his slides to say hello and sign a copy of one of my favorite books by him; "Little Platinum Book of Cha Ching". In the book he wrote to me ONE WORD after he wrote my name and signed. What one word did this best selling author write to me as he exclaimed this was his first directive of the day? It's the same advice I give you here; what to do next before you speak a single word to your potential client. The word: THINK.

Think about the opportunity that exists before you. Before speaking with a potential client...what's your attitude? As someone once said "You better check yourself before you wreck yourself" ;-) You have a golden opportunity to CONNECT with a fellow human being, to potentially have an INCREDIBLE impact on one of the MOST IMPORTANT days of their life. That, dear reader, is a gift. A gift that you get almost EVERY. SINGLE. DAY. Take advantage of it. DON'T squander that opportunity. Your clients deserve your best. You deserve to reap the rewards of what can come to you from developing that relationship. I've written many articles on sales over the years here for this fine publication and the ADJA's Current Audition, and I encourage you to go back through the archives and read them to find out more about what to do next in the sales conversation or just visit www.MitchTaylor.net and see when my next sales workshop - Sales Is Solutions - is being held. (Shameless plug - P.S. I'll save you the trouble - it's March 2nd, 2015 in Las Vegas. Get your tickets now before it sells out - I know it will).

This same advice holds true before you step foot in that venue and open that microphone. Before you speak a SINGLE word to your guests - PAUSE. THINK. Who are you in that situation? What do you want your audience to do/say/feel? How do you want them to react? How can you best serve the person/people that are before you at that given moment? By THINKING first, then PAUSING, then and ONLY then speaking. You get clarity of your situation and how you can best use the golden opportunity sitting in front of you to better someone else's day and potentially a lifetime of memories that you contribute to. Look them in the eyes. Connect with them. See what they see. Feel what they feel. Put yourself in their shoes and THINK about if you were them how would you want this to play out. The last two words of one of my favorite books ever on sales is SUM TERTIUS. It's Latin for "I am third." That philosophy will take you far in life.

The last step in this process was alluded to in the first paragraph. It is to just "be". Be with that person sitting across from you. Be with your audience on the microphone. Be with them in the moment in that space. Be real. When we just "be" we truly connect with the people we are speaking with (NOT TO) and we are able to better serve them.

When you fall off that thought process wagon (as I have, of course, and probably will do again) THINK back to this article. Think of how you would want to feel/react/be in that same situation if you were them. There's a lifetime of opportunities and memories to impact. PAUSE. THINK. BE.

Mitch Taylor is an 18 year veteran of the mobile disc jockey industry, starting out on the cruise ships of Carnival Cruise Lines. He is a member of the American Disc Jockey Association and WED Guild™. Mitch owns and operates Taylored Entertainment in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and can be reached at 906.786.6967 or via email at mitchtaylor@discjockeynews.com.

PTDJ: Finding Time To Learn

By Dan Carpenter

As part-timers we lack extra time. Maybe it's the extra time we wish we had to market better, or practice our mixing, or maybe it's the extra time for our families like I addressed last month. Regardless of what we want the time for, there has to be a way to find extra time.

My extra time just got cut. Being a teacher, my day job began this week. While there are some upsides to the day job starting, I can't let my family nor my business suffer because of it. I feel like I've found a good rhythm to preparing for an event and still giving my family time; however one big obstacle I tend to have is finding extra time to learn. The week before I started school I attended the DJ Expo in Atlantic City. On a side note, this is a great event full of wonderful seminars and content, and I recommend that if you can take a few days, you should attend (but get the full expo pass to get the most out of your time, as the seminars are where you will get the biggest ROI on your trip). At the DJ Expo, I learned so many great nuggets of information that I want to put in place as soon as possible. I even took time to buy some DVDs from industry leaders that will help me continue to learn throughout the year. Now I'm home and it hits me - when can I actually sit and watch DVDs?! Last month I told you about my family, and our active 5 year old, who makes it very difficult to sit down and watch anything. Even when he does settle down, the TV is usually on Disney Jr. Now I could wait until he goes to bed, but then that's time I like to spend with my wife. I could wait until she goes to bed, but now it's late and I have to get up the next morning for work. I could wait until the next day, but then the vicious cycle repeats.

About a month ago, I realized I have time that I have been letting go untapped. I drive 30 minutes each day to get to work. During that time, a lot can be done. Now, I don't recommend what I heard some other DJs do; checking and responding to email, texts, writing blogs, etc. However, I would assume most of us have some sort of listening device in our vehicle. Pick up some seminars on CD or podcasts of other DJs, and tips or tricks they have. Recently I bought Alan Berg's audio collection. If you have a DVD player in your car, you could also play any DVDs that you've picked up. While I would definitely NOT recommend watching the DVDs while you drive; you could listen and possibly pick up a few ideas.

In the same respect after a hard day at work, sometimes I just want to rock out. So I will use this car time to listen through special songs or new songs that have been released. It's a great time for me to do my music research. I will typically load a bunch of songs to my phone and then play as I drive. It's worked great for me as I've found some songs weeks before they've made it to the local radio station, and it also allows me to know my music ahead of time for when someone comes up and requests a song.

The fact that you are reading this publication means you're taking time to do some type of learning. However, if you are having trouble getting enough extra time to do the learning you'd really like to, it may be time to look at your schedule and take advantage of the untapped times you may not have realized you had available. While the car works for me, I'm sure you may have a different source of untapped time. What are some of the things you've done to find extra time? Do you have a secret time you've utilized and would love to pass along? If so, please send them. I'd love to compile a list and share with everyone. Maybe together we will all find just a little more time.

Dan Carpenter can be reached at dancarpenter@discjockeynews.com.

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Tight Spot...

By Jake Palmer

Last month I talked about situations where you are not in your comfort zone; maybe the bulk of your weddings are in nice hotels and suddenly you find yourself in a small town legion hall or visa-versa. Traditions, customs, and styles can be completely different from what you are used to and challenge you all night. Sometimes couples can throw you for a loop with their timelines and schedules. In the last 2 weeks I have had these situations at two different weddings. I wasn't necessarily out of my element or comfort zone, but was not in as much control as I would have liked, so I had to heed some of my own advice from last months' article, as well as some other things to get through both weddings successfully.

One wedding had a timeline that started too early so guests had a hard time getting into the "groove" of the party part of the evening, and like most parties or dances in small town Midwest, they were not ready to hit the floor until later in the evening. Another wedding had a scheduling conflict with the chapel, so we had a small group for dinner at 4pm then a ceremony at 6 with apps, drinks, and dancing. These events presented some challenges, but more importantly they forced me to come out of my "normal" wedding state of mind and work a little harder and smarter.

When you're in a tight spot, it's important to remember the basics of DJing and entertaining a crowd or group of people; continue to smile, don't get frustrated, make sure the music makes sense, keep the guests involved and feeling like they are part of the event. Never give up! Never give up! (Yes I meant to type that twice.) It's important to not give up on an event or a group, as the crowd will know when you have given up on them and they will immediately give up on you. Remember, they are looking to you to be the leader of the fun. Guests will also show some sympathy for a DJ who is obviously working hard to get people on the floor and they may guilt themselves into coming out.

It is also important to be more organized and prepared than usual. If you know you're going into a show that is going to be a tight spot prepare more and harder than you normally would. Stay professional, two hacks don't make a professional. In other words, if your event feels less than professional and you now sink to a less than professional level, the event just became twice as unprofessional. Always take the high road, always stay professional.

If lack of interaction or involvement is the problem then you'll want to "warm the crowd". If I have a group that just isn't responding the way I want them to, I will go up to individuals and small groups and explain to them exactly what I want them to do, what I expect from them, why I expect it, and what the pay off will be if they do it. It's the same reason they have comedians warm an audience before they shoot a TV show. They want the audience loose and already in the mood to laugh. It makes the "real show" better and the laughs come easier.

Lastly, don't be afraid to back up, don't be afraid to change up the expected flow of an event, and do things differently. Most weddings have a certain flow; older more middle of the road music that everyone loves early, morphing into newer, louder, faster music later as the crowd thins and you are left with the party crowd. If everything about your wedding is less than normal, don't expect the music and dance to be any different. Don't be afraid to go back the oldies well later in the night, if that's what the crowd looks like they want. To get out of a tight spot, sometimes you have to wiggle, sometimes you have to wobble… wobble baby, wobble baby

Jake Palmer can be reached at jakepalmer@discjockeynews.com.

Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2015Preview

http://www.mobilebeatlasvegas.com

Mobile Beat Las Vegas returns in 2015 with what is hoping to be an all-new experience for attendees. It takes place February 23-26,2015 in Las Vegas. Producer Mike Buonaccorso has teamed up with co-hosts Bill Hermann and Jason Jones of the Entertainment Experience, striving to set a new standard in DJ gatherings.

When asked to describe this "new experience", Mike quoted from a recent blog post he had read by entrepreneur Mark Cuban: "99.99 percent of the things we do in business are being done the way they have always been done. No one has re-imagined how things should be done. That is what successful people do, think about how to re invent them. They envision a complete reapplication. Then they decide what to do with what they just recreated."

Re Invent. Re Apply. Re Create. Shake things up a bit.

Using two full time hosts for the event breaks into a whole new territory. Bill and Jason will not only be making your participation personal, they will also be including some of their own expertise to add to the learning experience.

MBLV promises to deliver a stellar lineup of other presenters as well, including Mark Ferrell, Carr Hagermann, Brian Dodge, Gary Shapiro, Rob Schenk, Josh Yawn, Ben Stowe, Joe Bunn, and more surprises are planned, in addition to the 80,000 square foot exhibit hall. Each presenter was selected to zero in on ONE unique aspect of your complete mobile entertainer abilities.

A just announced addition as of press time was the addition of Penn Jillette of the very popular Las Vegas magic and comedy show called Penn & Teller. Penn will be speaking at MBLV on the entertainment business and how relevant it is to what we do everyday.

"It really speaks to a world where anything is possible," commented show host Jason Jones when discussing bringing celebrity Penn Jillette to the show. "Not often we can actually prove that; Yeah! we can do that!"

Another new aspect in the event affects the infrastructure. There will now be four days of stellar presentations, not just a Monday "pre-day" with seminars presented if you have nothing to do. You'll want to be there from the beginning, with kickoff Monday around 1 PM featuring Gary Shapiro, producer of the world's largest trade show, CES, speaking on strategies for success and the latest trends in audio fresh off the 2015 CES trade show floor.

Full event passes for MBLV are available through September 30 at only $179.00.

This pass gains access to the full MBLV experience: the presentations, the exhibits, the parties, and more.

When you aren't busy enjoying Mobile Beat Las Vegas you are in need of two things. Checking out Las Vegas and a place to sleep. Mobile Beat has arranged for hotel rooms beginning at $34 at the Riviera Hotel and Casino. The link to the show rate can be found at the show website.

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http://www.mobilebeatlasvegas.com

http://www.facebook.com/mobilebeatlasvegas

DJAA National Conference Review

By Glenn Mackay

Wow! What a month August has been. Not only is August turning into a busy month for weddings (strange as it's a winter month here in Australia), but we also held the 2014 DJAA National DJ Conference in Ballarat, Victoria.

This small DJ conference, which is only in its 2nd year, is growing rapidly and this years' event was a huge success. Ballarat was a big gold mining hub back in the gold rush days, so there were no doubt many nuggets on offer over the 2 day event. Despite seeing footage of snow in Ballarat just days out from the conference, DJs from around the country traveled in to take part.

Over 2 days, the DJAA put on a fantastic show full of diverse education and activates.

Day 1 consisted of the DJAA AGM, which is nothing amazing, but it was great to see the announcement of the DJAA becoming a National Incorporated Body. This is a big step forward for the DJAA and for DJs in Australasia.

Following the AGM was a Q&A session with the "Panel of Experts", otherwise known as the "Panel of old guys". With Steve Bowen, Serge Olivieri, Bruce Harrison & Peter De Wever as the experts, the questions from the audience came thick and fast. The 4 experts each gave some amazing advice and insight, based on their extensive DJ and entertainment experience.

Day 1 continued after lunch with 2 presentations from speakers outside of the DJ industry covering topics mostly around sales, marketing and online presence. Then the industry specific seminars started with a presentation on 'Upselling', and Thomas Ormond giving a great seminar on 'Mixing & Mashups', which provided a great insight into how his mind works as a DJ.

As Day 1 came to an end everyone headed off the DJAA annual dinner, which included special guest speaker Bruce Roberts who is a very popular TV News reader in the area (essentially he is the Ron Burgundy of Victorian TV lol). Bruce gave a few tips for presenting and public speaking and how to better connect with people based on their personality types.

Day 2 saw a diverse range of seminars from a great variety of presenters. John Beck delivered a talk on dealing with 'Client Objections', which was very well received. Next up was Brian Davis who I think delivered the best presentation of the conference with his topic of 'Going from Part-Time to Full-time'. This was one seminar where I took more notes than any other and Brian's insight on how to analyze aspects of your DJ business that most don't was quite eye opening for many. Brian's presentation style is very engaging and based on what I was hearing afterwards, many attendees took away some great nuggets.

The remainder of the day 2 consisted of seminars on planning and procedures, Crowd interaction, electrical safety and understanding DMX. All seminars throughout the 2 day event appeared to be well researched and well delivered by the presenters, and certainly well received by those in attendance.

During the last part of Day 2, the equipment exhibit area opened and we all got the chance to play with some DJ toys from a range of companies who supported the event. The display from Pioneer was very popular with their new PLX-1000 turntable debuting at the show.

As previously mentioned, this is only the 2nd year this show/convention has been running and 2015 is looking to be bigger and better. For those interested, it will be held in Melbourne on August 4th and 5th 2015. You can visit www.djaa.com.au regularly to see when more details are released.

I'm also very much looking forward to visiting Las Vegas this month to experience the Las Vegas DJ Show for the first time. For me, this involves about 15hrs flying time, so I really hope you can make it and please feel free to come up and introduce yourself. I'm looking forward to the many Premium Workshops I've booked into, plus I hope you come along at 11:45am on Monday the 8th of September to the WED Guild Open House. Check the schedule and times closer to the day to confirm. See you there!

Glenn Mackay is a mobile DJ from Brisbane, Queensland, Austrailia and owner of G and M Solutions Mobile DJs. Glenn can be reached at glennmackay@discjockeynews.com

Think Different!

By Ron Ruth

We've come to the final chapter of "Re-ignite Your Creativity: How To Overcome Inspiration Burnout." So far we've explored ways to prevail over two of the three most common enemies of creative thought and innovation; unanticipated obstacles and menacing naysayers. Now it's time to tackle the greatest adversary of creativity, needless self-doubt.

There's no doubt that you've experienced self-doubt at some point of your life. Think back to your first day in a new school or college (will I fit in?), the time you went on a blind date (will he or she like me?), your first day on the job (have I bitten off more than I can chew?) or when you found out that you were expecting your first child (am I really ready to be a parent?). These and other milestones in your life probably created at least a moment of uncertainty where you came face to face with the unknown. The unknown can be a very scary place. It can make the most confident among us shiver at the thought of not knowing what lies ahead.

As you may already know, my wife and I are huge Disney fans and we go to Walt Disney World in Florida every year for our vacation. If you've ever been there, you know that there a number of iconic rides that you just have to experience. One of those is Space Mountain.

Space Mountain is a roller coaster ride. Now, something you don't know about me is that I have a tremendous fear of heights and roller coasters typically take a rider way up before it drops down, only to go way up, again. Not my cup of tea. But on one of our earliest trips I told my wife, Debbie, that if I was going to claim to be a true Disney Geek, I had to ride Space Mountain at least once.

As we approached the space ship shaped cars to get on I was both excited and terrified. But, I wasn't about to chicken out after coming this far. I got in the little single seat car and pulled down the safety bar. Debbie was seated behind me.

At the beginning of the ride the cars are moved to a tunnel with flashing lights and a laser like sound that acts as a countdown for the ride to begin. Then I was catapulted around a sharp turn before the ride reached the first climb to what seemed like to me to be one thousand feet into the sky before gravity took over and sent me flying down and up and all around. It's only like a 2 minute ride, but for me it lasted an eternity.

When we came to the end, a cast member pried my hands loose from the safety bar and helped me out of the car. Debbie asked me how I did and I said, "Great! I just kept my eyes closed through the whole ride. It wasn't until that moment that she told me that Space Mountain is a dark ride and you can't see anything even with your eyes open. Although it was tough getting over her laughing at me, I got over my fear and was more confident to ride Space Mountain, again. Today I make it a point to enjoy that iconic ride every time we visit and I'll be just fine as long as they never turn on the lights.

It could be that your first experience working with a paying client as a wedding professional and business owner was a lot my first experience on Space Mountain. That singular moment was the very reason you started your business and you entered into it with excitement and yet, there was no escaping a feeling of fear that maybe you weren't ready or that something could go wrong. The event most likely had a few ups and downs and twists and turns, and yet you survived making you more confident to do it again.

Yours is a great story of survival but it's one that can be easily forgotten and replaced with self-doubt, especially in moments when you consider pursuing new ideas.

It's never pleasant to feel self-doubt because that emotion brings you face to face with the fear of--- let me apologize in advance for dropping the "F" bomb on you---failure! But if you're a true creative, you should know that failures are going to happen. You're human. Failures, however, should be worn as a badge of courage. It says that playing it safe is not an option and that you're not afraid to put yourself out there to give your ideas an opportunity to succeed.

When Thomas Edison was asked the many failures he encountered while inventing the light bulb he said, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Every attempt you make at bringing your next great idea to life sets the service you provide on the path to becoming an iconic experience that people can't wait to enjoy.

The real danger though for creative individuals like you and me---is becoming overly comfortable with our past achievements and, instead of exercising our imaginative spirit, advancing our ideas, we settle on what we know to be safe, placing the benefit of practical over the value of possible. If we allow that to happen, we're ignoring the vast universe of new and exciting ideas that are just hanging out in our imagination waiting to be discovered. When we play it safe, settle on the status quo, we eventually become that person who looks at a box as nothing more than a box.

In 1984 Steve Jobs and Apple introduced the first Macintosh computer to the world. Imagine what our lives would be like today if Jobs had been so fearful that he could never duplicate the success of the Mac that he stopped there and never spearheaded another innovation? Would we still be enjoying all of the wonderful technological advancements, from digital music to smart phones, that evolved from the creation of the first Mac?

It's a trick question because there's absolutely no way that would have happened. Steve Jobs was an optimistic visionary. He not only had an unwavering passion for what he did, Jobs was a great leader and the champion of Apple's "purpose"---the driving force to think differently as a computer maker and change the way in which consumers thought of, purchased and used computing devices. It was Job's commitment to that purpose, to think different, that saved Apple from extinction in 1997 when, after a 12 year absence from the company he founded, he returned as interim CEO.

The first Mac was, by today's standards… an ugly box. Fortunately for all of us, Jobs didn't think inside or outside of that box, he only thought about what he could do with that box. And, if you look at the Macs of today, you'll see how beautiful it turned out. Whether you use an Apple product or not, there's no denying that millions of people find the experience of using Apple products to be iconic and they'll stand in line for hours, sometimes days, to get their hands on the latest new product rollout.

To overcome self-doubt, commit to your purpose. It will never fail you.

So what is your business' purpose? How do you think differently that changes the way couples think about experiencing your service? If you have to think about it, then you should probably devote some extra time to thinking about it.

It's not enough to simply be able to articulate your purpose. If you're genuinely and passionately committed to it, your purpose must also be a non-negotiable. It is what separates you from the rest of the pack. Everything you do in your business and for your clients should be done with the intent of fulfilling your purpose first! What you do is common and easily mimicked. No one, though, can take from your imagination or the inspiration that makes you different in the way you do it. And because you're successful, there will be those who try to duplicate what you do, but without a conviction to a purpose of their own, they'll fail.

To be different you have to think differently about how you want your business offerings to be perceived differently than all others. To think differently, you have to be courageous and have faith that inspiration will reveal itself in your purpose. Trust your instincts and respect the value of perseverance when things don't go exactly as planned. To be iconic you must never fear failure. But when you do fail, wear your badge of courage proudly. And when others call you crazy, take solace in these words from Apple's 1997, "Think Different" television commercial that played a huge role in keeping the company from falling into an abyss.

"Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo.

You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward.

And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do."

I hope that you've not only enjoyed my series "Re-ignite Your Creativity: How To Overcome Inspiration Burnout," but that you've found inspiration in the articles that will keep your flame of creativity burning bright. As I close, I'd like to leave you with one additional thought. The best way to become or even remain fearless in your creative endeavors is to embrace the role that creatives play in supporting one another. Reach out to those who share your passion to imagine bigger and deliver better. They could well provide the spark of inspiration you need to see your next idea transform into an extraordinary creative accomplishment. Now get out there and change the world!

Join me for my live version of "Re-ignite Your Creativity: How To Overcome Inspiration Burnout," on stage at the Wedding MBA Conference at the Las Vegas Convention Center on Thursday, September 18th at 9:00 a.m. I'll be stepping out of my comfort zone to bring you a fun and entertaining presentation that will change the way you think about the creative process forever!

Ron Ruth is a 20 year veteran of the wedding and DJ industry and the owner of Ron Ruth Wedding Entertainment in Kansas City. He's also a WED® Guild Member, a self-described "Disney Geek" and a nationally recognized speaker who presents seminars at conferences for DJs and wedding professionals on the topic of delivering quality service. Ron can be reached at 816-224-4487 or ronruth@discjockeynews.com

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Anatomy Of Interaction Part 6

By Dean C. Carlson

I just wanted to thank all of you for tuning in to this journey through the Anatomy of Interaction. You might be saying to yourself, "why so long, they're just games?" I believe that understanding all the detail of how interaction works can greatly enhance the overall end results, thus garnering more bookings. We all know that word of mouth trumps any print ad you can place in the market.

So far we have Covered 5 of the 8 pieces. The Soul, which drive the interaction through purpose. The Brain, because the more we know the greater our ability to place personalized pieces throughout the interaction. Let's face it we can make a very similar interaction fresh each time we do it by what we know of the event. The Eyes dealt with things that are happening in real time, so that we can use it. Kind of like a comedian and hecklers, it can raise our game to a new level. The Lips taught us that it is what and how we say it that motivates, compels and drives or crashes an interaction. Then last month we talked about The Hands, which really personifies getting to work and practicing until we have it down so well it allows us to take everything else in.

The Lungs of Interaction focuses on the breath of life. Do that with me right now; breath in, breath out. Slowly do it again. Breathing after a marathon for me would be like gasping for my last breath of life, as opposed to being seated in a dark room with a personal trainer focusing my breathing. If you talk to runners they will tell you that proper breathing is vital to running.

Now you may be wondering where I am going with this. Well, breathing and pacing are everything when it comes to making your interaction feel alive. For example, have you ever watched a comedy on TV and it just seemed off? Well the problem with most faulty comedy isn't that the jokes are bad, it's the pacing at which they deliver them. The same example can be made for why several presidents have made it into office - they just had outstanding breathing skills when it came to public speaking.

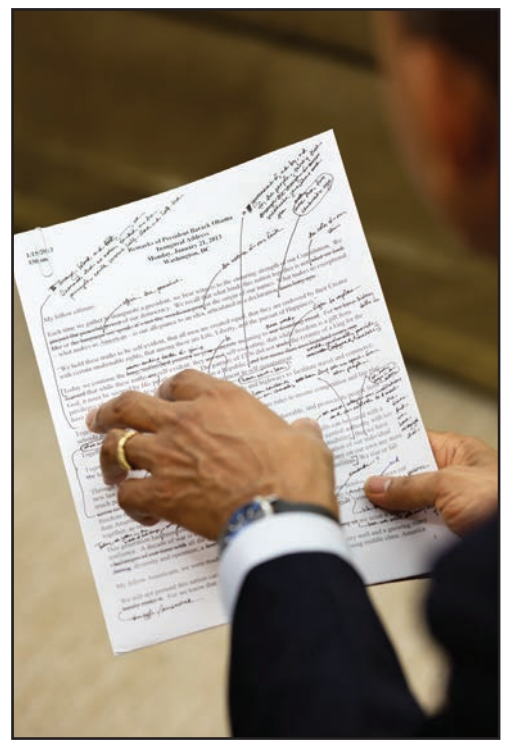
I have watched enough video of DJs from around the country to know that sometimes their overall piece of interaction isn't bad, it's just off because they didn't understand how to bring life to it from proper pacing. I mentioned this in previous articles here that all the pieces of interaction go together. You see if you haven't practiced (The Hands) a piece of interaction, and gotten it down so well that it become second nature, well then your Brain doesn't have time enough to think about something like this.

I'll use myself as an example. Two years ago I started performing ceremonies. I have now done about 16 of them. Last week I had another DJ with me and afterward she did a review telling me that what I said was great, but my pacing at places was just a bit off. Something that could have and should have been extraordinary was just good, because I didn't nail the pacing. Love Stories and enhanced grand march entrances are easy places to point out faulting breathing, but it happen elsewhere as well.

So how do you fix it? Well first off you have to master the other pieces of the Anatomy of Interaction. We talked about it in both The Hands and The Lips that scoring copy and practice are vital. Scoring copy is when you read something that you are going to be performing live. You make marks on the paper that indicate inflection and breathing spots. There are places on the web that you can find different methods of marking your copy, but I found making my own system works just as well.

A note about practice; Please, I beg you to practice by making a fool of yourself. I mean do it just like you would at a show, saying everything out loud. Saying it in your head versus out loud defeats the purpose of breathing. Your head is much faster. Then also practice it in what I like to call 'over the top' mode. Over the top is when you push yourself to places you wouldn't normally take yourself to. It is harder to take something to a place if you haven't already been there. Read a piece of copy 10-15 times, completely different each time, then start to pull it back. Read it in front of your family and friends. And finally, read it at the venue where you are going to be performing. Each hall has a slightly different feel to it which can affect the outcome.

I'll be honest, this is the most difficult part of the Anatomy to get down. Practice will only take you so far. It will get you in the ballpark, but it might not knock it home. Live performance is a must here, which brings me to the greatest tool you can ever have; video. Some people take years to master proper breathing techniques, but those that want to accelerate this must take and watch video.



The video doesn't lie. I suggest at first taking a few days off in between your performances and watching the video so that you can clear your head and be objective. You can watch the video for a number of reasons, but I would pick one thing to work on at a time, in this case breathing. Take notes, and re-watch it again just to see if you missed anything. Personally, this is my least favorite thing to do, but every time I do it I learn things there are no way to catch live.

Finally, after you have been able to handle critiquing yourself, ask another DJ to watch it with you. And eventually have DJs come and shadow (ride along) your shows. I personally do this 2 times a year, and it is worth its weight in gold when all is said and done.

Although nothing beats experience when it comes to proper Lung use, you can speed that process us. This is the step a true professional NEEDS to take, meaning they desire that growth that elevates their game. If we as an industry want to be looked at as professionals, then we need to act like professionals.

Good Luck and Great Shows!

Dean Carlson can be reached at deancarlson@discjockeynews.com.

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Always Be Closing

By Carr Hagerman

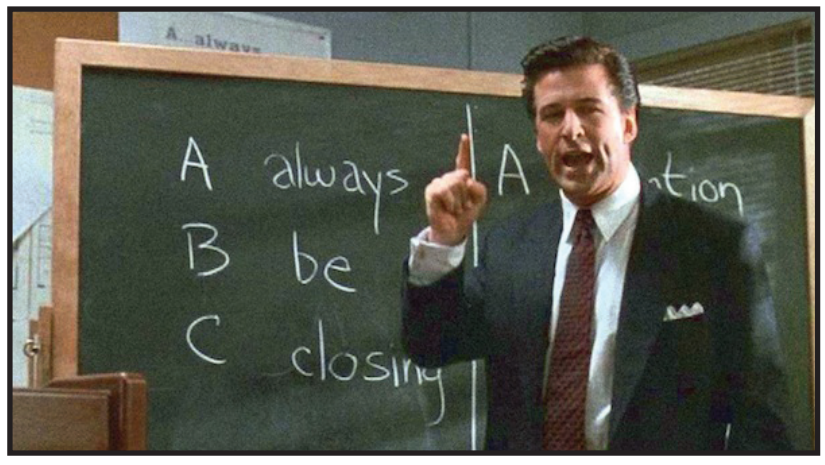
In the classic 1993 movie "Glengarry Glenross" *NSFW (Based on the award winning stage play by David Mamet) Alex Baldwin plays a sales director who, in one scene, verbally assaults a group of losing salesmen with threats and intimidation if they don't close more sales. In the scene, as it thunders and rains outside, Baldwin points to a chalk board with an "A.B.C." rule for selling success. He barks,

"A = ALWAYS. B = BE. C=Closing! ALWAYS BE CLOSING"

It is a blistering and painful satire about ethics and business and how far these men will go to make their numbers. Most important is the always be closing.

Is selling just a game of numbers? The more prospects you have, calls you make, the more presentations you give, the more likely you are to sell. Once you get it down, script the process, fill the pipeline with clients, get them in the funnel and sell even more! Do this and, we've been told, our roads will be paved with gold. Go get em tigers!

We believe the most productive way to sell to another isn't by seeing them as a pawn to pitch. We're pretty certain one reason so many folks hold sales people in such low regard is because of this often false and sometimes inauthentic approach with clients. Imagine the response if a sales person told clients "hey, look, I need to close this deal today to make my numbers this month" or, "I'll win the monthly contest if I can just pop this sale!" When there is an a myopic internal push to close more clients and to lead with numbers first, we risk turning clients into props, playing pieces to move along our board towards close, close, close. No wonder so many people find professional selling distasteful!



The problem with close, close, close, is that you don't really make anyone a true fan, a brand evangelist or an inspired believer. What you end up with is someone who signed a contract, the weakest form of selling. You may make your monthly nut, but you'll exhaust yourself trying to juice up again, and again, as you hunt for another person to pattern, script, then close. It's a recipe for burnout.

In order to maintain your personal energy you need to maintain a clear conduit to your clients, a conduit that isn't clogged with manipulative mumbo-jumbo selling tactics. You cannot "establish a rapport with key phrases" as one popular sale program suggests, and have your relationship with clients be real. A real rapport is the result of an actual conversation, one driven by mutual interests, trust and respect. If you can't establish a rapport naturally, using your own real questions and self empowered curiosity perhaps you're in the wrong business!

We understand the necessity for goals and that many a good sales professional needs to make goal to keep the mothership operating. But instead of spending time and investing money in training program learning shortcuts or put ons, we believe the best way to close more sales is to engage three simple elements. Question. Conversation. Connection.

Question. The question is a centerpiece of the Top Performer sales training, but the most important question isn't those designed to "expose objections" as many sales programs do. We approach the question as a way of finding a common connection, something that unifies ourselves with our clients. It could be something as simple as a common interest in hobbies, the love of dogs or cats, the city where they grew up in, anything where you find a common interest. The most important thing to remember is that your questions have to come out of your own curiosity, not out of some processed approach to gaining confidence. Ask them because you want to know!

Questions keep the conduit open, and as we build connection the answers just lead to more questions. The goal is not to get answers as much as it is to ask more questions. Interest and curiosity are the oxygens for connection, and when it comes out of a genuine interest, clients feel it.

Conversation. Conversation is the ongoing relationship with a client that includes mutual interests, trust and empathy.

Connection. A connection is a coherence, a cleaving together of ourselves with these other people. A true, wholehearted and friendly connection is the gold of your future. It means the relationship is about a potential sale, but a mutuality of interests. Your clients become your friends, your partners, and as such you take every pain to cultivate that connection. You'll record, recall and remember who they are, what they do, what they love and where they live. That is the connection that counts

Alex Baldwin's character was wrong; it's not "ALWAYS BE CLOSING", it's always be connecting.

Carr Hagerman is the author of "Top Performer: A Bold Approach To Sales And Service." (Hyperion). You can contact Carr at: carrhagerman@discjockeynews.com Or visit his website at http://www.carrhagerman.com

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Excitement Is Around The Corner In Las Vegas!

By Jeremy Brech

I have been so torn on what to write about. So many ideas have been running through my mind. Do I follow up the article from Mike Walter last month? Do I talk about my experience from DJ Expo 2014? What about something that I have been dying to write about named, "What is your Façade?" Well it all comes down to this; Las Vegas DJ Show! I am so thrilled for September because the Las Vegas DJ Show is hitting Vegas hard. Even though September is extremely busy for us in the Midwest, this show is a great break and I feel does come at the right time. It is great to visit with everyone as we are in the peaks of seasons as well as re-motivate as we finish up the fall and winter season. So what am I excited about at Las Vegas DJ Show this year?

5. Meeting new people that I haven't met yet. LVDJS is growing in leaps and bounds, and it is exciting to see the show grow and inspire. To network with great entertainers I haven't met yet or to visit with people just getting into the business is so awesome. I don't ridicule anyone for where they are at in their business because we have all been there. I remember when I just started out, and now I look back and wish that I would have found these conferences back then. Last year I met so many new entertainers from across the world and I know many of them came away from the show with more energy and drive. I am also excited to see great friends from around the world and catch up with everyone!!

4. The content at the LVDJS is so good. Last year I was personally inspired by Mitch Taylor, Peter Merry, Liz Daily, Mike Anderson, and so many more. I remember taking so many notes that I am still trying to incorporate some of the details into my business. There are so many great seminars going on at this conference that I have to bring an employee with me so we can take it all in. The best thing is the content is so rich. But wait, there is more!

3. Premium Content brings another level of learning. Most premium content is workshop based or hands-on. They also bring a deeper level of learning. As you may have read last week I am a huge believer in higher education. I would encourage you to check yourself into one of these premium content workshops, if there are any still available. I know some people are wondering why you would have to pay for premium content. Well, you are only paying $49 for the show and the show producers are providing you great content to start. If there wasn't a limit to attendance and a cost for the premium content, they wouldn't be able to focus or take the time to assist the attendees. I am excited to be attending Mitch Taylor's "Sales Consultations" workshop as well as Mike Walter's "Advanced Ops Training for Multi-Op Owners". I wish I could hit up Larry Williams' "Rehearsal Dinner Revenue", but obviously I am only one person.

2. As you may have heard or seen the WED Guild® is going through a lot of changes which will improve the industry and the WED Guild®. The ADJA, the show producers for the Las Vegas DJ Show has acquired the guild and is going to allow a strong structure and presence across the country and the globe. For everyone to understand the benefits and changes for the WED Guild® I will personally be presenting at the WED Guild® open house. We first want to show you another level of education and how it can assist you in your WED Guild® application. Then we will be "showing off" the reasons for everyone to consider the WED Guild® application and how it will take your business and your performance to a higher level. We will provide some time for Q and A, and last but not least we want to inspire and shake your hand to help you feel welcomed as we assist you in your journey to become a Wedding Entertainment Director®. Oh yeah, and join us for dinner Tuesday night at the Hard Rock Café. Find me for details.

1. Last but not least, I have always loved inspiring others when it comes to their business, their performance, and their creativity. I am very excited to be hosting my first workshop, a hands-on experience, to teach people and inspire them to take their events to the next level. I have been presenting seminars regarding lighting design for a couple years now. People always tell me how inspiring my seminars are, but now they get to inspire themselves. Jamie Bodie and I will be working with some of the newest technology from Chauvet DJ. We will be teaching users how to program to a higher level as well as create an experience like none other. Again, we are there to help individuals inspire themselves. We will be working on a small portion of our 2 day workshop that we will be teaching down the road. We will teach you the design properties to create unbelievable events and with only a few seats left, we want to see you get inspired! If there are any tickets left when you read this get signed up at www.thelasvegasdjshow.com. See you in Vegas!

Jeremy Brech is Owner/Entertainer/Lighting Designer of DJ Jer Events and Lighting Design, and WED TM Member. Jeremy can be reached at: jeremybrech@discjockeynews.com.

Are Ethics Important?

By Ed Spencer

Expanding on last month's article where a wedding professional came begging for help with a same sex wedding just days beforehand, we're going to explore some additional things that have happened that should give everyone some food for thought.

Shortly after this happened, a groom trying to help his overwhelmed bride, sent out an email to a group of photographers to see if any of them were available for his wedding date, a little over 6 weeks out. Unfortunately, he sent his email to everyone, with them all CC'd - so they could all see that it was sent to a group of photographers. The same wedding professionals in this group started to berate the groom for planning so late and thinking he could actually get a photographer 6 weeks out. I found these comments shocking considering just a week or so before they had suggested that wedding professionals step up and help someone who didn't realize it was even a same sex wedding until days before. How can we expect a groom to know better when wedding professionals don't behave any better?

This counterproductive behavior, showcasing a split in the standards, was shocking to say the least, and the behavior caused my own opinions of these professionals to drop significantly. Which brings us to another point - what we say and do - outside of our performance and business can have wide-reaching impacts on our business, relationships and more. Not just in the case above, but in a case of something that came to light just last night.

You see, another local wedding professional was arrested for allegedly soliciting a prostitute - and that information, including their picture was given a lot of press in the local paper, along with their website, as part of a current 'sting' operation by the local police department. What may or may not have been a single lapse of judgement for this person is going to have far reaching implications, particularly if he's actually convicted of this crime. For example; beyond the expected impact on his marriage, children, friends and family, his business may be impacted as well. If convicted, this person will likely no longer clear the background check for schools, since conviction of this crime is sufficient to disqualify them. This means that potentially any school event that requires a badge to perform is no longer a possibility for this person.

It means that his posting of scripture and other uplifting materials to his own facebook page calls not only his own faith into question, but that of his church. And what of other wedding professionals? If you have been recommending this person, does it call your own behavior and ethics into question? What about any brides that have booked him, particularly those who may be extremely conservative - how do you think they may feel about this? And what about his employees? Do you think they may have an issue? What if his conviction causes a drop in business that impacts their own income? And even more importantly, what if you shared office space with this person and his business? Does that impact your business and bottom line through guilt by association?

It's become increasingly important to keep in mind not only the standards we hold for ourselves, but also to carefully select your friends and professional colleagues. As much as many may wish otherwise, if someone you recommend has an alleged lapse of judgement it can have a negative impact on your business when your own ethics and behavior are now called into question.

We, as professionals, have to be careful who we network, recommend, learn, grow and share with as they are a reflection of us and our business. We must be mindful of our behavior and to keep in mind that even a momentary lapse in judgement can have far reaching implications for not only ourselves, but for many others. Choose your online behavior and words carefully, as the minute you share with even one other person the likelihood of that information being 'leaked' goes up significantly. If that closed or secret group has 11,000 other members, even if a number of them are blocked, what you say can, and likely will, reach others.

Mark Ferrell once said in a workshop, "Ethics is what you do when no one is watching." The problem is, if you're active online, and with the modern proliferation of cell phones and other recording devices, someone is always watching. Be careful out there…your business might just depend on it.

Ed Spencer can be reached at" edspencer@discjockeynews.com.

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The Way I See It: We've Got You Covered

By Michael J. Lenstra

It was Saturday, July 26. I was in the middle of setting up for my wedding when I got the call.

"Mike, this is Tom. Hey, we have an emergency here. Bob had a heart attack setting up his stuff. It doesn't look good, Mike."

After a moment of stunned silence I finally replied, "I'll be right there." I grabbed my laptop bag, abandoned my cart in the hallway of the banquet facility, and rushed out the door.

Bob and I go way back. He actually was the first DJ who took me out on gigs when I started working for a multi-op back in 1991. After a few years it was apparent that, because technology was changing and the owner had no desire to change with it, the company was not going to be around much longer. At that point I decided to branch out on my own. Bob moved out of the area for awhile, and when he returned a few years later I asked him if he would like to join me in my company. Years later we both decided it was time to tackle this profession as a full time occupation: I decided to focus on weddings. Bob decided that he really wanted to pursue other entertainment opportunities such as kids' events and trivia programs. So even though we both technically own our own separate companies I still subcontract with Bob for nearly two dozen weddings a year and he has me fill in for him whenever he double books or is unavailable for his events.

On that fateful Saturday he was not working for me but doing a company picnic in a local park. As I raced to the park I thought of a lunch Bob and I had just two days earlier. After meeting with a wedding couple, we went to an Italian fast-food place. Bob seemed tired. He did not seem to focus well while we were meeting with the couple. At the time I wondered if he had just woken up from a nap; looking back, though, I wonder if that was a sign.

When I arrived at the park I got all of the details. Bob had woken up that day not feeling well and called one of our other associates, Steve, to see if he could cover for him. Although he was not scheduled for anything, Steve was actually attending a wedding out of town with his wife. Bob's wife then offered to help him for the day. Just after arriving at the park and retrieving most of the equipment from his vehicle, Bob was stricken.

Tom, the man who called me, owns an inflatables business and we work with him several times a year. He assured me that the company that was hosting the picnic understood the situation and was not looking for someone to come in and entertain the kids for the day, so that was covered. The next order of business was deciding what to do with Bob's equipment, so I loaded it into my truck, took it back to my home, and then returned to the banquet hall to finish setting up for my wedding. I then called other people that we work with and let them know the situation. We all spent that night checking for text messages and watching Facebook for any updates. He was in critical condition, unable to breathe on his own and hooked up to a heart pump. But, according to the family members at the hospital, doctors said that he was stable. I was certain when I heard that key word—stable—that he was going to be okay.

The next day we went into recovery mode ourselves. We had talked about situations like this before and knew what we had to do. I had set up a wedding consultation for Bob that afternoon, so I rearranged my schedule and met with the couple myself. Immediately after that Steve and I met at Bob's house, spoke with his son for a few moments, and then found his date book and began making plans to cover his events. He had a couple of trivia programs in the coming week that Steve could do and I had some trivia rounds from a couple of years ago that I could dust off and supply him with. Later that evening I pulled up my own company schedule and began making calls to cover the weddings that I had Bob scheduled for, through October. In 24 hours everything was covered with the generosity of my other associates and other DJs that I know well in the area. The next day Bob was taken off the ventilator and heart pump and was back to breathing on his own again. Two days later I stopped in to see him before I went on a family vacation. He seemed weak but was sitting up in a chair and eating some lunch.

The moral of the story to all of this is: have a back-up plan. We did, and not a single event or appointment was missed. But if you are going to be in this business long enough things will happen. It may be a piece of equipment that falls on you. It may be a vehicle mishap. It may be something as nearly tragic as what happened to us that Saturday.

Start making your list. Do you carry back-up equipment? Is it on-site with you? What about liability insurance in the event that your speaker pole may suddenly fail and crash down on someone at one of your bar mitzvahs, school dances, or weddings? Do you carry disability insurance in case you're laid up for awhile? Even though you may have someone who can do your events in case you become ill or injured, you still need to pay that person. Can you survive without the income? Do you network with anyone who can provide you with a substitute on a moment's notice should a family emergency pop up? Do you have a second copy of all of your music? Do you burn a CD or have a back-up hard drive with all of those special moment songs on it? What about something as simple as knowing where your spare tire is and how to change it? Do you allow yourself extra time when traveling to your parties?

The way I see it is basically Bob died in the park that day, but it was his good fortune that his wife came along with him. You see, she knew CPR and with the assistance of a bystander who did as well, they kept Bob alive just enough until the medical professionals arrived. One of the paramedics told Tom that, without their intervention, chances of his survival would have been very, very slim. He was also fortunate–and had the foresight–to have someone ready to step in for him in a matter of hours.

Just short of four weeks after his heart attack Bob was back behind the microphone to a cheering crowd of regulars at one of his weekly trivia events. I went along to set up and take down the equipment and correct the answer sheets. He still tires easily but is getting stronger every day. It may be awhile before I ask him to go stand at someone's wedding for six hours, but thankfully that day is coming again.

Until next month,

~ Mike ~

Michael J. Lenstra is a 20-plus-year veteran of the Mobile Disc Jockey Industry, a full-time entertainer, and owner of Alexxus Entertainment in Dubuque, IA. He can be reached at mikelenstra@discjockeynews.com

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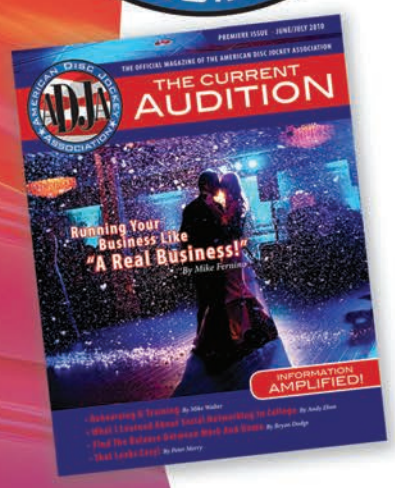

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The Referral Coach: How To Ask For A Referral

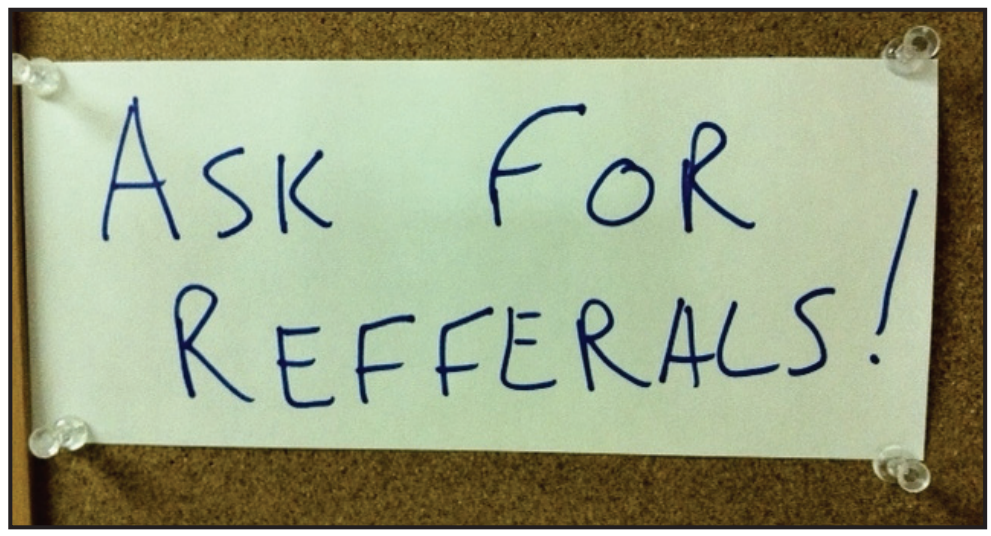
By Matt Anderson

When I first started networking for business in 2002, I had no idea what I was doing. My only goal was to pounce on the first person I talked to and explain why they had a problem and needed to sit down with me for a complimentary coaching session! I wish I was exaggerating about my behaviour. It makes me squirm just to think about it. I was so disingenuous and desperate.

When I was at weekly leads group meetings, I would pretend to ask for introductions to people outside the group. But I was so shortsighted about business relationships that I would simply target every person in the room. I could not see past them. I didn't understand that this made people defensive. I didn't understand that people who like you will open doors for you and they don't all have to be clients of yours. I didn't understand how to ask for a referral. Since those painful days, I've learned that there is one way to think and two ways to ask:

1. The one way to think about asking for referrals: Believe that your ask benefits and serves others

When I asked for referrals in the early days, my ask was all about ME and my needs. My ask was a cry for help based on a growing credit card debt. It never occurred to me that most people referred business not because they wanted ME to do well (although I'm not saying such people don't exist) but because they thought it would benefit someone they cared about. It took me years to realise that most people refer because like to help people who are important in their world. And it makes them feel good to help others.



Let me speed up your learning curve. Forget about yourself. The world does not care whether your business succeeds or fails. So use your goals as a driver to take action. Remember this first: you ask because your work serves other people.

This is my first point because congruent communication is far more than just words (even though that's what you're reading this for!) You cannot fake genuinely caring about others – not for very long anyway.

Remind yourself until it's hard-wired in your brain:

"I am going to ask because what I do truly serves other people. I believe I can help them too."

2. The two ways to ask for a referral. The Direct Ask and the Advice Seeking Ask.

The Direct Ask

Get straight to the point. You do this with people where you feel comfortable being so, well, direct: good friends, favourite clients, top centres of influence, and people who communicate in a very direct way (straight-shooters). Also use this with people who are indecisive.

Example 1: "Last time we met you mentioned that you had four pharmacists who are clients of yours. Can you introduce me to them?"

Example 2: "How about you invite your friend Sophie to (name of her favourite restaurant) for lunch so we can meet each other?"

Example 3: "I'd love to talk to Nigel. If you could shoot him an email and see if he'd be open to hearing from me, that would be great."

The Advice Seeking Ask.

You ask this way when you don't know the other person quite so well or if you are less sure what the best way to be introduced will be. This approach can also be more respectful so is good for people higher up in companies or organisations. It works better for people with big egos too (even though everyone loves to give advice)! Listen to your gut on this. If the direct approach feels too blunt, use this approach.

Example 1: "Last time we met you mentioned that you had four pharmacists who are clients of yours. What would be the best way to find out if they would be open to hearing from me?"

Example 2: "In terms of perhaps helping your friend Sophie, how would you be most comfortable introducing me?"

Example 3: "Nigel sounds like a great guy. How would you suggest I reach out to him?"

Customise the wording above so that it sounds like something you would say. Practice the wording. After that you will learn quickly which approach is better in different situations.

Your goal is to help as many people as you can so the more effectively you ask – and the more you ask – the better your results. Please – go out and make a difference. If not you, then who? If not now, when?

Thanks for reading this. If you found ANY value from this, please share this with the top people in your network.

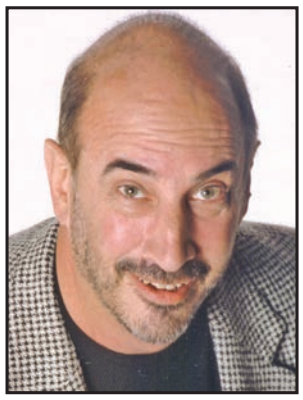
Matt Anderson is the author of 'Fearless Referrals' at: http://www.http://www.thereferralauthority.com or at: Matt.Anderson.intl@gmail.com

The NEW TRUTH About Closing The Sale

By Jeffrey Gitomer

Every salesperson is looking for the fastest way, the best way, and the easiest way to "close" a sale.

More than human nature, for salespeople, closing the sale is both a desire and a need. And the results are totally measurable. Either you win, or you lose. There is no second place in sales.



Many people think that "closing the sale" is the fulcrum point of the process. All of those people are wrong. Closing the sale begins when the sales presentation begins.

A sale is not "closed." A sale is earned.

In my career I have learned two powerful words that complete the selling process. They allow me to complete the sale without a feeling of discomfort or hesitancy. When it's time to deliver those words, I know in my heart of hearts the sale is mine.

The two words are: fair enough, and they are delivered to the prospect in the form of a question. "Fair enough?"

"Fair enough" are the most powerful words to affirm the prospect's intention to buy. You may be erroneously referring to the prospect saying "yes" as "closing a sale." Not good.

"Fair enough" asks for a commitment and validates the value and the fairness of your offer. If your offer is valuable, or perceived as valuable by the prospect, then the words "fair enough" will always be followed by the prospect's affirmative answer. And vice-versa.

The words "Fair enough" are also a self-test. Do you perceive that your offer is so valuable, that when you ask the prospect, "Is that fair enough?" you know in your mind and in your heart that in fact it IS fair enough. Always ask yourself the "fair enough" question BEFORE you give a sales presentation. If you can answer "yes" to your own offer, it's likely the prospect will answer "yes" as well.

The words "fair enough" ask for a "yes" and a confirmation to move forward. They are direct, completely understandable, and are non-manipulative. They don't contain the phrases, "Can you see any reason not to move forward?" or worse, "Is there any reason you could not do this today?" Those are old-world, BS sales expressions of the worst order.

"Fair enough" is pointed, powerful, and positive. And you don't have to wait until the end of your presentation to ask. You can slip it in once or twice as you're presenting to make certain you and the prospect are in agreement and moving forward.

"Fair enough" gives you a transition from your presentation to earning the business.

THINK ABOUT THIS: If you have a bunch of presentation slides and offer to send some kind of proposal at the end of your presentation, you can never use the words "fair enough." Your job as a salesperson is to figure out how your presentation can culminate with the words "fair enough" and that there's enough perceived value in your presentation for the customer to say, "Yes, that's fair enough."

If the prospect says, "That sounds fair enough," or gives you some form of yes, that's not just a purchase, it's also a report card that your offer was perceived as valuable enough to move forward.

START HERE: Review your entire sales presentation and see where the words "fair enough" fit into it. If there's no place for them, then your offer is most likely not fair enough, and will be met with some kind of resistance or stall.

This review process requires work on your part, and may mean you have to revise your sales presentation. This is a good thing! It will most likely mean you have to ask more questions, discover what the buying motive of the prospect is, and make certain you have value offerings that are in harmony with their true needs and motives to buy.

If you are able to give prospects the answers they're hoping for, you will have created the ultimate buying experience. Asking the question "fair enough" will become a joy. A financially rewarding joy.

I just provided you with a major secret of selling – a secret that, when mastered, has the potential to double your sales and increase your earnings significantly. All you have to do is create a strategy to incorporate it. Fair enough?

Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books including The Sales Bible and The Little Red Book of Selling. His forthcoming book, 21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling, will be available September 3rd, and will feature a national public seminar tour. Get the details at www.gitomer.com. It will lead you to more information about training and seminars, or email him personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

5 Signs It's Time To Fire Your Website

By Alan Berg

I recently gave a new presentation at The Special Event Show (TSE) in Nashville titled "5 Signs It's Time To Fire Your Website". It's the sequel, if you will, to my book "If your website was an employee, would you fire it?". As a consultant, website reviews are one of my most requested services, and I don't really want to tell you that it's time to make a new site. I know that it involves stress, time, money and aggravation… and who needs more of that?

When it's time, it's time

However, there comes a time for every site when it's time. For most of us, that time comes sooner than we'd like. I recently launched my new site after 2 1/2 years with the old one. Now, that may not seem like a long time for the old site, but there were some things that made me know it was time. Those things, at least for me, weren't that it was outdated or non-functional. Rather, for me the signs were that my old site wasn't designed for e-commerce. When I first launched it, in March 2011, I only had one book. As I developed more products, DVDs, Audio CDs, ebooks, Spanish-language books and MP3s, it became clear that I was outgrowing the architecture of the site. All products were on one, long (and getting longer) page. I wouldn't want to keep scrolling down, down, down to get to the other products, so I knew none of you would either.

That was the first sign

The next was that more of you were visiting my site via mobile devices. As of this writing 24% of my new site's traffic is through mobile. 73% of that traffic is specifically through iPads and iPhones. While I only had one Flash element on my old site (two video testimonials), those are not visible on Apple phones and tablets. I know that percentage is only going to grow, so it was time to act.

Should I stay or should I go?

So, when is it time to call it day on your current site? For most of you the clock is either ticking, or the time has already passed. You can't make a new site in a day… at least not a good one. You should start planning at least 6 months in advance. In my presentation at TSE I gave my 5 Signs It's Time To Fire Your Website. I'm going to list them here, along with a couple of bonuses.

1. You made your website yourself… and it looks like it. I don't care if you make it yourself. It just shouldn't look like you did.

2. The design is obviously outdated (narrow, dark, frames and borders on everything). If it's more than 3 years old, it's probably getting dated, every day.

3. Your website doesn't match your current branding. When you update one part of your branding, you have to update them all.

4. It's not mobile-friendly. See above and find out how much of your traffic is coming through mobile devices. In the presentation I go into detail about two different mobile strategies.

5. You're getting traffic, but not inquiries. Conversion of the traffic you're already getting is key to improving your current, or a new site.

Two Bonuses:

6. If there's only one person, or company, that can manage your site, you need to think about what would happen if they went away. Your site is too important to have only one person, or company that knows how to manage or maintain it. If you don't have access to the coding, backend and hosting, that's a problem waiting to happen.

7. If your current site is costing you more in lost business, than a new site would cost to make… then you're losing money every day.

In my presentation I also highlighted 5 Ways to Retrain Your Current Site to perform better, 6 Things You Should Remove from your current site and 6 Things You Should Add to your current site. If you'd like to hear the entire presentation, theMP3 audio is in my shop, on sale for the next couple of weeks only. Click here to hear it, as well as many other actionable presentations on MP3 Audio, DVD, book and CD.

If you're like the people who attended, you'll be making quick and easy changes to your current site, right away… whether or not you're working on a new site. And don't worry, any updates you make to your current site will only help you when you decide to move on to a new site.

Alan Berg has been called "North America's Leading Expert and Speaker on the Business of Weddings and Events". Find out more about his speaking, website reviews, consulting, books, DVDs and audio presentations at http://www.AlanBerg.com - email or call Alan, 732.422.6362

A.D.J.A Acquires WED Guild®

The WED Guild® is proud of its achievements and excited about the new focus and energy. If you have not heard, the American Disc Jockey Association has acquired the Wedding Entertainment Director's® Guild in July of 2014. You have to look at the WED Guild's past to really understand its' future. The trademark for the WED Guild® was obtained about two years ago under the direction of Past President Liz Daily. This allowed stronger branding and separation from people using Wedding Entertainment Director as play-on words. The WED Guild was created by Peter Merry, the author of, "The Best Wedding Reception… Ever!" (TBWRE) The beauty behind the book is it is written for brides, but is also great material for DJs. As we know, the things DJs do for a wedding are either going to make it the worst or the best. You also might have noticed that "TBWRE" is focused on experiences and moments created by a large amount of WEDs®. So what is the Guild going to do for you?

With the new merger through the ADJA it will give great opportunity for the WED guild® to be present at more national wedding conferences. Before, the WED Guild® didn't have the manpower or the dollars to have a booth at large conventions or tradeshows. Wedding Entertainment Director® and DJN writer, Mitch Taylor says, "The ADJA acquisition of the WED Guild® is a major step forward in branding and marketing for all Wedding Entertainment Directors® and inspiring WED's everywhere. WED is the highest level achieved in our industry, and the ADJA will only help us to further that brand." Photographers, Venues, etc will understand the importance of having a WED Guild member to work with. The new energy in leadership is going give the WED Guild® a breath of fresh air. Wedding Entertainment Director Jeremy Brech says, "I am excited help the WED Guild® move to the next level. The WED Guild® is about an industry and we are going to eliminate previous perceptions. We want to assist others in improving what they do for their clients and make them the best at what they do. Every entertainer is different and we aren't looking to make carbon copies, just acknowledge an entertainer who can create a unique experience and create results." The WED Guild® will allow you to brand and separate yourself in your own market, when you get that question; "what separates you from other DJs?"

So is the WED Guild® easier now? Only if you allow it to be. The application for the WED Guild® isn't changing. The WED Guild® is still making everyone earn and prove themselves, but they are providing a streamlined process and a large support group. The application isn't as hard as you think. You have already completed all the tasks. Just compile your information in the form of the application requirements. WED Guild® and DJN writer, Glenn Mackay states, "For me, the journey to becoming a Wedding Entertainment Director® was one of examination and growth for my business. It forced me to examine every area of my business and ensure my performance was at its best, knowing that it would be examined by a group of people who I really look up to and understand me as an entertainer. Now I'm part of an amazing network of high quality wedding entertainers who are always happy to help or lend advice. It's one of the best things I ever did for my DJ business" The support groups and learning opportunities will be shared with potential WED Guild® members to assist them. The support from WED Guild® members will help inspire you to improve what you do and the results you create. This allows you to make simple changes that can take your performance to a higher level and achieve the WED Guild® status.

Do brides really care? Yes and No. A bride and groom will only care if you allow them to. Anything can be a marketing tool, but only a few can use the power of the WED Guild®. WED Guild Member and DJN writer, Ron Ruth states, "There is a certain honor going through the process, going in front of a committee of your peers, and to be acknowledged by your peers. Once you have achieved this level anything less than exceptional is unacceptable. It changes the public perception of what a DJ does and what a DJ is worth. Most importantly it allows couples to enjoy extraordinary results." Not only will it improve results, but it will allow you to never stop learning from other WED Guild® members through creative networking. Are you ready to take the next step?

Top 30 Music Charts

By www.PrimeCutsMusic.com

Pop

1	Sam Smith	Stay With Me
2	Magic!	Rude
3	Charli XCX	Boom Clap
4	Disclosure	Latch
5	Maroon 5	Maps
6	Nico & Vinz	Am I Wrong
7	Demi Lovato	Really Don't Care
8	Ariana Grande	Break Free
9	Clean Bandit	Rather Be
10	Sia	Chandelier
11	Meghan Trainor	All About That Bass
12	Ariana Grande	Problem
13	Enrique Iglesias	Bailando
14	Iggy Azalea	Black Widow
15	Taylor Swift	Shake It Off
16	Jessie J, A. Grande, Nicki M.	Bang Bang
17	Kiesza	Hideaway
18	Becky G	Shower
19	OneRepublic	Love Runs Out
20	5 Seconds Of Summer	Amnesia
21	Echosmith	Cool Kids
22	Jeremih	Don't Tell 'Em
23	Ed Sheeran	Don't
24	Katy Perry	This Is How We Do
25	Rita Ora	I Will Never Let You Down
26	Tove Lo	Habits (Stay High)
27	Ingrid Michaelson	Girls Chase Boys
28	Coldplay	A Sky Full Of Stars
29	Tinashe	2 On
30	Florida-Georgia Line	This Is How We Roll

Country

1	Dierks Bentley	Drunk On A Plane
2	T. McGraw & F. Hill	Meanwhile Back At Mama's
3	Lady Antebellum	Bartender
4	Kenny Chesney	American Kids
5	Dustin Lynch	Where It's At
6	Cole Swindell	Hope You Get Lonely Tonight
7	Brad Paisley	River Bank
8	Florida-Georgia Line	Dirt
9	Luke Bryan	Roller Coaster
10	Lee Brice	I Don't Dance
11	Chase Rice	Ready Set Roll
12	Jason Aldean	Burnin' It Down
13	Brantley Gilbert	Small Town Throwdown
14	Miranda Lambert	Somethin' Bad
15	Swon Brothers	Later On
16	Eli Young Band	Dust
17	Zac Brown Band	All Right
18	Sam Hunt	Leave The Light On
19	Frankie Ballard	Sunshine & Whiskey
20	Eric Church	Cold One
21	Little Big Town	Day Drinking
22	Big & Rich	Look At You
23	Keith Urban	Somewhere In My Car
24	Parmalee	Close Your Eyes
25	Blake Shelton	Neon Light
26	Rascal Flatts	Payback
27	Maddie & Tae	Girl In A Country Song
28	Scotty McCreery	Feelin' It
29	David Nail	Kiss You Tonight
30	Chase Bryant	Take It On Back

Adult Contempory

1	Sam Smith	Stay With Me
2	Nico & Vinz	Am I Wrong
3	John Legend	All Of Me
4	American Authors	Best Day Of My Life
5	OneRepublic	Counting Stars
6	One Direction	Story Of My Life
7	Magic!	Rude
8	Rixton	Me And My Broken Heart
9	Justin Timberlake	Not A Bad Thing
10	Pharrell Williams	Happy
11	Paramore	Ain't It Fun
12	Maroon 5	Maps
13	Ingrid Michaelson	Girls Chase Boys
14	OneRepublic	Love Runs Out
15	Train	Angel In Blue Jeans
16	Ed Sheeran	Sing
17	Michael Jackson	Love Never Felt So Good
18	Coldplay	A Sky Full Of Stars
19	Ariana Grande	Problem
20	Taylor Swift	Shake It Off
21	Sara Bareilles	I Choose You
22	Colbie Caillat	Try
23	Calvin Harris	Summer
24	Connecting Stars	Stuck
25	Marie Miller	6'2
26	Disclosure	Latch
27	Danny Gokey	Hope In Front Of Me
28	O.A.R.	Peace
29	Sarah McLachlan	In Your Shoes
30	Richard Marx	Whatever We Started

Urban

1	Jeremih	Don't Tell 'Em
2	Schoolboy Q	Studio
3	Lil Wayne	Believe Me
4	Iggy Azalea	Fancy
5	Migos	Fight Night
6	Rich Gang	Lifestyle
7	Chris Brown	Loyal
8	Nicki Minaj	Pills N Potions
9	T.I.	No Mediocre
10	Rich Homie Quan	Walk Thru
11	Rae Sremmurd	No Flex Zone
12	Chris Brown	New Flame
13	Drake	0 to 100/The Catch Up
14	Wiz Khalifa	We Dem Boyz
15	Jeezy	Seen It All
16	Ne-Yo	Money Can't Buy
17	Trey Songz	Smartphones
18	Beyonce	Flawless
19	T.I.	About The Money
20	Mike WiLL Made It	Buy The World
21	Kirko Bangz	Rich
22	Teeflii	24 Hours
23	Usher	Good Kisser
24	Bobby Shmurda	Hot Boy
25	Young Thug	Danny Glover
26	Migos	Handsome And Wealthy
27	Usher	She Came To Give It To You
28	Nicki Minaj	Anaconda
29	Adrian Marcel	2AM
30	DJ Khaled	Hold You Down

Rock

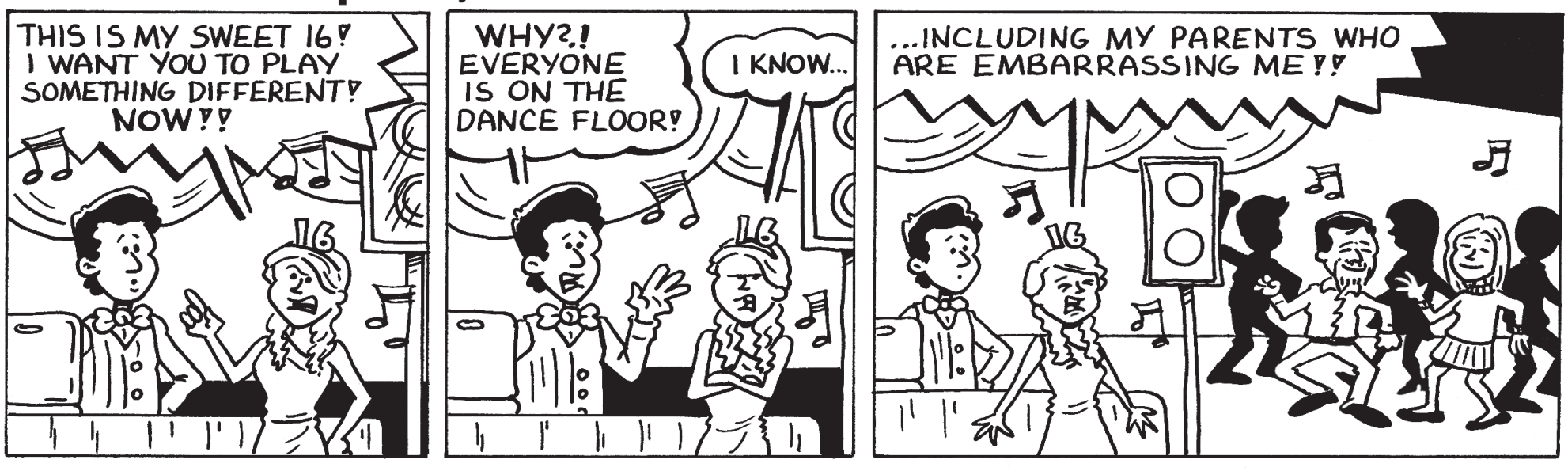
1	Nothing More	This Is The Time (Ballast)
2	Godsmack	1000hp
3	Seether	Words As Weapons
4	Pretty Reckless	Messed Up World
5	Linkin Park	Until It's Gone
6	Rise Against	I Don't Want To Be Here Anymore
7	You Me At Six	Room To Breathe
8	Starset	My Demons
9	Slash	World On Fire
10	We As Human	Take The Bullets Away
11	Chevelle	Hunter Eats Hunter
12	Korn	Hater
13	Weezer	Back To The Shack
14	Theory Of A Deadman	Drown
15	Crobot	Nowhere To Hide
16	Sixx A.M.	Gotta Get Away
17	Nickelback	Edge Of A Revolution
18	Avenged Sevenfold	This Means War
19	Skillet	Rise
20	Royal Blood	Figure It Out
21	Kongos	Come With Me Now
22	Framing Hanley	Criminal
23	Devour The Day	Respect
24	Like A Storm	Love The Way You Hate Me
25	Otherwise	Darker Side Of The Moon
26	Bring Me The Horizon	Can You Feel My Heart
27	Black Keys	Gotta Get Away
28	Islander	Coconut Dracula
29	A Day To Remember	End Of Me
30	Black Label Society	Angel Of Mercy

Alternative

1	Vance Joy	Riptide
2	Big Data	Dangerous
3	Milky Chance	Stolen Dance
4	Dirty Heads	My Sweet Summer
5	Coldplay	A Sky Full Of Stars
6	Weezer	Back To The Shack
7	Black Keys	Fever
8	Alt-J	Left Hand Free
9	Bleachers	I Wanna Get Better
10	Kongos	Come With Me Now
11	Rise Against	I Don't Want To Be Here Anymore
12	Hozier	Take Me To Church
13	J. Roddy Walston	Take It As It Comes
14	Bastille	Flaws
15	Kongos	I'm Only Joking
16	Priory	Weekend
17	Griswolds	Beware The Dog
18	Tove Lo	Habitats (Stay High)
19	Thirty Seconds To Mars	Do Or Die
20	SomeKindaWonderful	Reverse
21	Young The Giant	Mind Over Matter
22	Pretty Reckless	Heaven Knows
23	Meg Myers	Desire
24	Joywave	Tongues
25	Lana Del Rey	West Coast
26	Jack White	Lazaretto
27	Death From Above 1979	Trainwreck 1979
28	Black Keys	Gotta Get Away
29	Seether	Words As Weapons
30	Interpol	All The Rage (Back Home)

A Different Spin by Jason Nocera

www.nichecartoons.com



How To Be Taken Seriously In Sales – Be A Go-To Resource

By Nancy Bleeke

Are you happy with the length of your sales cycle? If you, like countless others, are not, you'll find the following post from Babette Tenhakken includes several tips for you to shorten time as you become a valuable resource to your buyers.

If You Walk Like A Duck, Quack Like A Duck, Are You A Salesperson?

You know that expression: "If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it's a duck." Ever wonder how many of your customers commoditize you under the category of "salesperson" (aka, "duck"?) You know what I'm talking about: you walk and talk like a stereotypic salesperson.

Are you making it easy for prospects and customers to dismiss you? Or not take you seriously? Here are three tips for liberating you from waddling around and prolonging your sales cycle.

Talking the talk and walking the walk involves more than memorizing the latest messaging and sales spiels that corporate sends your way. That's what your customers and prospects are expecting: Duck Talk and Walk. The first person you should read thesemessages to is yourself. If you believe what you are saying to yourself, then you'll deliver this messaging in a credible manner. If you don't believe your company's value proposition, then it's time to have those conversations with your sales manager andmarketing managers so that they are successful in selling you, first and foremost. You never know. You may find allies you thought you never had. They may gain insight from your comments on their work. After all, you are the person in the firing line in front of the customer. Most of the time, the marketing folks aren't. This can be a win-win conversation. Have it.

"We have testimony that you walk like a duck and you quack like a duck. Tell the court—are you a duck?"

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Selling is more than delivering data that you receive from corporate. Take the time to research the research. When we present information to potential customers, much of what we cite are industry studies that either our company or someone else's has sponsored. While the data seems convincing and airtight, it usually supports our company's or product's competitive position in the marketplace. That's what your customers and prospects are expecting from you and your company: Duck Research. What happens when you present your data, and then continue the discussion by saying: "I did some additional research on this topic, just to make sure what I am presenting isn't one-sided. And it is / or isn't. Here's what I found." Now you are an advocate for your customer. Now you are on your way to gaining their trust. Now you are on your way to using the left side of your brain as well. Data is compelling, if you take the time to understand what does, and does not, make sense to your customers.

Think beyond your own sales cycle; put yourself in your customers' shoes. If you want to become that go-to resource for customers and prospects, find out how they position themselves in their respective marketplaces. Perhaps they are doing quite a bit of quacking and waddling themselves and are stuck in their own status quo. The more you can find out about what the status quo looks and sounds like in their organizations, the more easily you can align your products, services, and platforms as tools to move them out of the rut they are in. The solution you propose becomes strategic, rather than tactical. Once you are regarded as a strategic resource, your prospects and customers start taking you seriously. They won't be dismissing you at all, because that is not what they were expecting. There's a big difference between being a strategic resource and being a stereotypic salesperson.

Take a look across your customer base. Identify customers you enjoy working with; they are probably the customers you also do your best work for. These are your A-List Customers. Put these three tips into place with these favored customers. Move them, and yourself, 1 millimeter outside your comfort level, incrementally. Sometimes all it takes is doing something ever so slightly differently. It makes all the difference in the world - and a compelling reason to do business with you.

Take some time to put into action the ideas Babette shares....then let us know if you are quacking all the way to the bank.

Nancy Bleeke, Founder and President, started Sales Pro Insider in 1998 to help companies improve their sales, customer service, coaching, and teamwork results with conversations that count. Her book, Conversations That Sell, was awarded a gold medal for Top Sales & Marketing book in 2013 and is quickly becoming a must-read for sales teams. http://www.salesproinsider.com

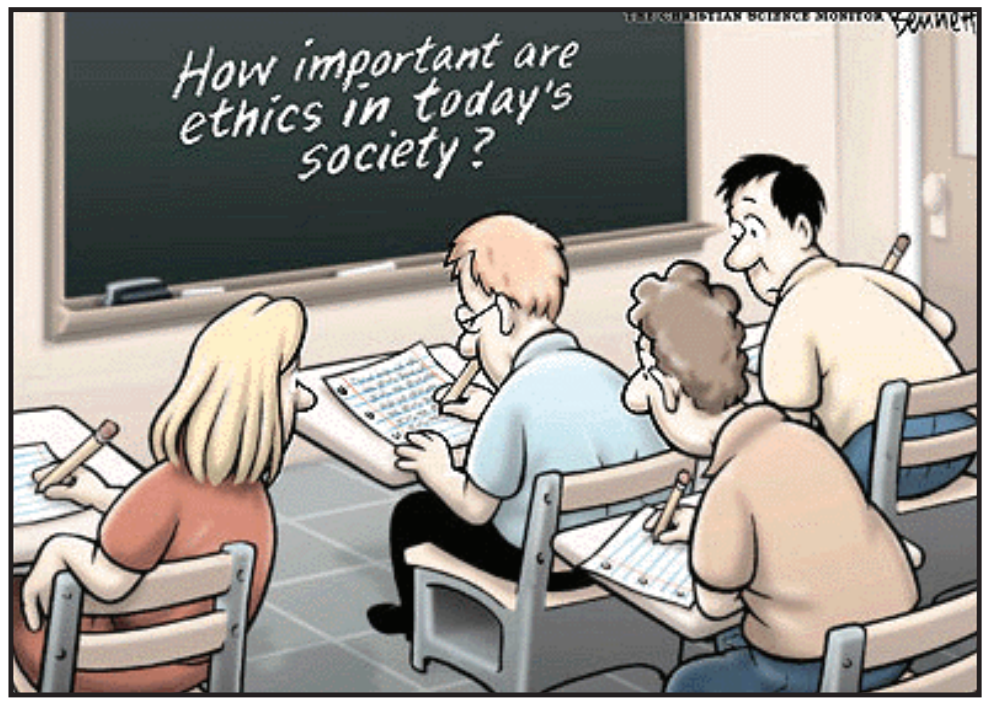
If You Need A Class In Ethics, It's Too Late

By Stevie Ray

I rarely use this forum as an opportunity to respond to readers who disagree with my point of view. I figure if I want to engage in a pissing match, that's what Facebook is for. There was a comment made by a number of people about last month's column, however, that I had to address. If you didn't read my last column, it related to an incident in which a delivery company failed to deliver an appliance by the agreed-upon time. One reader called me a fool in the first place for believing that any delivery service would be on time. In so many words, he claimed that most trade professions are untrustworthy. That sentiment is not only inaccurate it is insulting to the tens of thousands of trade workers in America who bust their backs to get a job done on time and on budget.

The more troubling sentiment came from those who said that I got what I paid for. They claimed that, since I bought the appliance online and saved a lot of money, it was obvious that the appliance company was only able to provide such a discount by using a cut-rate, unreliable delivery company. Some readers called me a fool for expecting anything better. Call me old-fashioned, but I don't believe in the principle that you get what you pay for. I believe you should get what you are promised. In this particular case, I was promised phone calls that weren't made, and a delivery time that wasn't kept. I only complain to companies who promise one thing and deliver another.

I was raised to believe that, in business or one's personal life, if you make a promise you keep it. You aren't allowed to say, "Well, it was a cheap product. What did they expect?" If you aren't happy with an arrangement, you re-negotiate before you make the promise, you don't find ways to short the deal afterwards. This is the reason I think classes in Business Ethics are pointless. Frankly, if someone doesn't know right from wrong; if they aren't willing to do the hard thing because it is the right thing, why would you hire that person in the first place?



I conduct dozens of low- or no-cost workshops for non-profit organizations each year. No matter what the fee is, I show up early, wear a suit and tie, and deliver the best session I can. I don't say, "These guys aren't paying much, where are my jeans and sandals?" And it's not because I am afraid of bad word-of-mouth or a poor evaluation. I give the same effort for a low-cost job as a full-fee client because that is what I promised to do. And it is the right thing to do. I didn't need an ethics class to learn that, I had a mom and dad.

In the movie, K-PAX, the character of Prot claims to be from another planet. A psychiatrist is interviewing Prot to try to find inconsistencies in his story and prove he is actually human. When the subject of crime and punishment arises, Prot says that the planet of K-PAX has no laws; that there is no need for them. When the psychiatrist asks how, without laws, they are able to know right from wrong, Prot says, "Every being in the universe knows right from wrong."

It isn't often you can gain wisdom from a movie (Ghandi notwithstanding), but I agree that everyone, at almost every age, truly knows the right thing to do for any situation. When we hesitate to act, we are not confused about what to do; doing the right thing just seems like such a hassle. I receive a monthly magazine about the speaking profession. One section poses a new ethical question each month; issues like "How would you handle being offered a fee that is higher than what you typically charge for the same service?" Members are invited to chime in with what they would do in that situation. I always find that section useless. Everyone knows the right thing to do—without question—they just find it difficult to do. How often have we adults used the same tactic as children by seeking support for inappropriate decisions? We ask others to see if they have done the same thing. No matter how many people do it, wrong is wrong. If any of my employees excused their poor performance with, "You get what you pay for," there would be serious doubts about their future with my company.

Stevie Ray is a nationally recognized corporate speaker and trainer, helping companies improve communication skills, customer service, leadership, and team management. He can be reached at www.stevierays.org or stevie@stevierays.org.

Recurrent Hits For The Dance Floor for SEPTEMBER 2014

New charts weekly on http://www.discjockeynews.com/weekly-music-charts

Pop Recurrents

1	CALVIN HARRIS	Summer
2	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS	Can't Hold Us f/Ray Dalton
3	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Happy
4	RIXTON	Me And My Broken Heart
5	LORDE	Team
6	ELLIE GOULDING	Burn
7	CAPITAL CITIES	Safe And Sound
8	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Demons
9	DRAKE F/MAJID JORDAN	Hold On We're Going Home
10	AMERICAN AUTHORS	Best Day Of My Life
11	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Mirrors
12	EMINEM	The Monster f/Rihanna
13	PITBULL	Timber f/Ke$ha
14	DJ SNAKE & LIL JON	Turn Down For What
15	IGGY AZALEA	Fancy f/Charli XCX
16	JASON DERULO	Talk Dirty f/2 Chainz
17	JOHN LEGEND	All Of Me
18	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Not A Bad Thing
19	PARAMORE	Ain't It Fun
20	KATY PERRY	Dark Horse f/Juicy J
21	BASTILLE	Pompeii
22	MKTO	Classic
23	ONEREPUBLIC	Counting Stars
24	AVICII	Wake Me Up
25	BRUNO MARS	Locked Out Of Heaven
26	ONE DIRECTION	Story Of My Life
27	DAVID GUETTA	Titanium f/Sia
28	TREY SONGZ	Na Na
29	ICONA POP	I Love It f/Charli XCX
30	SELENA GOMEZ	Come & Get It
31	RIHANNA	Stay f/Mikky Ekko
32	MARTIN GARRIX	Animals
33	CALVIN HARRIS	Sweet Nothing f/Florence Welch
34	BRUNO MARS	Treasure
35	MAROON 5	Love Somebody
36	FUN.	Some Nights
37	CALVIN HARRIS F/ELLIE GOULDING	I Need Your Love
38	ED SHEERAN	Sing
39	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS	Thrift Shop f/Wanz
40	DAFT PUNK	Get Lucky
41	ZEDD	Clarity f/Foxes
42	JAY Z	Holy Grail f/Justin Timberlake
43	LANA DEL REY	Summertime Sadness
44	LORDE	Royals
45	KATY PERRY	Roar
46	SWEDISH HOUSE MAFIA	Don't You Worry Child
47	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Radioactive
48	ROBIN THICKE	Blurred Lines f/Pharrell/T.I.
49	ZEDD	Stay The Night f/H. Williams
50	JASON DERULO	The Other Side

Urban Recurrents

1	TINASHE	2 On f/Schoolboy Q
2	AUGUST ALSINA	I Luv This Sh*t
3	AUGUST ALSINA	Make It Home f/Jeezy
4	YO GOTTI	I Know f/Rich Homie Quan
5	RICH HOMIE QUAN	Type Of Way
6	DRAKE	All Me f/2 Chainz & Big Sean
7	JOHN LEGEND	All Of Me
8	RIHANNA	Pour It Up
9	RICO LOVE	They Don't Know
10	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Happy
11	MIGUEL	Adorn
12	BEYONCE	Drunk In Love f/Jay Z
13	T-PAIN	Up Down (Do This All Day)
14	TREY SONGZ	Na Na
15	CA$H OUT	She Twerkin
16	YOUNG MONEY	Trophies f/Drake
17	BEYONCE	Partition
18	K CAMP	Cut Her Off
19	JHENE AIKO	The Worst
20	FUTURE	Move That Doh f/Pharrell...
21	TY DOLLA $IGN	Paranoid f/B.o.B
22	JAY Z	Part II (On The Run) f/Beyonce
23	KID INK	Show Me f/Chris Brown
24	YG	My Hitta f/Jeezy,RichHomieQuan
25	SEVYN STREETER	It Won't Stop
26	JAY Z	Tom Ford
27	DRAKE	The Language
28	BANDO JONEZ	Sex You
29	YG	Who Do You Love f/Drake
30	WALE	Bad f/Tiara Thomas
31	KENDRICK LAMAR	B**ch, Don't Kill My Vibe
32	LORDE	Royals
33	KENDRICK LAMAR	Swimming Pools (Drank)
34	KENDRICK LAMAR	Poetic Justice f/Drake
35	DJ SNAKE & LIL JON	Turn Down For What
36	FUTURE	I Won f/Kanye West
37	MIGUEL	How Many Drinks? f/K. Lamar
38	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Come Get It Bae
39	M. JACKSON & J. TIMBERLAKE	Love Never Felt So Good
40	K CAMP	Money Baby f/Kwony Cash
41	YOUNG THUG	Stoner
42	CIARA	Body Party
43	J. COLE	Power Trip f/Miguel
44	J. COLE	Crooked Smile f/TLC
45	DRAKE F/MAJID JORDAN	Hold On We're Going Home
46	JAY Z	Holy Grail f/Justin Timberlake
47	ARIANA GRANDE	Problem f/Iggy Azalea
48	A$AP ROCKY	F**kin Problems f/Drake
49	JAY Z	F*ckwithmeyouknowigotit
50	FUTURE	Turn On The Lights

Adult Contempory Recurrents

1	BASTILLE	Pompeii
2	KATY PERRY	Roar
3	ELLIE GOULDING	Burn
4	SARA BAREILLES	Brave
5	LORDE	Royals
6	PASSENGER	Let Her Go
7	LUMINEERS	Ho Hey
8	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Mirrors
9	MUMFORD & SONS	I Will Wait
10	FUN.	Some Nights
11	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Radioactive
12	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Not A Bad Thing
13	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Demons
14	LORDE	Team
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21	AMERICAN AUTHORS	Best Day Of My Life
22	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Happy
23	CAPITAL CITIES	Safe And Sound
24	RIXTON	Me And My Broken Heart
25	BRUNO MARS	Locked Out Of Heaven
26	PINK	Just Give Me A Reason
27	ANNA KENDRICK	Cups (Pitch Perfect's When...
28	PITBULL	Timber f/Ke$ha
29	NEON TREES	Everybody Talks
30	PINK	Blow Me (One Last Kiss)
31	ALEX CLARE	Too Close
32	A GREAT BIG WORLD	Say Something w/C. Aguilera
33	ADELE	Rumour Has It
34	MAROON 5	Daylight
35	IMAGINE DRAGONS	It's Time
36	MAROON 5	One More Night
37	TAYLOR SWIFT	I Knew You Were Trouble
38	ROBIN THICKE	Blurred Lines f/Pharrell/T.I.
39	KELLY CLARKSON	Stronger (What Doesn't Kill ..
40	PHILLIP PHILLIPS	Gone, Gone, Gone
41	PHILLIP PHILLIPS	Home
42	GOTYE	Somebody That I Used To Know
43	OF MONSTERS AND MEN	Little Talks
44	IMAGINE DRAGONS	On Top Of The World
45	DAFT PUNK	Get Lucky
46	MAROON 5	Love Somebody
47	PINK	Try
48	RIHANNA	Stay f/Mikky Ekko
49	O.A.R.	Peace
50	KELLY CLARKSON	Catch My Breath

Optimism Saves The Day

By Harvey Mackay

U.S. President Harry S. Truman once said, "A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties." Which do you think will reach their goals, live a happy life, and achieve their dreams?

Imagine interviewing two people who have identical skills, but one is always grumbling about how unfair life can be, while the other one talks about what wonderful possibilities exist. Who would you want to hire? Whom do you think would do a better job?

Naturally, you would gravitate toward the optimist. If you choose the pessimist, you would be setting yourself up for plenty of aggravation and disappointment, not to mention the negative impact on your staff and customers. Pessimism can bring everyone down, not just the person with the negative attitude.

Pessimism is nothing more than self-sabotage. Expecting only the worst is not being realistic. Realists hope for the best but prepare for the worst. Pessimists can't imagine the best, so only prepare for the worst.

And then if the worst never happens? Pessimists often find the worst possible result simply to prove that their concerns were right.

The question becomes, would you rather be right than happy? That's not being realistic either. That's being self-defeating. Pessimism can rob you of your energy, sap you of your strength, and drain you of your dreams.

Optimism is the remedy.

Optimism doesn't mean pretending life is always wonderful. Optimism means embracing reality. You

accept that there will be bad days, but also good days. When you're grounded in reality, you know where you are and how far you need to go. Once you know how far your goal may be from where you are, optimism can give you the motivation to make plans to get to where you want to go.

Pessimists see life as one problem after another. Optimists see life as one opportunity after another.

How you look at life can drastically affect how much you enjoy your life. Optimists expect the best out of life. If you were not raised with this attitude, take comfort: it can be learned.

Optimism is based on three basic tenets, according to Mary Kay Mueller in her book "Taking Care of Me: The Habits of Happiness":

• Bad things do happen in life, but they are temporary.

• Bad things in life are limited in scope and tend to be small or insignificant.

• People have control over their environments.

Pessimists reverse the tables:

• Good things in life are temporary.

• Good things in life are limited – small or insignificant.

• People have no control over their environments.

Does it make sense that pessimists tend to blame others or circumstances for their failures?

Optimists help create some of the good they come to expect, so they are probably right more than not – and they don't waste time worrying about what they're not right about. Optimism relaxes people. When we're relaxed, there is better blood flow to the brain, which results in more energy and creativity in your life.

Consider how optimism turned this situation around.

Within a seven year time span, a woman's mother died, her husband divorced her, and she found herself living in poverty just one step away from being homeless. In her spare time, she wrote a book that 12 publishers rejected. Finally one publisher accepted her book about a boy named Harry Potter. And then she wrote a few more books, which became blockbuster movies, and even spawned a theme park.

J.K. Rowling was an optimist who's now a billionaire. How far in life would she have gotten by being a pessimist?

There is virtually nothing that you can't do if you set your mind to it. You cannot control events in your life, but you can control how you react.

Do you want to be a pessimist and have no hope for a better future? Or would you rather be an optimist and believe you can achieve a better future?

There once was an old man who had many troubles. No matter what hardship life handed him, he faced each obstacle with a smile and a cheery disposition.

A friend finally asked him how he managed to stay so happy despite his challenges.

The old man quickly answered: "Well, the Good Book often says, 'And it came to pass,' but never once does it say, 'It came to stay.'"

Mackay's Moral: Attitude is the mind's paintbrush – it can color any situation.

Reprinted with permission from nationally syndicated columnist Harvey Mackay, author of the New York Times #1 bestseller "Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive," "We Got Fired!...And It's the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us," and his new book, "The Mackay MBA of Selling in the Real World.

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