

# Monday Morning Motivation 7/18/2011



THE POSITIVE PLACE. SALES MOTIVATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH

## Going around in circles

I've been dealing with Google's new product, Google Circles this week. I'm already on Facebook, and LinkedIn; Circles is yet another way to stay in contact with people. I just killed my Twitter account the other day, after someone hacked into it. Just as well; I think I'd used it three or four times. I've never been much of a tweeter.

So I've got relationships on the brain, and it brings to mind a couple of lessons that we all can learn:

1. Relationships and friendships are important.
2. There's no technological excuse for actually talking with someone, face to face.

To tell you the truth, I could go days without talking with anyone other than co-workers and my family. I doubt I'd notice. I suspect that could carry on for weeks. It's too easy to get into the habit of just doing the communication that you need to do -- just talking with the people who are in your face, so to speak, and leave the others to a less vigorous means of communication.

Sure, Facebook and Twitter and Circles are better than nothing, and in many cases, they're quite a bit better than what existed in our lives before. I'm now in contact with people whom I haven't communicated with in years and years. There are some relationships I have that only exist over email or telephone -- I've never met them, and likely never will.

But when you get right down to it, the relationships that mean the most to me are the ones that I have face to face. The people who I've looked in the eye recently mean more to me than the ones who comment on my posts -- even when I don't talk with them as often as I post something on an electronic feed.

This is something that many businesspeople never quite understand -- they try making sales over the phone, without ever meeting the customer -- or they try to deal with them only over the Internet. Am I more likely to show loyalty to a vendor who I've never dealt with one-to-one, or a vendor who I've only dealt with over a web form?  
In many ways this is one of the great de-personalizations of our modern day world --

sometimes, you really need to speak with a person to do something, and no phone tree will help in such circumstances, no matter how well it's organized.

We're people, and sometimes, we just need to communicate with other people -- and that's a lesson that many banks, credit card companies, cable companies, telephone companies, and other assorted groups have forgotten, to their detriment.

It's the little things that count in such relationships, from the hearty handshake, to the occasional smile to the jar of mints on the desk -- and those little things can be developed into big deals and great business relationships.

However, there's also the flip side of this -- when confronted with organizations which give bad service, I'd usually prefer to just deal with it through an electronic system. In such cases, I judge the company on how good their electronic system replicates the personal touch -- at how well they give information just the same as a human would do in the same case. That's why in most cases, I will go to the self-checkout line at a grocery store -- because I hate to be treated poorly by the clerk. If the clerk was friendly and helpful, I'd avoid the self-checkout line, and have more loyalty to the organization as a result.

In company relationships, though, particularly in bigger companies, we need to develop the personal relationships that give a face to an email address or telephone voice. Those little things make a difference, and turn us into a human being in their eyes, not just an extension on the office phone sheet.

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