

"The Customer Hated the Product, the Home Office Didn't Make a Timely Refund, So I Lost My Distributor. It Looks Like the Company is Ruining My Business. Where Should I Go Next?"

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Training lesson from Tom Big Al Schreiter

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It's weird, but no one ever thinks about it.

I just returned from England where the network marketing community has an unusual and outrageous perspective.

I thought they were absolutely crazy, but . . . I noticed that the network marketing community in the United States has the exact same distorted perspective. Is this a secret insanity virus spreading worldwide?

Networkers everywhere are killing their businesses. And they don't understand why. Imagine investing hundreds or even thousands of hours into your business, and then systematically destroying your business with an incorrect point of view.

First, a little background.

How many hours do you think the average networking leader spends doing the following tasks:

- ◆ Listening to downline personal problems.
- ◆ Listening to downline business problems.
- ◆ Making numerous telephone calls to the home office following up lost shipments or product shortages.
- ◆ Apologizing for incorrect statements made by the upline leaders or home office staff.
- ◆ Playing referee between jealous distributors fighting over a single enrollment.

- ◆ Berating home office staff who don't understand network marketing.
- ◆ Keeping track of all the telephone calls that weren't returned promptly.
- ◆ Worrying about greed destroying certain members of the organization.
- ◆ Groaning about unfair treatment and lack of recognition.
- ◆ Trying to recover business that was stolen by unfair competition.
- ◆ Discussing the company's lack of leadership and responsiveness with other disgruntled sales leaders.

If you add up the hours, it's a 40-hour week!

These activities take **time**. How much time can a leader afford on these non-productive, non-revenue generating activities?

These activities take **physical effort**. Leaders are physically exhausted after marathon telephone conversations with professional victims complaining that the world is against them.

These activities take **psychic effort**. Leaders lose their mental energy fighting these losing battles. After one of these battles, the leader prefers to become comatose and watch television. There is no enthusiasm left for a prospecting campaign.

Who has the problem?

Guess what? The distributor doesn't have the real problem here. **The leaders have the problem!**

The leaders have a wrong perspective or viewpoint.

Here is what the **unsuccessful** leaders **believe**:

In order to be successful in network marketing:

- ◆ 100% of the home office employees must be perfect.
- ◆ 100% of all distributors must be honorable, charitable, problem-free citizens without a touch of greed.

- ◆ 100% of all distributors must never quit.
- ◆ 100% of all telephone calls must be answered the way they want them.
- ◆ 100% of the home office staff should become instantly available when they call.
- ◆ 100% of all upline leaders should be perfect role models who never make a mistake while speaking.
- ◆ Distributors are never selfish.
- ◆ 100% of all decisions must be perfect.
- ◆ 100% of all decisions must work out perfectly in the future.
- ◆ Everything must be perfect, or they'll just complain and destroy their business, and then look for a new venture with the perfect leaders, the perfect home office staff, the perfect compensation plan, the perfect product at the perfect price that satisfies 100% of all people 100% of the time, etc., etc., etc.

Yuck! As Zig Ziglar would say, "**That's some stinking thinking!**"

So, unsuccessful leaders quickly sink into "fix-it" mode and spend the rest of their mediocre careers making sure nothing bad ever happens to anyone in their downline, upline, or company. Now, that's going to be pretty hard in this world.

This is what unsuccessful leaders say regularly:

"It's a crisis! It's a crisis! Should I fix it now?"

No.

If your business can't survive a crisis or two, maybe it's time to go back and build a better foundation. And, there will be lots of problems in your future no matter how well you build your foundation because . . .

People are human!

That's right. Your company, your upline, and even your downline are human. And as humans, they have certain characteristics, such as:

- ◆ Humans make mistakes. Only computers are perfect, and computers don't want to be distributors.
- ◆ Humans are often selfish.
- ◆ Humans are professional quitters. They quit school, quit jobs, quit marriages, quit diets, quit New Year's resolutions, and quit MLM programs.
- ◆ Humans often fail to return telephone calls.
- ◆ Humans are often rude.
- ◆ Humans take people for granted. They don't show appreciation to their upline or downline when appropriate.
- ◆ Humans love to criticize. It makes them feel superior and helps them to forget their own personal problems.
- ◆ Humans make terrible decisions. Why do you think there are so many divorces? Or why do you think so many people lose at the horse races?
- ◆ Humans think they are always right. After all, who do you know that deliberately goes out of his way to be totally wrong?

So when distributors, upline or home office personnel make mistakes, are rude, criticize, or quit . . . don't be surprised!

They are just being human!

Why fight human nature? Why try to rearrange chromosomes?

Why not just accept people as they are?

As humans.

This is the perspective and point of view that **successful** leaders take. They don't waste time trying to change people, fix their perceived problems, or trying to eliminate all the problems in the world.

Successful leaders learn to **manage** problems, not fix problems.

There is a difference.

Imagine that you could work hard and magically fix all the problems with your downline, upline, and MLM company. Whew! That was hard.

Now, since you fixed all the problems today, what are the chances that there will be some new problems tomorrow?

100%!!!

Yes, more problems tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, and every day in the future. There will always be problems.

Successful leaders accept this fact. They simply learn to live with the problems instead of stressing over each problem for the rest of their lives.

Look at it this way.

There is no such thing as a perfect MLM company. All the companies hire humans! So, there just has to be lots of mistakes and problems.

What do unsuccessful distributors do? If they see that their present MLM company has a problem, they quit! They join another MLM company and hope they never have a problem.

What kind of crazy thinking is that?

All MLM companies have problems.

Successful distributors and leaders realize that if all MLM companies have problems, you might as well pick the company that you choose to have problems with. Then, get over it. Accept the problems and get on with business.

Let your competitors try to fix the problems, fix human nature, and jump from one company to another. Encourage your competitors to do it.

Why?

This will keep your competitors busy while you build a large and successful networking business. You'll have exclusive access to all the best prospects because your competitors are too busy trying to fix problems!

But don't I have to fix some of the problems?

No.

Our businesses will be quite successful if we just concentrate on developing three or four leaders. Once we have three or four trained people who think like we do . . . we're invincible!

Developing leaders is everything in our business. Distributors may come and go, problems may come and go, problems may come and stay, but if we develop long-term, loyal leaders, we'll be here forever with regular bonus checks.

All these other problems don't have anything to do with locating, training and developing our three or four good leaders. (Remember the secret principle I mentioned at the beginning of this article?)

Let's look at a typical crisis #1.

Your distributor received his order of 20 different products and one product was missing. The missing item was Donut Blend #2.

Your distributor calls his sponsor and says:

"Help! Help! My order is incomplete. I don't know how many items are missing, but it's all wrong. Do you think the company is going out of business?"

It's a natural human tendency to exaggerate slightly when describing a personal problem.

The sponsor accepts the problem and becomes depressed. He worries about what would happen if his distributor quits over this massive product shortage?

So, the sponsor calls his sponsor and says:

"Help! Help! The company has stopped shipping products and is taking our distributors' money! Why are they attacking and destroying our business?"

It's a natural human tendency to exaggerate slightly when describing a personal problem.

His sponsor panics over this massive, career-destroying problem. So he calls his sponsor (that's you) and says:

"Help! Help! The company stopped shipping products and sent a SWAT team out and is now shooting our distributors! You have to stop the killings!"

Like I mentioned, it's a natural human tendency to exaggerate slightly when describing a personal problem.

So, by the time you've received the problem, it's a big, big problem.

How are you going to react?

Are you going to call the home office and add a little exaggeration to the story? Not if you're a successful leader.

As a successful leader you have a rock-solid, stable viewpoint. You know that the only thing that counts is that you locate and develop three or four good leaders -- period. All the other problems are just a distraction that you can ignore.

What do you do? You reply to your panic-stricken leader and say:

"Missing products, eh? Well, I don't have access to the home office shipping computer, so why not FAX them the details and they'll take care of it."

Boom! You're done. That's it. No more hysteria or involvement.

Now this relatively minor problem is manageable. The distributor with the problem must write down the details in a FAX. That's good. Why?

- ◆ Writing down the details is hard. Most people would rather pass the problem on to their upline rather than handle it themselves. After all, it's just human nature. Why not make a simple exaggerated telephone call. That's easier than making out a written report.
- ◆ Writing down the details usually limits the amount of exaggeration.

- ◆ Most people will recheck their facts before committing themselves in writing.

So, what happens?

The distributor rechecks the shipping box and magically finds the missing product, Donut Blend #2.

Problem managed. You are on with your business of locating and developing three or four good leaders for your business.

"Hey! That's a pretty good perspective on how this networking business really works. What would happen if my downline adopted this point-of-view?"

Massive growth. Massive sales. Massive bonus checks.

Wouldn't it be nice if your downline never complained? Instead, they simply accepted problems as part of life and then went on their way to build their business?

Well, that would be a perfect world. However, there is no rule that says we can't educate and train our downlines towards this goal.

Can you imagine how powerful your opportunity meetings would be if everyone was positive and focused on their goal of locating and developing three or four good leaders? The atmosphere would be magic! With so much positive energy in the room, guests would join without even hearing a presentation! Prospects want to be involved with positive people who know where they are going.

What about other problems?

Can a human make a mistake during a business presentation?

Can there be a typographical error in a brochure?

Can an underpaid newspaper reporter jealously write an unfair story about your company or your products?

Can an upline leader tell lies, steal customers, counterfeit distributor applications and steal your dog?

Yes!

It happens.

So what!

All these type of problems have nothing to do with your ultimate focused goal of **locating and developing your three or four leaders**. (If you are paying attention, I bet you are starting to see the secret principle here.)

Let's look at crisis #2.

About seven months ago, I gave an opportunity meeting presentation to about 50 people. It was in a small hotel room in the north of England.

In the back of the room was a brand new distributor. She brought along her husband and her 11-month old daughter.

Also in the back of the room was a prospect with a \$1,000 pin stripe suit, manicured nails, the perfect sun tan, a replica of a very expensive watch, and . . . an attitude. He looked like the stereotypical stockbroker.

What do you do when the baby cries?

As I proceeded with my presentation, occasionally the baby made a bit of noise. Okay, the baby cried. Not real loud, but it was distracting.

Now, here is the question:

Does a baby crying have anything to do with **locating and developing your three or four good leaders?** (If you are paying attention, I bet you are starting to guess the secret principle here.)

No!

So it's not a problem. It's a non-event. It's totally manageable by simply ignoring the crying and continuing with the opportunity meeting.

So I did.

Guess what happened when the meeting was over?

The well-dressed guest left! He was completely turned off by the baby's crying.

His parting remarks?

"How could any professional business allow a crying baby to interfere or distract prospects during a business presentation? I couldn't possibly join a non-professional organization like that!"

Now here is the million-dollar question you have to ask yourself as a business builder and networking leader:

"If my prospect quits or doesn't even join because an 11-month old baby cries, will this prospect ever be one of my **three or four good leaders?**"

The obvious answer is "No."

At best, this prospect might become a "temporary" distributor. He'll quit at the first sign of distress, problems, hurt feelings, or stress.

So whether or not this "temporary" distributor joins or not, it would not make any difference in one's long-term networking career.

Look at it this way. This prospect quit before he even started.

Why?

Because he heard the crying of an 11-month old baby who didn't even recognize his existence. The 11-month old baby **didn't even know or care that this prospect existed!**

Yet, this 11-month old baby **had the power and control to make decisions** for this weak-willed, well-dressed prospect.

If this so-called prospect is going to let 11-month old babies make decisions for him, how well is he going to do in his own business? Not well.

Should you fix the problem?

No.

It would be a total waste of time.

Let's say that you banned babies from the opportunity meeting. Maybe you hired babysitters or told families they weren't welcomed if they had children. Anyway, you fix the problem of babies crying at opportunity meetings.

So what?

What if the meeting room was too hot? Wouldn't this picky, weak-willed prospect still refuse to join?

What if the meeting next door made too much noise?

What if the speaker made a mistake during the presentation?

What if someone had a bad cough?

See the problem?

**The problem is with the prospect,
not with the circumstances around the prospect.**

You can't go through life, walking in front of this prospect, and say:

"Please smile when you walk past my prospect."

"Please don't say anything bad about our company in front of my prospect."

"Please don't let it rain while my prospect is coming to our meeting."

This prospect believes that circumstances must be right in order for him to become successful. In other words, he is saying **that success is outside of himself.**

He is dependent on circumstances to make him successful. And he hopes that the 11-month old baby doesn't make any more decisions for him.

Is this prospect ever going to develop into one of your **three or four good leaders?**

No.

The 11-month old baby might have a better chance.

Leadership has nothing to do with the clothes you wear.

Who would you rather have in your organization?

1. The mother who brought her 11-month old baby and her husband to the opportunity meeting, or
2. The well-dressed, weak-willed prospect who takes directions and career decisions from an 11-month old baby.

The answer is obvious, once you understand the principle of **locating and developing three or four good leaders**.

Leaders are everything.

They are your long-term security.

They are your keys to solid growth and consistent bonus checks.

**Almost everything else you do
in networking marketing is trivial.**

Your major effort is to concentrate on **locating and developing three or four good leaders**.

Most of the other things we do are a waste of time. Want some examples?

- ✓ Discussing company politics
- ✓ Arguing with know-it-all distributors
- ✓ Re-training uplines
- ✓ Arranging chairs at opportunity meetings
- ✓ Re-writing the prospecting brochure for the thirty-first time
- ✓ Arranging product displays
- ✓ Memorizing sales pitches
- ✓ Holding hands with weak-willed prospects
- ✓ Correcting people when they are wrong
- ✓ Scolding distributors for missing meetings

- ✓ Wishing you got more money for your efforts
- ✓ Demanding immediate shipment of backorders
- ✓ Demanding that everyone in every circumstance was treated fairly
- ✓ Listening to petty grievances
- ✓ Giving pity to people with hurt egos
- ✓ Trying to save professional victims
- ✓ Forcing distributors to go to trainings they don't want to attend
- ✓ Trying to find somebody to blame
- ✓ Wishing people had the same vision you have
- ✓ Telling management how to do their job, etc., etc., etc.

We don't become successful leaders by solving these problems. And, we don't become successful leaders by sponsoring and replacing "temporary" distributors.

We become successful leaders by **locating and developing three or four other good leaders.**

"MLM Crisis Center, may I help you?"

Make sure this is not how you answer your telephone. Instead, educate and train your new distributors and potential leaders that problems are natural. Problems are part of life and will be here tomorrow and every day of our lives.

So instead of fixing, stressing over, and worrying about problems, simply manage problems and get on with life. You'll have more free time, less stress, and the lifestyle to enjoy those big, big bonus checks.

And, you'll find yourself easily answering questions and handling problems when you are focused on locating and developing three or four good leaders.

For instance, if you live 40 miles from your company's home office, you'll have distributors ask you:

"Why don't you go over and visit the home office more often?"

You can answer:

"Because visiting the home office has nothing to do with locating and developing my three or four good leaders."

Or distributors will ask,

"Why can't we have Donut Blend #8 in chocolate?"

You can answer:

"What does that have to do with locating and developing our three or four good leaders?"

Or distributors will say,

"Mary spoke too long during the opportunity meeting."

You can answer:

"What does that have to do with locating and developing our three or four good leaders?"

See? It's easy.

Once we understand the principles and have the proper perspective on our networking business -- **EVERYTHING gets easy!**

And finally, in case you didn't notice the principle I told you about on page one, here it is:

Our job as leaders is to simply locate and develop three or four good leaders. The rest of our activities are simply "non-events." They just don't matter.

Biography

"Big Al" Tom Schreiter writes the Fortune Now Leadership Newsletter and is the author of five books on network marketing. (You can download one of his books free at his Fortune Now web site.)

You can visit Tom's FREE training site at <http://www.fortunenow.com> to get more great ideas on building your business.

Recommended Resources

103 Ways & Places to Sponsor New Distributors.

Power-packed 500+ page manual from two top Network Marketers, Tom "Big Al" Schreiter and Art Jonak.

<http://powerpack.mlmllessons.com>



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