



21 September 2007

NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER

“People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel”. - Malcolm Forbes, Publisher of Forbes Magazine

G’day there,

One of the great traps in any form of selling is to misjudge people by their appearance and to act accordingly to this misconception.

Before I make my real point of this newsletter, have a read of this true story and which is a great example of what I am alluding to.

THE GINGHAM DRESS.....

A lady in a faded gingham dress and her husband, dressed in a homespun threadbare suit, stepped off the train in Boston, and walked timidly without an appointment into the Harvard University President’s outer office.

The secretary could tell in a moment that such backwoods, country hicks had no business at Harvard and probably didn’t even deserve to be in Cambridge.

“We’d like to see the president,” the man said softly.

“He’ll be busy all day,” the secretary snapped.

“We’ll wait,” the lady replied.

For hours the secretary ignored them, hoping that the couple would finally become discouraged and go away.

They didn’t, and the secretary grew frustrated and finally decided to disturb the president, even though it was a chore she always regretted.

“Maybe if you see them for a few minutes, they’ll leave,” she said to him!

He sighed in exasperation and nodded. Someone of his importance obviously didn’t have the time to spend with them, and he detested gingham dresses and homespun suits cluttering up his outer office.

The president, stern faced and with dignity, strutted toward the couple.

The lady told him, “We had a son who attended Harvard for one year. He loved Harvard. He was happy here. But about a year ago, he was accidentally killed. My husband and I would like to erect a memorial to him, somewhere on

”

campus.

The president wasn't touched. He was shocked.

"Madam," he said, gruffly, "we can't put up a statue for every person who attended Harvard and died. If we did, this place would look like a cemetery."

"Oh, no," the lady explained quickly. "We don't want to erect a statue. We thought we would like to give a building to Harvard."

The president rolled his eyes. He glanced at the gingham dress and homespun suit, then exclaimed, "A building! Do you have any earthly idea how much a building costs? We have over seven and a half million dollars in the physical buildings here at Harvard."

For a moment the lady was silent. The president was pleased. Maybe he could get rid of them now.

The lady turned to her husband and said quietly, "Is that all it cost to start a university? Why don't we just start our own?"

Her husband nodded. The president's face wilted in confusion and bewilderment.

*Mr. and Mrs. Leland Stanford got up and walked away, travelling to Palo Alto, California where **they established the university that bears their name, Stanford University**, a memorial to a son that Harvard no longer cared about.*

You can easily judge the character of others by how they treat those who they think can do nothing for them."

Which then raises the point, and I am sure many of you have heard it as well, when at sales meetings I ask a sales person, "how many people through that open?" and they quote a number, let's say 15.

I then ask them "what did the 15 say about the property and what would they pay for it?"

The reply all too often comes back "oh well, only 5 of them were buyers so I called them".

To which I retort, "how did you know only 5 were buyers. Why not the other 10?"

Their answer- "coz they didn't look like they were or couldn't afford it"

****How many "Stanford Universities" have they created for another salesperson who took the time and trouble to go with them further?**

In our From Signup to Sale one day course, we stress strongly just how important it is to go that extra step to build both vendor and buyer trust.

It may be a seemingly small item, but like the 20 cent piece of foam that fell off Challenger, it can have tragic and/or far reaching results.

I invite you attend one of these courses and to brush up on the basics of the auction business. With the economy heading for troubled waters, it may well prove to be your best move for 2007.

Carpe diem

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