



Self-Directed Success

By Mike Stewart, CSP

Your success depends on your Self-Identity, -Esteem, -Respect and -Reliance according to Kimberly Joyner in a recent Atlanta Journal-Constitution editorial directed toward underprivileged low-income people in our metro area. I found her article right on point for people who seriously wanted to better themselves and their quality of life.

Although salespeople and managers are definitely not underprivileged - in fact most are quite the opposite - I could not escape the persistent thought that most salespeople and managers I work with do not enjoy the incomes that they are capable of earning. The more I read the more I realized the applicability of the author's points to a broader population generally and to my Clients and their salespeople specifically.

Way too many people just go through the motions of doing their job day in and day out. Sadly, they do not have a passionate commitment to a positive vision of who they are. This shortcoming leaves them with a passive reactive self-identity such as, "I'm just a salesman," or "Sometimes I feel like I'm nothing but a babysitter!" Such negative self-identities not only destroy self-esteem and self-respect, they also destroy other people's confidence and trust.

The guaranteed result of such negative self-imagery is failure!

Create a success role and play it to the hilt. Look at the successful people around you and you will usually see people who take care of themselves mentally, emotionally and physically. One such salesperson I worked with several years ago is Joan Boxer of Air Jamaica. She has always dressed beautifully and presented an impeccable professional image. She exudes confidence in herself and genuine concern for others. Some time after our last training session I received an email from her saying,

I just got a promotion to Regional Sales Manager. One thing, Mike, it has taken lots of hard work. And, Mike, I will always remember that morning you just looked at me and said,

"I see success written all over you!"

"If it is to be, it is up to me!" describes **Self-Reliance** very

accurately and in the simplest possible way. This old saying has been around a long time for a reason. It cuts no corners and makes no exceptions or excuses. You are the only person in the world who is responsible for your success.

When the chips are down, you can rely on no one but yourself. Larry Winget, an author and speaker I've know for years, says it this way,

Of all the people in the world who will never, ever leave you, you are the only one.

One of the biggest success stories I've been associated with during the past year involves Chris Crisman, an Area Director for Boston Scientific. When he took over, his Area was ranked about in the middle of the pack and several of his regions were struggling to produce new sales. He saw the need for strong intervention and took it upon himself to provide the training and follow up his team needed to make a decisive turnaround in sales production.

Because he relied solely on himself to significantly increase sales production, he is driving double-digit growth in a flat market, his Area is in first place, and his six Regions are ranked in the top third among the 90 regions in the company. At a company meeting last week the President recognized him among his peers as a consummate example of initiative and leadership, and said,

"He didn't ask for help or permission. He just did what needed to be done!"

Self-Identity and Self-Reliance are the result of a simple choice. When you choose how you will be perceived by others, and choose an uncompromising commitment to success and a positive, can-do attitude, you lay the foundation for success. The result of these choices will lead to strong feelings of Self-Esteem and Self-Respect that truly set you apart among your peers and mark you for a lifetime of achievement and success.

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International sales trainer and consultant, Mike Stewart, CSP, specializes in hiring and developing high-performance sales teams. He is a leading authority in diagnosing and overcoming Sales Call Reluctance. To learn more about Mike and the services and products his company offers, go to www.StewartSalesDynamics.com.

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