

Connecting Through Books

What Clients Love, A Field Guide to Growing Your Business, by Harry Beckwith

Once in a while, you read a book and when you try to tell someone how much you enjoyed it, suddenly the thought strikes you... “Where do I start?”

Harry Beckwith has such a creation with *What Clients Love, A Field Guide to Growing Your Business*.

Beckwith heads Minneapolis based Beckwith Partners which is a marketing and advertising firm and has handled over 29 Fortune 500 Clients including Microsoft, General Motors and Target and numerous start ups with their branding and communications strategies. He has 3 other books, *Selling the Invisible*, *The Invisible Touch* and *You, Inc.*

Being that we are in sales, we both related to this book very quickly. Stop and think for a moment how much more effective you could be if everybody in your sales staff, management team and customer service staff was on the same page. You could sell what your clients want, sell what they love about you and enjoy meaningful and fulfilling success.

This book provides an excellent insight into dos and don'ts, doing what will get you known and remembered, stopping to listen, finding the perfect name for your company or product and, one of our favorites, “What the Best Salespeople Sell (in order)” and “What Ordinary Salespeople Sell (in order)”. The book is written in easy to grasp pieces...and each one will probably cause you to smack your head like you could have had a V-8.

Just to whet your appetite, in the sales training we have done we have always stressed the importance of building a relationship. Beckwith touches on this subject where he writes, “*Hard selling shrinks your market*. The final hard sale scorecard: one short-term customer gained, one long-term and several future clients lost: a net loss...In short, treat business relationships like personal ones: Give them time and space to grow.” Nothing could be truer. In selling you want to have farmers and not hunters...because we really succeed with the long term business.

Our personal favorite was on the section devoted to “The Power of Welcome”. Beckwith says that psychologists have found that certain words will reduce anxiety and heart rates...and welcome is one of those words. Now we encourage you to draw your own conclusions. We've all called clients and/or vendors and have had the phone answered by a rude or even incompetent receptionist. How much more is that magnified if we are calling with a customer service issue or complaint?

What if the receptionist answered the phone, “Welcome, (pause) XYZ Company”? We are guessing most people would stop, and might even ask, “What was that you said”? The important part is if we as the caller have some point of irritation going on and the person answering the phone says, “Welcome” and we stop and pause for a moment, tension and anxiety have been neutralized. If you’ve ever studied “body language” we’re betting this can take the scowling person with arms folded...to a smile and more relaxed posture with arms more open. It is worth the experiment and we’ve recommended it in a couple of our “*What Do You Really Sell*” workshops.

We read enough business books that we’ve found great joy in reading and passing them on to business associates and or clients. This is one that has made our suggested reading list and will remain in our library. We’ve already ordered additional copies to pass along and we highly recommend that you by a copy of *What Clients Love, A Field Guide to Growing Your Business* for yourself, your sales people and your customer service people.

The most important part of what we do may not be selling our clients what we offer as much as selling to our clients what they want to buy. And that is much easier to do when you understand what clients love.

Please feel free to comment on this column. If you have a favorite business book you’d like for us to review, let us know. Norma Havens can be reached at norma@UniversityOfStreetSmarts.com. Bob Belknap can be reached at bob@UniversityOfStreetSmarts.com.