

## **Two More Lessons Learned As a 9-Year-Old Tricker Treater**

When we came home and dumped our pillowcases and plastic pumpkins, the celebration was underway. Cries of excitement echoed down the once crowded streets as tricker treaters were now home taking inventory of their “spoils”.

For the overachieving, risk-taking, no time-a wasting young entrepreneurial, trick or treater, Halloween night represented the biggest “snatch and grab” opportunity of the year.

Do you remember those mounds of candy? If played right, the treasures of that one night could last through Thanksgiving and, if thrifty enough, Christmas.

All of us seemed to immediately transform into accountants, giving witness to tallies of goods until, what seemed, late into the night. Once accounted for, we were confronted with some choices – we could eat as much as Mom would allow (plus a little more) or we could space out our consumption.

Every experienced business owner knows their company's marketing and sales cycles. Those that know their numbers and revisit their key indicators can typically predict the next ebb and flow within their market. The wiser business owner predicts lean times and prepares during their feast times.

Think back. Do you remember contemplating the candy famine? As you looked forward on the calendar, Christmas to Easter represented what seemed an eternal candy famine. Minus the two minor “blips on the screen” holidays; Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's, there was little to no opportunity to make big on candy from Christmas to your next big “snatch and grab” opportunity, better known as Easter.

It is frightening to think that we learned some of the most useful business tactics as 9-year-old, tricker-treaters, but truth be told - **#6 The most successful 9-year-old, “candy collecting” entrepreneurs understand that “snatch and grab” opportunities are predictable.**

As a business consultant, I have seen far too many business owners making horrifying decisions as they spend money like it will be there tomorrow, only to fall into the avoidable, vicious cycle of feast or famine. This is unnecessary. Create space in your calendar and evaluate your past two or three years. You will discover your best “snatch and grab” weeks and months. If it makes sense, market with those opportunities in mind.

When you have completed this exercise, take another close look at your clients. Decide if you are wasting time on “dark porches”. Perhaps you are allowing too many costly “one -offs” to fill your schedule. Take some time to think of ways to make it easier for current and past clients to do work with you again and again. You might consider selling package deals to fill those potential “famine” times.

## **#7 The most successful 9-year-old, “candy collecting” entrepreneurs stretch their limits no matter how scary things seem to be.**

I'm not sure that you are aware of this, but not all Haunted houses are really haunted. As a kid, I remember being scared to death of the annual haunted house experience that our youth leaders and youth volunteers created in the cold, damp basement that was typically used for Sunday School classrooms.

Every year, they would close off the entire basement of the main sanctuary building in our little Methodist Church and spend weeks preparing things designed to freak people out.

One year, I finally gave into the urging of my friends. We made our way down into the dark, cold basement, cobwebs running through our hair and hands reaching out to touch us. It was creepy. We finally reached the entrance door and were invited to enter. Frightening screams and cries of terror filled the air as we were directed to step to the right and follow a not-so-well-lit path.

I distinctly remember two things that absolutely disturbed me. It was the bowl of eyeballs and brains that we were forced to touch and, of course, Dracula at the very end, who abruptly rose from his casket and yelled, so as to scare whatever was left in us out.

Later that night, as things ended, my friends and I were invited to come down and help clean things up. It was at that moment that I discovered that not everything that scared us was real. First, I found out that Dracula was my Sunday School teacher. As we cleaned up, I stumbled upon a bowl of peeled grapes and cold spaghetti noodles. Awe, I think I found the bowl of eyeballs and brains.

Owning and operating a business can be scary at times, but giving into fear is never an option. After launching and leading four non-profits, relaunching two other non-profits and successfully launching two “for profit” businesses, I know businesses encounter moments of great terror.

I have also discovered that most of the things that go “bump in the night” can be out run, out sold, out marketed, out witted and out maneuvered because they are, typically, nothing more than a loud mouthed, Sunday School Teacher with slicked-back hair, wearing make-up.

Tell me again, why should I be afraid of that? I shouldn't be and neither should you! Step aside fear, we have clients to serve, sales to close and businesses to run!!!

You can find success tips #1 - #5 [www.rohnertparkchamber.org/chamber-news](http://www.rohnertparkchamber.org/chamber-news). Scroll down until you see Andy Springer, Business Consultant - 'Making Sense of Mondays' Series. Click on “Lessons I Learned as a 9-Year-Old Tricker Treater”

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