

# POWERFUL SOLUTIONS

For maximum F&I profitability

## Having Fun WHILE Being Professional

Years ago, an assignment came along which is probably familiar to many Trainers. “Fix ‘em, or he’s gone,” sort of encapsulates the sentiment. No pressure, or anything, particularly since many Business Managers possess the primary earning power within their homes. In this case, our Business Manager was the sole income-earner in the household and had a 10-year-old daughter.

We’ll refer to our Business Manager as Charlie. I met Charlie in the middle of the month. His production wasn’t bad, but this store required better numbers. He found himself 15-20% per copy lower than the average of his peers.

It was a typical, busy day for this high-volume store. I sat in with Charlie, throughout his day, quietly paying attention to his interactions with his Guests. At the end of that day, as best as can be recalled, Charlie had processed 6-8 deals. This was certainly enough to get a good read on what was happening. As Charlie finished his last deal of the day, he breathed a sigh.

I moved to the Guest’s side of the desk. “Tell me, Charlie... what are your greatest strengths?”

Clearly replying to the question from a business perspective... Charlie proceeded to line out a list of positive traits, with not one of which was there disagreement. He stated things such as that he was professional, kind, accurate, quick, articulate, and courteous.

Then I asked Charlie, “Tell me, in your opinion, what is your single greatest weakness?”

This is where things suddenly became oddly serious. Charlie responded with resignation that he felt as though a personal trait of his was holding him back, a trait for which he and I both knew I had no earthly ability to change! He must have felt as though I was wasting my time...

“Charlie, I don’t think that has anything to do with anything... frankly. Now, I just met you today, and I certainly don’t want to offend you... but I’m not having any fun!”



Charlie’s face wrinkled up a bit. “What do you mean?”

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Partnership + Performance = Profit

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“Charlie, I feel like I’m at the License Office. I think that someone mistakenly gave you the impression, early in your tenure as a Business Manager, that things in here had to be very sterile to be considered “professional,” particularly since you mentioned “professionalism” as one of your accolades. Tell you what, let’s change things up a little bit. Tell me about what you and your daughter do for fun, in the limited spare time you have together.”

Charlie proceeded to tell me that the two of them would put together play-like productions. “Perfect,” I responded. “To facilitate this activity, do you buy costumes?”

“Yes,” he replied. “That’s some of the BEST FUN we have!”

“And do you spend much money on these costumes,” I asked.

“Oh sure, sometimes many hundreds of dollars at a time,” he shot back.

“PERFECT,” I excitedly responded. “Now let’s think about this from our Guest’s perspective. These folks are often spending many tens-of-thousands of dollars on their purchases. Don’t we owe THEM a good time? In fact, couldn’t we consider our desk our stage?? Aren’t our timing and marks critically important???”

Naturally, being in the Show-Me state Charlie responded with, “Okay... show me how.”

We have reviewed a LOT of ground in previous columns, here, which entail addressing this very sentiment. We won’t be rehashing that now. That would be redundant. The point is to put a HIGH degree of emphasis on professionalism WHILE having a good time! These are NOT mutually exclusive ideas.



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Tracking Charlie's numbers very closely following the visit, about 10 days later with yet another several days to go in the month, Charlie had brought his average up 50% accumulative for the month! This indicates that his post visit numbers must have been around a 100% increase!!! "CONGRATULATIONS," I exclaimed when reaching out to Charlie! "What have you CHANGED?"

"I'm getting sick with it," was his reply.

Being a little out of touch with modern vernacular, I responded, "What do you mean?"

His elated response was, "I'm having a ball with my Guests, everyone is enjoying the process, and I had no idea how miserable I was until I wasn't miserable anymore..."

Thank you, Rick M. and James C., for your inspiration...

Think about it.

Good luck and good selling!



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