

## Service That Sells! E-Newsletter Volume 10, No. 5 • February 2, 2009

---



### The Truth About Why We Don't Reach Our Goals

All right, it's February. Tell the truth: did you make any New Year's resolutions? And, if you did, how's it going? If you're like 90 percent of Americans, statistics say that you've already broken your resolutions. By June, you will have forgotten what they were. And that's okay, because they were probably designed to fail from the beginning.

Most of us tend to make general resolutions, like boost sales by 20 percent. But we often stop there with vague ideas about training. What we lack in concrete strategies we make up for with wishful thinking. And even though we may cruise along for a couple of weeks with breathtaking sales meetings, we have a few slip-ups and we scratch the whole concept.

It doesn't have to be that way. Here are some tips on how to reach your sales goals (feel free to apply the concepts to any goal you've made this year):

- **Make a time table.** If you want to increase sales by 20 percent in a year, what do you have to do each shift to make that happen? How many desserts, sides, etc. have to be sold? Then, work backwards and create a schedule that details how many suggestions have to be made by each server.
- **Be flexible.** You may want to consider adding a "make-up" week every month (or quarter) for when the team falls behind goal. This is a way to super-charge servers and allows a little flexibility for slow weeks. This will keep you—and your team—motivated to succeed.
- **Reward milestones.** If you tell a typical 10-year-old you'll give him \$100 if he gets straight A's on his report card, the odds are that he'll never see the money. That's because motivation fails when the reward is too far away. If you offer \$5 every time he gets an A on a test, you'll find that your wallet is getting lighter. By the end of the quarter, you've reached the same result: straight A's on the report card for the same \$100 reward. Your sales team will also stay motivated with smaller short-term goals and, over time, reach your long-term objectives.
- **Get help.** A fresh voice with new ideas will motivate you and your team. Invest in a trainer or consultant to analyze your operation, your goals and your strategies. You'll find that these professional suggestions will soon pay for themselves.

---

### New Goals, Old Habits: How to Change Your Life By Bill Marvin

Most people never accomplish most of their goals. It's not because they don't have good intentions, but they get distracted. Their old world begins wrapping itself around them again and they slide back into old routines and old thinking. Achieving audacious goals requires the discipline to form new habits. This takes some concentration and focus. To truly become the master of your life, you must develop the courage to say "no" to distractions... and there are plenty of them.

There will always be people and events that clamor for your attention, but just because someone demands your time doesn't mean you should give it to them. If it has been your habit to drop everything and put out fires when they flare up, taking control of your time by refusing to entertain distractions will probably feel uncomfortable. However, that discomfort is a clue that you are letting go of an old behavior.

So the next time one of your crew says the sky is falling and wants you to deal with it, try this: tell them to use their own best judgment, handle it the way they think will be most effective and you'll talk about it later. Your ability to trust

the judgment of others will help staff members develop their professional confidence (and competence)... and let you stay focused on building the business.

Will your crew handle situations differently than you would? Of course they will. My approach would probably be different, too... but that doesn't make it wrong. In life there are lots of right answers. Will they screw a few things up as they get their bearings? Count on it. But they will recover quickly and your business will be stronger for it. After all, that's pretty much the way you learned, isn't it?

---

## Over-promise and Over-deliver By TJ Schier

One of the most over-used phrases is "under promise and over deliver." While it sounds good in theory, it teaches servers and managers to simply set a lower target to beat it so they feel good. However, it leaves money on the table... lots of it. This approach works not only with selling, but service as well. Aiming for mediocre service and providing it will not help sales and profits. Aiming for great service and delivering it is what great servers and excellent restaurants do.

Goal-setting shift-by-shift, server-by-server is the key to a great sales shift. Challenging goals and targets (i.e. "over-promise") will ensure the team continues to strive and improve for every guest. Too often, servers hit their goal two hours into the shift and then stop suggesting since they beat the hurdle. Many guests then miss the opportunity for an enhanced experience (and a bigger tip). Encouraging loftier goals, while harder to hit, will build sales.

Instead of mediocre performance, effective goals drive excellent performance at all levels: servers, bartenders, managers and so on. Each server selling five more desserts by setting and achieving a higher target equates into a few more dollars for everyone today (and more happy guests) and thousands of dollars for everyone in the long run.

Setting lofty goals and falling a bit short will still help you achieve better results than setting low targets and beating them. Setting a goal of eight desserts and selling nine is not as good, nor should it be rewarded more, than aiming for 15 and hitting it. Don't forget to equate items sold to sales levels to ensure a level playing field for those working less busy shifts or sections (i.e., sell three desserts per \$100 in overall sales). Strive and thrive!

---

## Training Tip

When you think of the most effective and successful leaders, you probably think of the most charismatic ones. They exude passion and energy, and people stand in line just to have a chance at being a faithful follower. But don't run out and buy your magic set just yet. While charisma can go a long way toward motivating a group, maintaining positive momentum during day-to-day operations comes from getting your hands dirty, not shining with the stars. The most important "training" you do is simply what you're doing... day in and day out. Staff members are always watching you, and will follow your example even if it goes against what you just taught them in a training session. So be sure you:

- Admit your mistakes when you make them, and allow everyone to learn from them.
- Praise good work publicly. It shows you're committed to your cause.
- Accept criticism when it's given to you constructively and appropriately.
- Remember that how you do things is often as important as what you're doing.