

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE HERD

PART THREE

SUCCESSFUL SALES

In this issue Julia Felton explores what horses can teach us about being a successful sales person

Typically when you think of a salesman or woman you think about door to door double glazing agents or timeshare representatives. These represent the worst type of sales person; dogmatic, pushy and typically never taking no for an answer. This is a hard way to sell things. Imagine instead sales being an effortless process where instead of you seeking out potential clients they are attracted to you, as if by magic. What a different experience that would be for all parties involved.

Our horses can teach us how to be great salespeople if we only let them. Horses understand the fundamentals of creating great relationships and this is at the

crux of all business relationships, including sales. Within a herd of horses each horse has a lot of respect for the other members, he trusts them to do their job, and importantly he respects their personal boundaries. He recognises when it is appropriate to be close to another horse and when his other herd members need space.

It is this sensitivity to recognising the other herd members' needs, as defined by their boundaries, that allows harmony to exist within the herd. So before we move on let's all be clear on what a boundary is. Personal boundaries define who you are as an individual and therefore the types of opportunities that you allow into your life. These boundaries can be physical, mental, psychological or spiritual.

How we set boundaries and

how consistent we are with them can be a defining point in how successful our lives and our businesses are. Sometimes setting boundaries involves you being courageous, particularly if it is with someone you have had poor boundaries with in the past. However, when boundaries are clear, everyone knows the rules of the game and armed with this knowledge they feel safer.

When someone violates your boundaries you can feel angry, hurt and confused, wondering why the other person never understood the rules of the game. Maybe you were never clear about your own boundaries and what is acceptable behaviour.

In the herd unacceptable behaviour is dealt with by the offending horse being run out of the herd and left alone and isolated until he shows remorse and is allowed back in. If only we

could deal with pushy salespeople like that. Well, I guess to some extent we do, by shutting the door in their face!

There is an unwritten rule in the herd which we would do well to heed and that is, 'If I come into your space, you influence the interaction and if you come into my space, I influence the interaction.' When engaged in sales we want the person to come into our world or space, rather than us going into theirs. This simple shift massively changes the dynamics of the interaction. But how do you get a person to come into your personal space?

SHOW UP AS INTERESTING

Firstly you need to show up as interesting and create curiosity so that the potential client notices you. You need to stand out from the crowd. Secondly, it needs to be the right time for the potential client to be interested in your product or service, and if the person is not interested right now, you just continue to show up and stay on their radar until such time as they do become interested.

The first principle of Carolyn Resnick's Seven Waterhole Rituals is Sharing Territory and this is what a great salesperson does with a potential client. They hang out in the space with them until an interaction occurs. This could take hours, days, weeks, months or even years. When you spend time Sharing Territory with your horse you are developing the same type of relationship. You are making yourself visible and allowing a relationship to build at the pace that the horse or person wants.

BUILDING TRUST

Trust is a massive topic in business today given the recent financial crisis, and team members are less trusting of their managers than ever before, so how do you build a culture of trust within your

business and with your horse? The best way I have found is to be consistent in your character, do what you say you will do, take responsibility for your actions and always deliver on your promises.

The way you build trust with your horse is to adhere to the rule that if I come into your space, you influence the interaction and if you come into my space, I influence the interaction.

Go up to your horse, ask if you can enter his space, 'Say Hello' and then leave (Carolyn Resnick's second Waterhole Ritual, see Issue 72). Remember, as you have gone into the horse's space he influences the interaction, so you must not presume that you can stay unless you are invited.

It's the same with potential clients in business. If we go into their personal space we have no right to stay unless we are invited. Regularly going into your horse's space and leaving builds trust that you respect his personal space and it is the same with potential clients. If they know that every time they see or hear from you, you are not going to push a sale down their throat, they will be more mindful to engage with you. In a business context the way that I build trust is by delivering great value in the form of great content, tips and strategies that the potential client can implement right now. I stay visible and at the front of their mind and then, when the time is right, I know they will reach out to me as I have developed trust and respect with them by being very aware of their personal boundaries.

Just like a horse, if you Share Territory for long enough and show up as interesting and curious they will seek you out. They want what you have, or at least are intrigued enough to ask a few questions. The person is now entering your personal space and you are able to influence the interaction, and so hopefully



conclude the sale.

Never catch your clients, let them catch you! I hope you can see how easy this can be. Just follow the rules of the herd and you will have potential clients drawn towards you. But just as creating a great relationship with your horse does not happen overnight, neither does creating lasting relationships with your potential clients. Build a bond of trust and respect with them and then they will be magnetised to you and be willing to form a great partnership that is likely to stand the test of time.

Show up as interesting and curious then horses and clients will seek you out

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