

7 Scenarios You Can Anticipate that Immediately Improve Your Team's Effectiveness!

You've been at this for a while. You know what to expect. Here are 7 ways anticipating them will build your business.

- ➔ **Get rid of negative chatter: Anticipate scenarios when your team may use negative words. Then equip them with well-crafted, positive alternatives.**

EXAMPLE: Customer says, "I was thinking of buying this car, but I'm concerned it only gets 17 miles to the gallon."

Stop your team from giving negative responses: "Yeah it's not the best, but we have great financing!"

Instead give your team well-crafted positive responses: "Hey for a car this powerful, it's amazing that it gets 17 mpg! Seriously other cars like it get half that!"

- ➔ **Avoid time-sucking nonsense: Instruct your team to take an extra 30-seconds before texting and emailing, and anticipate everything their recipient will likely need. Then include all that info upfront! Both parties will save time.**

EXAMPLE: Employer emails admin: "Hey I got that report, let's review it tomorrow; it's pretty important."

Admin: "Sure."

Employer: "How about at 1:15."

Admin: "I can't then, but I can at 8:45."

Employer: "8:45 a.m. or p.m.?"

Admin: "Oh, a.m. I can work early."

Employer: "I can't come in early tomorrow. Oh wait, or do you mean by Zoom?"

Admin: "No, I meant in-person. Do I need to bring anything with me?"

Employer: "Yes, have the notes with you."

Admin: "All notes, or just this week's? And how's today after 5?"

Employer: "Zoom at 5 is good. Your or my link? And just this week's notes."

On and on and on... you've probably had endless message threads like this.

Instead text or email like this: "Hey I have the report. Let's review it tomorrow at 8:45 a.m. in my office, or at 5 p.m. by Zoom at my usual Zoom link. And please have the notes from this week ready to discuss. Thanks 😊"

- ➔ **Don't confuse your listeners: Anticipate when extra clarity is needed (such as when at a loud conference, when videoconference quality is low, when the speaker has an accent) and do this:**

- Speak the first word of each sentence slowly, to ensure you don't lose the listener from the outset.
- Speak keywords slowly: company name, your name, difficult to pronounce words...
- Leave longer pauses between sentences to sound in control/confident, to give your audience time to take notes and absorb your message, and to be easier understood.

- ➔ **Avoid blowing opportunities because you or your team sound like duds: Anticipate important questions you/your team will be asked, and have everyone rehearse clear responses for them.**

EXAMPLE: A potential customer says, *"Hi, good to meet you, so tell me about your business?"*

Stop your team from giving unclear responses: *"Oh yeah we uh, well we do X, and ya' know we also..."*

Instead give your team well-crafted clear responses: *"Hi I'm glad you asked. At X company, we provide X..."*

- ➔ **Avoid alienating customers and colleagues: Take a few minutes to anticipate words and phrases your customer-facing employees may say to customers, compile a list, and share this list with your entire team to avoid.**

For example: Religious words. Politics. Profanity. Money. Personal stories and struggles. Gossip. Downers. Criticism of competitors. Expressions such as "No problem."

EXAMPLE: Customer says, *"Hey your site wouldn't let me update my profile!"*

Don't say: *"Oh God, sorry about that!"* (Some people dislike religious expressions.)

Instead say: *"Oh sorry about that! Let me help you update your profile right now."*

EXAMPLE: Customer says, *"I appreciate you helping me."*

Don't say: *"No problem."* (This implies it would have otherwise been a problem.)

Instead say: *"Hey it was my pleasure, I'm glad you found it helpful!"*

- ➔ **Avoid difficult conversations and team frustration: Before speaking, anticipate what could be perceived negatively. Then re-word it positively. Everyone will be better off in the long run!**

EXAMPLE: Don't say, *"Karen, please finish this last-minute report."*

Instead say: *"Karen, you've really done a great job on these reports – probably better than anyone else could. So I'd love to give you this one too. It's a lot, so I'll be sure to take something else off your plate."*

EXAMPLE: Don't say, *"You've got to stop tapping your pen – it's driving me nuts!"*

Instead say: *"Hey if tapping helps you concentrate, I'd love to get you an extra mouse pad to put under it."*

EXAMPLE: Don't say, *"Hey, this article is missing the addendum."* (Negative.)

Instead say: *"Hi please add the addendum to the article."* (Positive.)

EXAMPLE: Don't say, *"What are you doing? Stop! You can't get it done that way!"*

Instead say: *"Hey I'd love to show you an easier way to do this!"*

- ➔ **Better engage your customers: Anticipate when the focus should be on them, not you. And make the switch.**

EXAMPLE: Don't say: *"I think you should get the premium plan."*

Instead say: *"The premium plan really seems best for you!"*

EXAMPLE: Don't say: *"I have two openings, Monday at 3 and 5."*

Instead say: *"Your choice, do you prefer Monday at 3 or 5?"*

EXAMPLE: Don't say: *"Hey please give me some feedback."*

Instead say: *"Feedback from you would be amazing, thank you!"*

EXAMPLE: Don't say: *"I have private conference rooms you can use."*

Instead say: *"Please feel welcome to use our private conference rooms!"*