

James Butler's Newsletter #30

Amuse, Inform and Inspire

February 2005

As a coach, I enjoy seeing people rise to a challenge and stretch themselves, whether personally, professionally, or both. Therefore, when fellow coach Anne McDonald challenged me to theme a newsletter on the songs of the Osmonds, I responded by saying I would, just as soon as she published her first newsletter (knowing she had put it off for months!). Imagine my 'delight' when her first newsletter arrived in my Inbox. Now I have to keep my side of the bargain, so prepare to hear what the Osmonds have to offer. You are free to hum along if it helps!



Love me for a reason

*Don't love me for fun, girl
Let me be the one, girl
Love me for a reason
Let the reason be love*

Now, the Osmonds were better at marketing than they were at poetry, so we're going to need a bit of slack here, but this song builds well on a recent newsletter on the subject of customer care.

If your customers don't love you for fun, what would they love you for? What do you do to hold a spell on them?

Personally, my customers love me for my excellent taste in music and my sense of humour. Well, maybe. How do we know? Have we ever asked? Can we assume we know? Can we influence why customers love us? What would we like them to love us for?

Before this descends into a chaotic twenty questions, let us put some structure on this (I'm a scientist, I need structure!):

What do your customers love generally about companies? When we created our profile of ideal customers for our marketing campaign (oh, you did do that, didn't you?), what did we decide our ideal customers would love? What are they looking for in a supplier in your field? What makes the difference between them liking you and loving you?

What do your customers love specifically about your service or product? What have they told you already? What feedback have you received to date? What have you done in the past that attracted particular comment?

How can you find out what your customers love? Have you ever asked them? How could you glean that information from them? Could a market research company like Tangram help? What could you ask your customers?

What do you do now to provide what they love? Are you tailoring your service to provide what they love (to push their buttons, as it were)? Can you? Does everyone who faces customers in your organisation know what the customer loves, and their role in providing it? Can you provide it profitably, or are customers asking too much?

What do you do to ensure you consistently provide it? Do you have systems in place to ensure your customers get what they love every time? Is it Painless? :o)

What are the three things you can do after reading this newsletter which will help your customers love you? What do you need to start doing, stop doing or do differently to make you more lovable? When can you commit to change them by?

I want every reader of this newsletter to be loved for a reason!!

Can you define a compelling reason why your customers love you? Let me know and I will include a list (including your business website/contact details) in a future issue, so that other readers can use your service! Any submission received by Saturday March 5th will be considered.

And they called it Puppy Love

*And they called it Puppy Love
Just because we're in our teens
Tell them all it isn't fair
To take away my only dream*

I have had lots of mail from readers following last month's newsletter regarding achieving my long-held goal of seeing tigers. It led to some discussion about whether our goals change as we get older, and whether it is good to let them go if our priorities change.

The consensus seemed to be that sometimes the dreams we hold in our teens aren't meant to be the ones we live by when we're older. If they did, I would be spending a lot of time with the blonde girl in Form 5B. Our first love isn't often our true love (so be careful of Puppy Love). However, some dreams are true to who we are, and it can be the cause of regret later in life if we let them go too easily.

What did you dream of doing when you were younger? Have you gone on to do it? What stopped you? How good would it be to do some of those things now? What's stopping you (honestly)? If you discounted all the excuses, leaving just the reasons, would it actually be possible?

Did you have a Puppy Love? Were you infatuated? Can you remember how sure you were that this was right for you, no matter what your parents or others told you? If you could recapture some of that purpose and passion, what would you use it for now?

For the "my-glass-is-half-empty" brigade, it doesn't matter whether your parents were right, and Johnny Deller did only want you for one thing – we're talking about capturing the emotion, not the outcome!

As we find our way in the world as teenagers, we think we know it all and nothing can stop us. Then, adulthood seems to be a series of cuts in our sense of adventure. Why does that have to be the case? Live like a teenager for a while (without the acne, bullying and student debt stress, obviously)!

Personally, I was infatuated with my Maths teacher when I was a teenager, and look where it got me – I married one.

Painless Business News

The next Painless Business Workshop is this week – on February 23rd. This time we will be considering how to [Build a Dream Team With One](#) – always a challenge for those in small business. We will be looking at the various roles business owners could fulfil, and the best way of structuring the business to get the jobs done. Expect the usual blend of hard work, good humour and lively discussion. As usual, we will be at the Shillingford Bridge Hotel from 5pm to 7pm.

I am delighted to say that the next stage in the growth of Painless Business has arrived – I am now in the process of registering trademarks and forming a limited company. The company will be running from 1 April (appropriate!) and the trademark should be registered by the summer (it is a lengthy process!). Obviously, I am very proud to be reaching this stage and thank you all for the roles you have played in the journey here over the last three years.

Book Review



More of a book preview this month, as I would like to herald the forthcoming launch of *Promoting Children's Well-being in the Primary Years*. This is a handbook aimed at educationalists working with primary school children. In particular, I refer you to page 54, where there is an excellent section by a leading UK coach, as featured in *Cosmopolitan*. If you need any clues as to who, that's his picture opposite. Details of the book can be found at www.networkpress.co.uk – recommend it to your teacher friends!

Painless Puns

The following inspiring thoughts have landed in my Inbox this month. Perhaps they will interest you:

Chase your passion, not your pension.

Edward James Olmos

You may not always make the wise choices, but you will always be wiser for having made them.

Anonymous

One particularly pertinent to the discussion of our teenage dreams:

We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow. Our wiser sons, no doubt will think us so.

Alexander Pope

Finally, some more of life's great mysteries:

If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?

When cheese has its picture taken, what does it say?

A bus station is where a bus stops, a train station is where a train stops. So, why on my desk do I have a work station?

Final Words

I now hope that Anne is satisfied that I have kept my side of the challenge (I can hear her humming along right now). I look forward to receiving the compelling reasons your customers love you, and I hope they feel more loved after you have answered some of the questions in this newsletter.

I promise the standard of music references will improve in future issues.

Warmest regards

James Butler

email: james@painlessbusiness.com

voice: +44 1491 659073

web: <http://www.painlessbusiness.com>

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