



Professional Intent

Good things eventually happen to everyone and so do bad. Success or failure is not determined by "things" or circumstances nearly as much as the reaction you have to them. Some of the greatest success in my life was first introduced to me as a "bad thing".

In fact, I believe what is usually considered a negative event can ultimately be flipped to a positive if the right reaction is taken. However, the problem is that most people's short-term reactions seriously limit the long term positive opportunity. When improper actions from others are confronted with a professional reaction it usually provides the greatest catalyst for positive change. It's easy to talk about but rarely easy to do, especially over an extended career. Building the discipline of wise and principled REACTIONS requires a regular series of life tests that can prove your competency.

If someone intends to advance, they must first intend to be professional. Nobody becomes professional overnight... NOBODY! Even extremely talented athletes need time to solidify their muscle memory. Character and professional

behavior is no different. Vince Lombardi said, "Practice does not make perfect - only perfect practice makes perfect." Practice is not just the "tough times". It's the great REACTIONS to each tough time that is the "perfect practice".

Make every crisis count for your life's resume. Predetermine a great response to all your tough times. Here are some suggestions for when you are confronted with a tough situation:

- 1. Wait for all the information before reacting.** Usually by the time all the information is in the best reaction is clear. Jumping ahead to assumptions is usually what brings the worst reactions.
- 2. The more emotion is involved, the longer you should wait to respond.**
- 3. Don't over react.**
- 4. Don't make it personal.**
- 5. Step back and take a slow look at the situation.** Ask yourself "How can I best display my values in this situation?"

6. The bigger the "situation" is, the more advice you should seek out. The important thing is, get wise counsel... not just counsel. For every person of wise counsel that you find, there will be nine not-so-wise counselors. Start developing relationships with people who are wise so that when you need strong advice you don't have to introduce yourself.

7. Take responsibility for your mistakes! Own them like you own your skin. Passing blame is not professional. Making it right may cost a lot but it is almost always worth the investment. If not to your customers, then to yourself... to prove to yourself you are a man or woman of character. It is one of the most highly valued gifts to your own self esteem.

8. Don't think short term; think long term. The further ahead you consider the consequences, the better the immediate reaction usually is. Ask yourself, "Will my reaction demonstrate the best long-term example of who I want to be?"

Becoming professional may take years and even sometimes decades of testing events. Patience is paramount. Remember, it sometimes only takes one event to obliterate a decade of investment.

Advancing in your career requires that those above you see qualities worth investing into. Personally, I'd rather hire an ignorant person with good character than a talented person without. Ignorance can be cured; arrogance usually not.

In every situation that arises, make the best investment of all; in your character!

About the Author:

Robert D. Scheper is a leading Accountant and Consultant to the Lease/Owner operator industry in Canada. His first book in the Making Your Miles Count series "taxes, taxes, taxes" was released in 2007. His firm exclusively serves Lease/Owner Operators across Canada. His second book "Choosing a Trucking company" is the most in-depth analysis of the operator industry available today. He has a Master degree (MBA) in financial management and has been serving the industry since he and his wife came off the road in 1993. His dedication, commitment and strong opinions can be read and heard in many articles and seminars.

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