



## Let Your Actions Reflect Your Words

The older I get, the more I appreciate what people DON'T say. I think people talk too much and say too little. Maybe it's just my perspective but young people can ramble on and on and after an hour of listening I realize, nothing was really said. Worse than that, sometimes they ramble on and say so much that you know they live in La La Land (not the movie).

Building a great business or career requires the harmony of both words and deeds. A real professional has way more deeds than words. I have a very close friend who traveled with me a while back. We sat for three hours not saying a word. It was beautiful. Finally, when we did talk, it was meaningful, direct and clear. Trust is built by actions, not words.

Classical education focuses far too much on words, not actions. I've interviewed hundreds of people in my career. Academically educated applicants seem to focus on what they know while seasoned workers focus on what they have accomplished. There is a huge difference. Young people should be taught what the work force is looking for. Employers and employees should be on the same page when it comes to workplace accomplishments.

Business and career development are all about action, not words.

One of my favorite business stories is about a bank on the west coast of the United States. It was sliding downhill financially as customers were closing their accounts and taking out their deposits. The Board met and discussed the matter and learned that customers were leaving because they were being treated harshly. The Board's response was to initiate a public campaign to change the bank's reputation. They bought thousands of banners and posters and covered the walls of the branches. Every employee was issued pins and new name tags with smiling faces. The entire region was blanketed with TV ads expressing how friendly the staff were and how deeply they cared. The problem was, the Board never told a single employee what was coming and never had a single class explaining the importance of friendly, customer service. The new words and message were delivered on cardboard posters and over the television. When marketing material arrived from headquarters, the employees, assuming they were supposed to be hung up... hung them.

At first, customers came in and saw the posters of smiling faces and smiled to the tellers. Being polite, the tellers smiled back. It was contagious, like the flu. It seemed to have an immediate effect on morale of both the employees and the customers. Deposits ticked upwards again, and it appeared the problem was solved. However, once customers got used to the dangling posters, they then only looked at the employees... who showed little to no signs of change. The employee's service was identical to how it was before the campaign and people returned to their prior opinions. It wasn't long until morale began to slide and people/deposits again began to leave.

Head office soon saw the numbers slide again and, not learning from their first mistake, began another campaign. This time, however, people weren't listening. The rush of customers out the door sped up rather than reversed. Before the Board had the opportunity to correct the problem by adequately training employees, they had lost too many customers and the bank had to be bought out by a competitor.

People learn who the talkers are and who the doers are. If you don't learn the art of building a reputation of trust through action or simple follow through, your future will be limited in opportunity. If you realize that you

are probably a type of person who talks too much and who walks the walk too little... change your actions and simply shut up for a while. Try not having the last word in a conversation or, not giving your opinion on the next number of conversations you walk into. A simple rule to help you along is... do not offer an opinion unless it's asked of you. If it's asked, you're probably considered a person who knows. If you're not asked... it's probably best to just shut up.

### 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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