

Ancient Wisdom for 21st Century Business Communication

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In the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism, there's a discipline called "Right Speech." Basically, it says we should ask ourselves these five questions before we speak:

Is this the right time?

Will what I say be of value to the other person?

Am I speaking with kindness?

Can I say it without complaint?

Is it true?

Reading these five keys, I can imagine how they'd contribute to anyone's spiritual development; but what about the growth of our business? Imagine if we set a priority to consider these five keys before speaking with our clients. Think about the people you choose to do business with. Do they follow these principles? Here are a few examples I've seen of right speech and how it positively impacted business growth.

1. In early 1985, I walked into my broker's office feeling confused and scared. After asking me a few questions, he realized my state of being had nothing to do with investments, but the marriage proposal I received the night before. He didn't dive into his pre-scripted presentation. It simply wasn't the *right time*. He just connected with me, where I was. We ended up talking about the pros and cons of marriage in a light-hearted way and when the time was right, we talked about investments. It was easy to choose him for my broker. For over 20 years, he's been receiving commissions because of that interaction and it all started with him recognizing the right timing.

2. How do we know if what we're about to say is *of value to the other person*? Most of us have felt others trespass on our space when they talk about something we have no interest in. A simple way to discover if what we're going to say is valuable is to ask them more questions. Do they truly have an interest? What are their specific needs? We can also ask ourselves if our intention is to serve the client or simply close another deal. The value of the dollar may be yielding to the value of people. How we care about people by respecting their time and attention is becoming more important to the lifeblood of our companies.

On another note, have you ever wondered if sharing your credentials is of value to others? After years of minimizing my own credentials, I saw another way of looking at this the first time I met Michael Buschmole. When he began his

workshop, he connected with us and shared a complete description of his background. I could feel his intention of letting us know that we were in good hands and that he had experience with the problems we were facing. No ego, no needing approval, it was done simply to share how his experience could be of value to us. Like most communication, the underlying intention is the true message.

3. What would happen if we spent more time finding ways to speak with *kindness*? When was the last time you contacted a client or prospect just to show consideration for them? Kind words go a long way in raising the collective energy. Michael Port, author of *Book Yourself Solid*, recommends sharing a relevant article or book with your clients simply because you thought of them when you read it. Another example is Biznik, where people post compliments and refer professionals to each other. It's fun and the good vibes naturally come back to you. I imagine you can think of a time when you showed a little kindness and your business grew because of it.

A simple reminder is to start off the day with five coins in your right pocket and switch them one by one to your left pocket each time you speak with kindness. If you have five coins in your left pocket at the end of the day, you'll probably be feeling pretty good. Corny? Perhaps. Does it work? Try it for yourself.

4. Speaking *without complaint* is pretty much a no-brainer when it comes to adding to your business success. Most of us realize that whatever we put our attention on grows. By shining a light on what is right, we increase our odds for a favorable outcome. Have you ever been in a brainstorming session with someone who keeps finding the reason your wild, new idea won't work? It destroys opportunities and drags people down. No, you don't have to give up your discernment, but words are powerful. Choose them wisely.

5. The last key is to *speak the truth*. If you find yourself needing to justify or rationalize, notice what you said just before it. Truth is simple. Very few words are needed. Authentic communication is clear, uncluttered, and easy to follow. What a gift when people say enough to be understood and also know when to stop!

It's been said that without a connection, nothing happens. Make sure you have quality Right Speech connections and watch your business soar.