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CHUCK TALK: A week in the life of a professional and non-professional

10 questions to ask yourself about your approach to business

BY CHUCK MACHE

Answer yes or no to the following 10 questions about your business:

1. Are my purpose and my objectives crystal clear?
2. Do I solve problems and/or eliminate pain?
3. Do my clients tell me that I exceed their expectations?
4. Do I put my clients needs before my own?
5. Have I identified my competition, and do I understand their strengths and weaknesses?
6. Am I clearly differentiated from my competition?
7. Are referrals and recommendations are a large part of my business?
8. Am I perceived as an expert, though I have much to learn?
9. Am I grateful?
10. Do I love what I do, and do I passionately attack each day?

If the majority of your answers were "yes," then my educated guess is this is how a real professional spent their week:

It's Friday night, and she doesn't know where the week went. It was full of potential time-stealing issues that were non-related to her goals. She's reflecting on how she was able to juggle everything while staying focused on her purpose.

There were good and bad things about the week. Some wins and some losses. In one case, she was able to exceed her clients' expectations because she had done her homework. She knew exactly where they were experiencing pain, and she knew she could fix it. Months of work had finally paid off this week.

Additionally, a potential client that she had been targeting for the past six months called her. When she met with him, he revealed some confidential information about his business that she was certain he hadn't

told anyone else. It was obvious that he trusted her and believed she could help. This gave her the ability to tailor make a program that would help him.

On the other hand, many things didn't go her way. In earlier years, that may have taken her out of her game, but no longer. She thought about her competitors. They're good, but she knows their weaknesses. In reflection, she can pinpoint when her business life started getting better. It happened when she started putting the needs of others ahead of her own. Miraculously, she's exceeded her own personal goals ever since.

She reflected on the difficulty of the week, but she knew that was the key to a good week. That meant she was really working. She thought about the areas that she needed to improve upon and made some quick notes before the thoughts left her head. She intended to review these with her mentor. She was becoming one of the best, but she wanted to get better. She thought again about the pace of the week. "What a rush," she said to herself.

If the majority of your answers were "no," then here's an example of the typical week of an amateur:

He wondered why he hadn't picked a different profession. Retirement and 65 seemed a long way away, and he was tired. Thank God it was Friday because if he dealt with another whining client he might scream at the top of his lungs.

He thought about the rest of the people in his office and how so many of them get so lucky. He thought about making another career change, or perhaps staying in the same industry and switching to a company that would give him the real assistance that he needs to get better.

The week had been a big disappointment, but it was something that he'd grown accustomed to. His annual goal wasn't realistic, so he didn't see much sense in having a weekly goal. Not in this market. Not now, maybe later when things picked up. He knew his daily goal: survive.

He was happy about the client that he picked up from his sister's friend. He just hoped they weren't too demanding. Networking and attracting business is a big investment of time and money. "I value my free time," he thought to himself as he walked into the movie theater on Friday afternoon.

Enjoy your week everyone.

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