

northbaybusinessjournal.com

This is a printer friendly version of an article from www.northbaybusinessjournal.com

To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Article published - Mar 26, 2007

CHUCK TALK: Letting fear rule you or using it to produce results

BY CHUCK MACHE

How many times have you heard comments like this about someone in business, "He is fearless." Or, "She has no fear." I don't believe anyone is absolutely fearless. In my view, that would be a license for total reckless abandon. A more accurate reflection of those who appear fear free is, "He doesn't let fear get in the way."

Fear can polarize us. We can find ourselves doing nothing except being fearful. Fear can cause target fixation as we impose our will and try to force unnatural outcomes. Fear puts us at a major disadvantage. We refuse to develop alternative plans because we struggle with clouded thinking.

On the other hand, the very best salespeople are great hunters. Like the hunter, they are rewarded for hitting the target. They sell and they get paid. They don't sell and they don't get paid.

I don't believe that great hunters are fearless, just like I don't believe that great salespeople, managers, or executives are fearless.

Great hunters have too much respect for, say, a 1,000-pound Grizzly that requires a precision shot to bring down. On the other hand, that hunter understands and acknowledges his fear, recognizes when fear is calling and is able to use it to his advantage.

The same holds true for great salespeople, or anyone in business. They use fear differently than those who struggle.

Have you ever been in a situation similar to this? Your new client just signed an agreement putting you way ahead of the previous year. Not only would it catapult you in your organization and the industry, your personal income would reach new heights.

Then, the following week, the person who signed the contract is replaced and in walks a new decision maker. His first order of business is to cancel all new contracts because of a strategic change in the direction of the company. There is no real logic to this cancellation and it absolutely changes the game. On top of that, the new guy brought all of his old relationships, including your largest competitor.

Which of the following reactions best fits you?

After receiving the news you go home crushed by the day's events. You spend considerable time pondering the effects it will have on your future. You consider the ramifications of finishing the quarter at the low end of the sales rankings. You feel hopeless.

Or, you go home and after a few minutes alone in the mental fetal position, you question your entire identity, purpose, and career path. Although brief, self-doubt rules the moment. A short time later you emerge out. You hunker down and develop your best strategy to win back the client using all of the tools available. Additionally, you identify where you are going to replace that revenue should you fail. You explore

and create options. You become stronger because you know the fight is just getting good.

Great salespeople have fear. The difference is that the best are fearful of not being the best, or not winning. Struggling salespeople are fearful of losing. The real question is not "Are you fearless?" The real question is, "How are you going to use your fears to make you better?"

Ask yourself three questions

The next time fear has you, try the following:

- Name something that you were fearful of that you absolutely didn't get through. We get through everything.
- Develop a plan B and take action immediately. Have plan C ready to go if need be.
- Recognize what your mind and body does when fear pays a visit. Invite it in, and then invite it to leave.

Greatness is about going where no others will go – don't try to tell me there's no fear attached to that. The key is to recognize and use your fear so that it becomes your friend. Healthy fear tells us we're on the edge of breakthrough. We're in the right place doing the right thing. That's a little different than letting fear own us. Go be great.

•••

Chuck Mache, President of Chuck Mache Communications, is a speaker, executive coach, consultant, and author of "The Four Kinds of Sales People: Your Personal Path to Breakthrough Achievement." Learn more about Chuck and sign up for his complimentary monthly newsletter at www.chuckmache.com