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CHUCK TALK: Not having fun at sales? You better be

Sure there are bad days; but overall one has to have fun

BY CHUCK MACHE

I was enjoying a wonderful day on the golf course recently. I can assure you it wasn't because I was playing with precision. It was pretty much the opposite. It was more like a combination of some good shots sprinkled among a golf swing that can best be described as "needs work."

However, the weather was sunny and in the high 70s, there was little to no wind and I was playing with a client in my foursome. Occasionally, I hit a shot that reminded me that perhaps, with a little luck, if I put in some practice, I'd be able to put a decent round together. The bottom line, I was having fun. Golf is supposed to be fun, right?

Then how come one of the guys in my foursome was really grinding away on his round? While he was a pretty good player and obviously had some command of the game, why did he appear to be so miserable?

I would describe his behavior as subdued anger. He would quietly curse when a shot wasn't exactly to his liking. He wasn't making any small talk during the round, unless it was a verbal undressing of his own game. It was obvious that Mr. Angry wasn't having any fun at all.

Even when he hit a good shot, he couldn't get over the bad ones. Mr. Angry was having a bad day. Was it just today, or does Mr. Angry ever have fun playing? He certainly wasn't having any fun today.

You learn a lot about people on the golf course. There really is no place to hide. It's you, the club, the ball and the shot. It's your good shot, and it's your bad shot. The strengths and weaknesses of your game are exposed, there for all to see. How you handle adversity, ups and downs, is truly revealed.

Transfer with me this same thinking over to business, and particularly sales. Are you having fun?

I'm going to tell you that you better be, or my bet is that you are in for a long and mediocre career. Or if you are lucky, it's a very short career and hopefully you'll find something that you enjoy doing.

I don't believe that anybody can excel at what they are doing unless they are having fun. It's human nature. If we are grinding away at our careers, similar to the golfer described above, we're either eventually going to burn out, get spit out or at the very least lead a sales life of misery.

So let me ask you this, who buys from misery? Who buys from grinder? Who buys from the self-absorbed individual who is never satisfied? Who buys from Mr. Negative? Who buys from Mr. No Fun?

If you buy into the premise that long-term successful selling means networking, relationship building and doing the things required to attract business via referrals and the like, then Mr. No Fun will be too preoccupied with what's wrong to attract any meaningful business. Said simply, nobody buys from Mr. No Fun.

Here's what I'm not saying: Every day is a great day. That just isn't possible. Chalk the bad ones up to "life happens" and move on.

Here's also what I'm not saying: You better be Mr. Personality, full of charisma and always up 100 percent of the time. Mr. Over The Top. Mr. Life Is Phenomenal. Because at the end of the day, that is Mr. Phony and nobody buys for very long from Mr. Phony.

Like golf, there is nowhere to hide in sales. Your results are your results. Like in golf, where you are certain to hit bad shots, in sales you will have bad days.

If you're not having fun in golf, you won't play the game for very long, and if you're not having fun in sales, you won't play that game very long either. Like golf, I wish I could say it's only a game, but it's more than that. It's your career, an even more important reason to have fun doing it.

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Chuck Mache, President of Chuck Mache Communications, is a speaker, executive coach, consultant and author of "The Four Kinds of Sales People: How and Why They Excel and How You Can Too." He is also a featured expert on the top-rated Entrepreneur Magazine Radio Show in a segment called "Chuck Talk" (online at www.EntrepreneurTalkRadiocom). Learn more and sign up for Chuck's complimentary monthly newsletter at www.ChuckMache.com.