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# **CHUCK TALK: The best testimonials aren't always in the brochure**

## **How to get others to 'sneeze' your name and bring in business**

by **Chuck Mache**

There are three possible things that are going on in the business world pertaining to you right now. Either nobody is talking about you, they're talking favorably about you or they're talking poorly about you. If they aren't talking about you, they either don't have a thought or they have a positive or negative thought and just choose not to share it. There can't be anything else going on, and if you look at it that simply, then the goal should be to get people talking favorably about you as much as possible. After all, isn't that the most credible thing that can happen in business? That someone speaks very favorably about you and your work? It should be a goal because a great testimonial adds tremendous credibility to our life's work. The first thing that people usually think about when they hear the word testimonial is a catchy quote from a trusted customer that gets plastered on a Web site or slick marketing piece. Its purpose is to demonstrate credibility to potential customers. It's a solid strategy and one that I always recommend. But the real value of the testimonial is much deeper than that, and the best ones don't come wrapped around neat little quotes on an expensive flyer. A standard testimonial that companies place in their literature goes something like this: "I partnered with XYZ Company because of their outstanding customer service." That's a really nice sound bite and looks especially good when written in a nice bold font. But, as I try to do, I'd like to take you deeper and talk about the very best kind of testimonial in the whole world. I mean the kind that's guaranteed to get you new business, the best employees, recruited by your competition and have potential customers calling you. It's called the verbal unsolicited testimonial. That's right, people in your community of business saying favorable things about you or your company. It's not in writing on a piece of literature, or on a Web site, and it doesn't come at your request. It's delivered directly from one person to the next from people who are overflowing with the need to "sneeze" your work to someone they feel could benefit from you as much as they have. It's like when I met my Realtor over 20 years ago. My boss said to me, "Call him, he'll get it done for you and you can trust him." That was all I needed to hear. He's still my Realtor. If people aren't talking favorably about you in business, and I don't care what business you are in, then there is a problem. Whether you are a doctor, accountant, lawyer, sales rep, CEO, CFO, COO, or any O, the crowd better be saying good things. If they are not, there is a problem. We live in a world where nothing is more powerful than a trusted source picking up the phone and saying, "Do business with him and you won't be sorry. Let me tell you about my experience." If your actions cause people to do that, then you will be tremendously successful. I am not taking about just sales here, I'm talking about business life and what makes the business food chain work. Those who perform get talked about favorably and, like a virus, it spreads. If it spreads, those who perform do better. Here are five tips on getting the world to sneeze good things about you. • Walk your talk – People need to know that your word is absolutely as good as anything in writing they could ever have. • Under promise and over deliver – The most overused phrase in America is "We exceed expectations." Most people and companies don't even meet expectations. You need to make sure that you absolutely exceed expectations. • Communicate effectively – One rule here: Determine how people want to be communicated with and give it to them. Avoid all negative surprises. • Stick to what you know – It is imperative that you are perceived as an expert in what you do. I've never met anyone who was great at everything. Do what you do best, over and over again. • Get results – People who choose to do business with you are happy to tell others of the great

decision that they made in choosing you. If you over deliver on your results, they will be happy to do so. How many people are calling you and wanting to do business with you because they were talking to a friend and your name came up? How many compliments are you getting from your boss or peers about the job you are doing? When was the last time you were recruited by a competitor? Do you think your name even comes up? If it does, and if it is favorable, then you are getting a verbal testimonial – someone is sneezing your name. That is powerful. ●●● Chuck Mache, president of Chuck Mache Communications, is a speaker, executive coach and consultant. His work is dedicated to helping companies and individuals break through to their next level and he is the bestselling author of the “The Four Kinds of Sales People: How and Why They Excel and How You Can Too.” Learn more and sign up for Chuck’s complimentary monthly newsletter at [www .chuckmache.com](http://www.chuckmache.com).