

Using All Of Your Resources?



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Often in the hustle and bustle of performing our daily duties we go about our usual ways, managing to get from point A way over to point B. But we can easily fall into a rut and struggle unnecessarily.

Perhaps, if we pause, and take an objective look at things, there just might be a better way of doing what we have to do to accomplish what is required of us. Suppose the Wright Brothers never thought of electricity, or was that cough drops, or something about air planes? Well, anyway, you get my drift.

Just because: “Well, that’s the way we have ALWAYS done it!” does not mean it is the only way, or even the best and correct way, of doing things. We’ve all been there: “We flush hydrants between 11:00 PM and 3:00 AM.” Why? Yup, you guessed it. “That’s the way we’ve always done it.” “We don’t want rusty water complaints.” Well, think about it. IF we change (oops, nasty word there) and notify the public as to what and why we are flushing hydrants, giving special written notices to hair dressers, laundries, hospitals, nursing homes, etc, we can get a better job done, as well as, save on overtime!

The resource I would like you to consider, that is already at your beck and call, is your local sales representative. For the most part, these people are highly trained and knowledgeable concerning new products and ways of accomplishing a desired end result.

Some of their employers, not all, have gone to great expense to train and educate their sales staff in the proper selection and application of materials and new products available in the marketplace today.

I cringe to think of the YEARS that passed before my old superintendent would permit the use of those ‘flimsy’ stainless steel clamps in place of those old heavy, bulky, expensive, cast iron, bolted split repair clamps and couplings! “We’ve always done it this way!”

Unfortunately, it is necessary to insert a STRONG WARNING here. As you are well aware, not every sales person who squirms through your interrogation process has your best interest at heart. Instead, they may be smiling at you and seeing quotas or bottom lines. It is up to you, the buyer, to separate the wheat from the chaff. Buyer beware!! You have, or will, develop your own way of doing this.

“My sales person as a resource?” “Well, why not? They’re available and inexpensive!”

I do encourage you to use these people to your advantage, however, PLEASE BE AWARE, there does come a point where this relationship becomes UNPAID CONSULTING. Please keep this term in mind as you pick the brains of your sales reps.

In spite of the appearance many, if not most, of them like to present to the general public, they are expected to produce some type of a profit for their employers. The golf expeditions, lunches, tickets, bar tabs (oops again), etc, DO cost somebody something – guess who? Have you ever heard the saying: “Nothing is free in this world!” You can be assured their employer is more interested in their profit margin than their golf score.

Boss: “Well, Charlie, you didn’t make a single cent of profit this month, but at least you had a lot of fun out there!” Yeah, get real.

You may be interested in leak detection, but is it acceptable to keep calling the sales rep for the equipment back time and time again to do your leak detection for you? Are you using the same supply house over and over for quotes when you know you would not order from them regardless? I used to slave over job plans to do comprehensive ‘take-offs’ for hours and hours to ‘serve’ some contractor’s request. For what? They knew very well who they were going to deal with. It is nothing less than abuse to use people that way. I spent valuable time and money basically for unpaid consulting. Tell your lawyer you just want to talk over some legal matters with him (or her) without exchanging any money. See the ‘look’ you get!

Are you spreading the wealth, so to speak, when you can? How about supporting those that support you?

Look around. Use your sales reps. Learn from them. But, treat them as you would like to be treated! They are people too. Besides: Mom says! (That makes it legal!) 💧

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