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How to Build Friendships in Business

By Justin Hitt, Strategic Relations Consultant, <http://www.justinhitt.com/>

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If you had a choice (which you do), would you rather work with your friends or the usual run of the mill customer? You, like many others, would want to do business with people who are friends - those people who you can trust and enjoy their patronage. Here are three suggestions on how you can build long lasting quality friendships in business:

Be in business for the long term. Consider the lifetime value of a customer over the entire period of purchase. Be honest with your customers to treat them as if you will see them again (if they are happy you will.) Invest in your customers as you would your stock portfolio; periodically weed out the unprofitable ones.

Treat each customer as an individual. No matter how busy you are that day, provide each customer a positive one-to-one experience. However possible generating a win-win situations with the customers long term interest in mind. A few profitable customers are better than just a whole lot of customers; they even cost less to serve.

Produce high quality products. If you customers have something to say about your product, be ready to listen. Continually implement methods to improve your products and services. Customers will not always tell you so ask how else you can better serve them.

To increase your bottom-line and create solid long lasting relationships in your business (a) be in business for the long term, (b) treat each customer as an individual, and (c) produce high quality products. It is really that easy, one transaction at a time, one customer each on their own measure. Try one of these suggestions in your business today.

To learn more about building friendships in business, visit <http://www.justinhitt.com/archives/2001/28/index02.shtml>

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True Friends Are Not Dream–Slashers

By David Leonhardt

A friendship poem:

Choose friends wisely, the portrait they paint
Is who you are and who you ain't.
Friendship is life's great support
When friends are of the right sort.
For all your dreams do they make room,
Or bring you down with doom and gloom?
You will know a friendship is true
When it brings out the best in you..

It's true. You can tell a person by the company she keeps. Our friendships not only tell a lot about who we are -- they make us who we are.

The friendship poem above says it all. You will know a friendship is true when it brings out the best in you.

Take a look at your friendships. Do they bring out the best in you? That might seem like a silly question. We all tend to think, "Of course they bring out the best in me. I wouldn't be friends with them otherwise."

But stop and think why you are friends. Here are a few common reasons why people become friends:

Common background, sharing a comfort level in company from "the same side of the tracks".

Common current situation, being able to discuss parenting, home renovations, or some other major life circumstance. Common interest, such as cards, bowling, hunting, etc. For shy people, a person who actually approached you is a candidate for friendship. For leaders, somebody who seems content to follow is a likely candidate. Somebody you spend time with anyway, such as a colleague, sibling, etc, often becomes a friend. Somebody you see frequently anyway, such as a neighbor, store clerk, etc, could become a friend.

These are just a few reasons people choose friends. It is the easy, natural way, but it is not always in our best interest. Sure, we should always want to get along with colleagues, neighbors, siblings, and anybody else.

But we should choose our friends, the people we open up to, very carefully. For instance, even a sibling can bring you down, pooh–pooh your dreams and load you up with negativity. "Ha! You think you can teach? What do you know about teaching?"

Even well–meaning friends can be dream–slashers. "Oh, do you really think you should go into business for yourself? I mean, what about security?"

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On the other hand, some friends have a way of building up your dreams. "Go for it! You could really do well. And at worst, you'll at least have given it your best shot!"

Friends will often lend a hand. "Gee, I don't know much about fitness, but is there any way I can help you reach your goal?" Dream-slashers usually don't. "Hey, if you insist on pursuing this crazy scheme, leave me out of it."

A true friendship should: Encourage you to live your dream. Support you toward your goals. Sympathize for your losses and help you find a silver lining. Build your self-esteem.

If happiness and life-satisfaction are your goals, your friends should be chosen on the basis of how well they can accomplish those four goals.

Happiness is a personal choice that comes from within. But it sure doesn't hurt to have supportive friendships that help us achieve our goals.

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and author of Climb your Stairway to

Heaven: the 9 habits of maximum happiness at

True Friends Are Not Dream-Slashers
Childhood Friendships
It Not Easy Bein "Me"
32 Words That Can Change Your Life
Fixing a Broken Partner-Picker

How to Use Your Mind for Study
Build Your Own Mail Order Empire
The Great Big Book of Internet Marketing
Inside The Minds of Winners
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