

Less is More

“You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”

It’s true. And the amazing thing is, after just those first few seconds, you’ve probably left a lasting imprint. Once that first impression is made, it is practically permanent.

I think that most people have heard this cliché about first impressions many times before. Maybe that’s why I often see entrepreneurs putting too much into their “meet and greets.” Or, it might just be an unconscious, nervous response to an uncomfortable situation. No matter the reason, don’t go “overboard” during your first social or business contacts.

I’m not saying that you shouldn’t try to make a good impression. You absolutely should. Just don’t assume that a lot of talk will necessarily show how effective, experienced or intelligent you are.

Remember the hit movie Speed? The story goes that when the creators pitched the movie idea to producers, it went something like this: “Think Die Hard, on a moving bus.”

Seven words – not bad. Had their pitch been “Think of a riveting, edge-of-your-seat story about a tough, troubled but socially mindful cop who meets and then saves a fun, courageous woman and a bus full of other lesser characters from certain death via a bomb set by a clever, disgruntled ex-cop,” the movie may never have seen the light of day.

If you have less than thirty seconds to present your company to a potential customer, what would you say? My advice: don’t waste time explaining the background of your company, or the intricacies of what your job entails. Only present information that is relevant to your listeners. Don’t waste the attention span of your audience on fluff. The more you say, the greater the chance that your listener will tune you out.

Also, be sure to tell the customer what you can do for them. Customers want to hear simple, insightful statements that they can relate to. Make it clear what benefit you provide.

Just as in the “movie pitch” example above, the potential producers of Speed could easily imagine the box-office returns of a Die Hard-type film, the benchmark for action/drama, hero-saves-the-day movies – from only seven words.

Think how much time you could save and how much more business you could earn by keeping it simple: saying more by saying less.

Warmly,

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