



# Mackay

## ON MONEY

BY AUTHORISED FINANCIAL ADVISER CHRIS MACKAY

*Sometimes you read an article or hear a speaker and you are stunned by the absolute truth of the message.*

*The following excerpts from an article by our Aussie cousin, Martin Grunstein struck such a chord. He's a really smart cookie. I rang him one weekend at his home and he was happy for me to share it. Hope you enjoy it. It's all about customer service.*

“Everybody has his/her own theory of life. Mine is called the ‘idiot’ theory of life and it has become the central focus for all my teachings in customer service.

It goes like this.

When you are about 12 or 13 (but at different ages for different people) you are sitting in your bedroom one day and it dawns on you – that you're an IDIOT!

This probably happens as a result of making a goose of yourself with the opposite sex and you think to yourself ‘Boy, am I an idiot? I hope nobody's noticed.’ But it's too

late because everybody knows you're an idiot.

So it becomes your mission as a teenager to hide the fact YOU know you're an idiot from everyone you come in contact with. You dress like the crowd and act like the crowd and it's risky to ask the opposite sex out for fear of rejection, and that's how we live our adolescent years.

BUT, you never grow out of it!

As adults, it intensifies and it becomes your mission in life FOREVER to hide the fact you know you're an idiot from everyone you come in contact with as long as you live.

Eventually, you meet one person in the world who you fool completely, totally oblivious to your idiocy, so you MARRY that person! You meet another group of people who know you're an idiot and accept you. We call these people FRIENDS. And the third group of people is the most important for our purposes because they are the people who know you're an idiot, but they DON'T let you know they know you're an idiot. And these are the people to whom we give our money in business! And I mean that most sincerely.

For example, I had to buy a computer for my business years ago. Now, I am an idiot when it comes to IT but I had to buy it from an IT retailer so I try and hide the fact I'm an idiot from the person serving me by saying all the things you are meant to say when buying a computer (even though I don't know what I'm talking about). Two seconds after I open my mouth the salesperson KNOWS I'M AN IDIOT from the way I speak but if that person lets me know they know I'm an

idiot, I'll run a mile because we don't give our money in business to people who humiliate us in the sales process.

After being humiliated on three separate occasions, I went to a friend of mine who was a trainer in the IT industry and said to him ‘I'll give you \$500 (plus the cost of the equipment) if you buy me all the things I need for my office and install them for me and be available to answer any dumb questions I have. I just don't want to come in contact with an IT salesperson. They make me feel like an idiot.’ My friend suggested \$500 was too much as it would take him less than two hours to do everything I wanted. I said ‘Keep the money’ and to this day I felt it was worth every penny to not have to deal with IT people.

I wonder how many people feel the same.

About 10 years ago I was playing golf with a senior executive who told me he was flying from Sydney to Brisbane to do an expensive IT course for people over 50 because he felt uncomfortable sitting in a room with people 20 or 30 years younger than him who picked up concepts quicker than him.

At a seminar a lady from rural N.S.W. said she drove over 100 kilometres to another town to buy a car because her local car dealer (for that brand) was patronizing to her as a female and she wasn't prepared to put up with that despite the massive inconvenience.

I have heard on several occasions stories of people giving their business to the only tradesperson who followed up the quote or the person who turned up on time.



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A client of mine was taking several important clients of his to a fancy seafood restaurant at Darling Harbour. While in the middle of entertaining and trying to impress the people at his table the waiter informed him, loud enough for everybody at the table to hear, he was eating his entrée with the wrong fork! Not only did that restaurant lose 10 future customers, my client said he's told the story to hundreds of people naming the restaurant every time and telling people never to go there.

There is an adage in customer service that says THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT.

That is the greatest load of garbage I've ever heard!

The customer is WRONG almost 100 per cent of the time. In fact most of the time the customer is an IDIOT, just like you and me.

But whether the customer is right or wrong is irrelevant to the success of your business.

The only thing that matters is whether the customer walks away from dealing with you THINKING he/she is right. If you can get that across to your staff there is a good chance you will increase the number of repeat customers...

Does that mean we have to lie to customers?

Of course not but it doesn't mean we always have to shove their inadequacies down their throat.

Would it hurt if the waiter didn't inform the customer he was using the wrong fork? Would it hurt if the regional car salesman didn't let the female customer know that he didn't feel women knew much when it came to cars? Would it hurt if the IT salespeople didn't embarrass me for not appreciating the

full capabilities of the computer when all I want to do is word process and get onto the internet?

The world wouldn't change at all but in those three cases those businesses would have gained customers they [subsequently] lost by making them feel like idiots . . ."

*Martin Grunstein's outstanding results with over 500 Australasian companies has made him Australia's most in-demand speaker on Outstanding Customer Service. His website is www.martingrunstein.com.au*

Footnote: Just remember this article originates over the ditch. The bit about adolescence and trying to conform seems right on wherever we live. But I reckon Kiwis in service industries have a nicer attitude and are less patronizing than their counterparts in most countries. We've come back recently from the Czech Republic and thought the people there were slightly surly and unfriendly. Prague we thought was a beautiful city but there wasn't a lot of going on. Much of the service was pretty slack too. Maybe they thought we were complete idiots!

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