

## **Questions Are the Key to Success in Business and Life**

It was Kipling who gave us what was perhaps the greatest advice for business success and, in fact, success in life that has ever been given. He told us the key to success in all areas when he said **"I had six honest serving men. They taught me all I knew. Their names were: where and what and when and why and how and who."**

The late great Earl Nightingale suggested we add two more friends to this group. They are, **which and if.**

Whether you are seeking to find ways to increase sales or control and reduce costs, questions are the key. Whether you are striving to improve your customer service or the quality of your product, or your life, questions are the key.

**Asking the questions and developing the answers are the keys to any and all success you will have in business and in fact life.**

Questions like:

If we do this, what happens?

Why do we do it this way?

Why don't we do it this way?

Who else can we sell to?

Where else can we get this?

What can we do to reduce costs?

What can we do to improve productivity?

What can we do to improve quality?

What can we do to improve our service?

How else can that be done?

How can we do it better, faster, cheaper?

How can we improve quality, service, and profits?

How can we cut costs?

If we do this, will we improve quality?

If we do this, will it improve service?

If we do this, will it increase profits?

Which provides us with better quality?

Which is best for our customer?

What do we get in return for this cost?

Who else can provide what we need?

Why are we paying that much?

Why do we not deal with another company?

Why are we dealing with them?

How many other bids have we gotten?

What if?

How can we replace that with equal or better quality for less?

What are other companies charging for that product or service?

What are other companies paying for that product or service?

Will this process or step add value to our product or service or does it produce added profit?

When would this investment pay off?

**You see my point I am sure.** You must ask questions and seek out the answers. You must also justify the answers.

**You must never stop asking. If you are not continuously asking the questions and reacting to the answers, you are either assuming or stagnating. Either one can be deadly to your business.**

You must review every phase of your business. You may be very surprised when you see how little effort it will take to find huge savings and to make major improvements in how you conduct business.

You can always improve how you do things. You must find ways to conduct business more efficiently, eliminate needless steps, improve quality, increase productivity, reduce errors, increase sales, reduce expenses, and control costs.

Let me give you one small example of how an assumption proved to be very costly at one company. One of the many products this company offered was a holiday label strip. This was simply a strip of peel off labels to affix to holiday presents showing “to” and “from”. Banks around the country would buy them and give them out one strip at a time to their customers around the holidays.

For years this company shrink wrapped these in packages of 250 and sold them in a minimum quantity of 1,000. The shrink wrapping was time consuming and costly. I asked them why. Why did they need to be shrink wrapped? How did they know if this was important to the customer? What, if any, difference did packaging make to their customers?

They asked the questions and found the answers. The answer in this case was that the customer either couldn't have cared less about the packaging or did not like the shrink wrap as it simply meant more work for them to unwrap. After years of doing it the way they always did and assuming that was what the end user wanted, they found out differently. They now bulk package. They save between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per year and their customers are either happier or neutral about this change.

Did this company sacrifice quality in any way to save money? No, they improved productivity, improved customer satisfaction, and, by doing so, improved profitability.

**Ask the questions. They are the key to the door of improvement.**

You should constantly be reviewing every area of your operation to seek ways in which you can improve. Use common sense. From office expenses to customer service, from distribution and production to quality control and shipping, you will be shocked at how little effort it will take to improve your operations, reduce waste and redundancy, and realize huge savings.

From the way you sell things to the way you buy things, it is up to you to improve things. Improvement is always possible in everything we do.

**You possess the greatest power ever created and it sits right between your two ears. You own it, free and clear. All you need to do is put it to work.**

This edition of The Welch Report has been provided by Derrick Welch the author of ‘**In Pursuit of Profits: How to at Least Double your Profits Without Increasing Your Sales**’. **Including**

**1,000 Cost Control, Expense Reduction, and Income Producing Strategies You Can Start Using Today To Dramatically Increase Your Bottom Line.**

And **'Defy Mediocrity. Choose to be Uncommon. Think of the Alternative'**.

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