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Be Assertive



Kyle Seay, birth mom Donna, myself and Ernie Quintana in Philadelphia circa 2012

I was going to use the word aggressive, but that can be misinterpreted, and can be mistaken for a bull in a china shop. Ernie Quintana and Kyle Seay, who I'm lucky to work with every day, define assertiveness. Those two guys are dialed in and on top of everything. A visual would be the difference between elite quarterbacks like Peyton Manning and Tom Brady and some backup QB. With the great QB it feels different because they have it together. There is a brisk pace and confidence in how they work. If aggression is a shotgun blast assertive is an assassin bullet.

Here are two recent stories about a lack of assertiveness that will probably cost two individuals great opportunities and money. In the security business, I represent 25 product lines in a four-state region. Often times, my bosses at my product lines ask for recommendations of good Representative Companies in another part of the U.S. Just a few days ago, my boss Dennis Dop, an all-around great guy who runs sales for a great company called Videofied (www.videofied.com) based in Minnesota, asked me for a suggestion in the western part of the U.S. I gave him the name of my friend, who will remain nameless.

I explained to Mister Nameless that I teed up the opportunity for him and it was all but a done deal! He was going to get eight states to represent and probably MAKE \$40K annually in commission! Most people don't make \$40K a year, and this is on top of everything Mister Nameless was already doing, Mister Nameless then texted me should he call Dennis? I was shocked and really made me think twice whether I should have referred this guy? I wrote back semi-sarcastically, "Only if you want the product line." If this were me I would have dialed the guy up the second I got the lead.

Say you have the product line for 10 years and you grow it, you are talking about a \$500K-\$800K phone call here! Can you imagine if the greatest girl in high school puts the word out she wants you to ask her to prom and you expect HER to call you?! Ridiculous. So it made me think back to when and where I learned to be assertive and I really can't think of who or when it became part of my DNA, but I can guarantee you this: if you want to

achieve your goals and dreams in a sooner rather than later manner you better incorporate this as early as you can! The second example is a great distributor called TRIED has a superstar named Steven Turkasz who runs their Austin branch. I would LOVE to hire him for that market to work for me, but it's a no-no to take your distribution partners employees. Steven, who I trust and also value his opinion, referred me to a guy he thought would fit into our company. We will call him Mister Slow. I email and call Mr. Slow and many days later I get an email back saying he's interested and that he's going out of the country and will be back in a week or two. News flash, the "I'm-out-of-the country" excuse is gone. Phones and email work virtually anywhere in the world. Mr. Slow shows back up on U.S. soil and leaves a really monotone unexcited voicemail that doesn't impress me one bit. If the guy had been out of the country shouldn't his batteries been fully recharged? Why not leave an exciting voice mail and look at our website before you call and have something relevant to use in your call back.

By the way this is for a \$70K job that will pay over \$100K a year within two years if the person performs. What did I do after I got the unimpressive voice mail? ZERO. That's not the type of guy I want on my team. Show up on time and excited for the opportunity or I would rather compete against you than play with you. I'm willing to bet that this individual will never make a \$100K a year and he was potentially a great timely phone call away.

It's truly that close in life. Make the extra call, text, follow up and be knowledgeable about who you are calling and what you want and more importantly what you can do for them. Not what they can do for you! I'm older, but you used to sell a potential employer why you were the right person to hire. Nowadays, employees act like you should sell them on why they should work for you. I disagree, if you want a great life, be assertive!