

The Handbook for Business, the Bible

Hearing and learning

There is one crucial question business owners should ask their BEST customers; that is, the type of customers every business wants more of as they yield the best gross profit and relationships.

Yet from my experience, few ever consider, let alone, ask any such question.

I call it the **perfect question** and it's simply this: *WHY DO YOU BUY FROM US?*

Most owners would assume the answer is obvious: quality product, friendly service, competitive prices and so on.

But just this once, I want you to **mistrust the obvious**.

Years ago, I worked with a supermarket owner who was being impacted by a new store that opened nearby.

I asked John, why he thought some still favoured his store over the new store?

He believed it was because *"we are a family business, offering good service."*

Nonetheless, I challenged him to ask a customer who was in store at the time.

Sure enough, he was stunned by her response - *"I like to shop here because I feel safe on the wooden floor...compared to the new store with its shiny, lino floor"*.

It turned out many older customers felt the same way.

John had no idea. And who would have ever figured it out? He did, but only by asking the perfect question: *"why do you (choose to) buy from us"* and listening intently to their answers!

My counsel for you, as a business owner:

Follow John's example. Ask your best customers the perfect question! It provided clarity for him, and it will for you. It's the best market research you can do and costs nothing. Their answers will help clarify your point-of-difference, your offer, your messaging and other marketing strategies.

You will also learn how customers **feel** doing business with you and what they value most about the relationship; and in marketing terms, this guidance from the most important people in your business is pure GOLD.

As a takeaway from this session, ***what is your equivalent of the wooden floor?***

The Bible, our Handbook counsel: Proverbs 1:5, English Standard Version...

"Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance"

Other Scriptures (NKJV):

Proverbs 2:2, *"So that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding"*

Proverbs 14:15, *"The simple believes every word, but the prudent considers well his steps"*

Proverbs 18:13, *"He who answers a matter before he hears it; it is folly and shame to him"*

Proverbs 18:15, *"The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, the ear of the wise seeks knowledge"*

Matthew 7:7-8, *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek...For everyone who asks receives..."*

James 1:19, *"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak..."*