



The Door Bell Effect

What goes through your mind the moment you ring the door bell of someone's house? I suspect first it's an expectation of having someone answer the door (seeing a family member or connecting with a friend). As time continues, and no one answers, other thoughts start to emerge: Did the door bell actually ring? Is there anyone home? Should I ring again? Maybe I should knock. Are they ignoring me?

Putting Creativity to Work!

At some point you decide to leave, usually feeling disappointed or a bit miffed because you weren't able to make the connection or that you were being ignored. However, perception is everything.

Creativity Explained Creativity Nurtured Creativity in Action

Unknowingly, how many of us are doing that to potential clients and customers?

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In business, people come do our doors for a number of reasons – wanting our goods or services, seeking employment, or seeking an interaction that will benefit them. Our goal is to make sure that the interaction is positive, whatever the context. Hopefully they will want to come back.

The growing trend in business to only acknowledge the potential employees we want to interview is short sighted and potential damaging. Here is an actual case in point.

A local well-respected charity was looking for an executive director. They used what was considered a reputable local head-hunter to oversee the process. A qualified person, seeing the advertisement spent a few hours researching the organization and their potential contribution, and put together an application package. After submitting their application they waited, and waited, and waited – the door bell was rung. After a few of weeks they attempted to contact the head-hunting organization to see if their application was received. Their phone calls were not returned. All avenues they tried to get some simple information went nowhere: the unanswered door.

This executive expressed sadness and outrage that after all their effort, they were ignored and vowed never to support that charity again or consider that head-hunting organization as potential contractors. If everyone who met that unanswered door reacted like this executive, the charity's fundraising job just got a bit harder. This executive, their family, a large number of friends and colleagues, have redirected their donations and estate gifts elsewhere – never to return. The human resource group will never have this person's consideration when looking for services.

All of this because someone could not be bothered to answer the door bell – even to say “no thank you”.

I talked to another human resource person who said she did not have time to acknowledge the 50 to 100 applications for the job that they posted. If half of the people she ignored decided, as the executive above did, to boycott her organisation's goods and services, that's 25 – 50 potential customers that were lost.

We all have times when people and activities slip through the cracks, but a large part of our businesses is about perception – other people's. How are your actions (or inactions) colouring the perceptions of people approaching your organisation?

So the next time potential customers, donors or clients ring your doorbell, for whatever reason, think about the consequences of ignoring them.