

Taking Care of Business:

Open for Business - The Entrance



To raise the environmental energies in your place of business, start at the beginning - the entrance. Your goals here are to be sure that everyone that who wants to do business with you can find you, can get in easily to see you, and is comfortable while they are in your business space. If

you can't control the door to your building, at least consider the door to your own space. Start where the clients with the money start: outside.

Is your business clearly visible from the street? Is your driveway clearly marked and attractive? Is it easy to get to? Is the pathway from the street to the door clearly defined? Is it blocked or confusing in any way? What signals those on the street who may interested in doing business with you that you're open and ready to do business? Where attention goes, energy flows. People have energy. So does the act of doing business. What do you have that is visible from the street to attract attention and business to your door?

Stand at different points to view your business' entrance. Look around and check your senses. Is your entrance clearly defined? How does it look - dirty or well-tended? Bright and attractive or dark and scary? How does it smell - like garbage stored too near the door or like the flowers that welcome your clients as they walk in? How does it sound - does the door squeak raucously or does the client hear a lyrical tinkling of a bell as they enter? How does the door handle and operation feel to your hand and body? Is the doorknob itself grimy or pristine? Is it easy to open or does the door stick or not quite close? Is the door mat thick and rich beneath your feet or does it feel just plain worn? Has the threshold been swept that day? Will your clients have a bitter taste from doing business with you or will they leave with a sweet sensation? [Now you know why there are baskets of sweets in many businesses. What flavor do *your* clients leave with?]

Are the doorway and entrance areas too crowded, too empty, or just right? Look at them in proportion

to the scale of space being entered. Try to make the clients' transition from outside to inside your business as simple and comfortable as possible. If you have double doors, is one of them always locked? If so, then some of your clients are pushing on a locked door before they ever get to you. While security is always a priority, you must also take into consideration your potential client's first reaction to meeting a locked door. It is likely to be one of minor irritation or frustration. That emotion will be their very first impression of doing business with your company. You're not going to get a second chance at a first impression so if you must keep one of the doors locked, be sure it is clearly evident to anyone entering that one half of the door is sealed. Consider having it changed into a window with a great display to catch the eyes of passersby or hang a curtain or artwork there to signal that it is not a usable door.

As the clients interact with your door itself, what do they experience? Do they have to really put a shoulder to the door to get in or does it open before them as they approach? Does the door swing open freely or does it hit something placed behind it and startle them? Will the door open all the way to the wall and allow more than one customer to enter at a time? If not, why not?

As the clients move into your business space, now what do they experience? Is there someone there to greet them, welcome them and invite them in? [One word should come to mind here: WalMart!] Are they called by their name or, better yet, reminded of your name? Is there a place for them to sit comfortably if they have to wait? If they're waiting, is their personal space so crowded that it affects their comfort zone? Is there something there for them to read, watch or do while they are waiting for you? Are there any refreshments or even water available for your client? Go into your reception area. Pretend you're a customer - would you sit and wait to spend your money?

Is there a clear path directing to where they are to go to do business with you? Is there a place, basket or cart in which to set down what they are carrying? Can the client get out of the doorway area to complete their transaction? If they don't feel comfortable, they won't stay - neither would you. Check your senses again for your customers' true first impressions.

Is the function of your business clearly supported by your entrance? If you're a retail establishment, do your clients know what you sell? Do they first encounter a lovely sales display for seasonal or special items they might not have thought they needed? If you're in a business office, is your company's logo clearly displayed? Are there examples of your work for them to see or brochures/annual reports that promote your business? If you're a service establishment, do your clients see a list of services they might not have known you offered? If you're a restaurant, do patrons see and smell fresh and tempting samples of your fare? Whatever type of business you're in, are you promoting yourself and your wares to every potential client *every time* they enter your establishment? Are you paying attention to every sensory cue?

Remember: all energy and clients must enter through the front door. Set the stage for that experience to be pleasant in every way. Clients will not only return again, they'll send in their friends. Take the time each day to sweep the entry – literally and figuratively. Then sweep more profit into your bank account!

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Next Week: *The Wonders of the Wealth Corner*

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