

By Bill Guertin

The 800-Pound Gorilla

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The Coolest Human To Do Business With

My wife and I were on a weekend trip to Clearwater Beach, Florida, where we met a vendor of handmade jewelry at a craft fair on the pier. Sherri had never worn an ankle bracelet, and she fell in love with one of the vendor's unique silver-beaded creations.

"How much?" I asked, fearing the worst.

He shot out a price that I didn't think was too bad.

"You'll see dozens of jewelry vendors here on the pier, but there's no one who will sell you this kind of quality for that kind of price," he said. "I guarantee everything I sell for life. If you don't like it after you've worn it for a year, send it back and I'll give you every penny you paid. If you love it and it ever breaks, I'll send you a brand new one for free."

This was too good to be true, I thought to myself. "How will we find you?" I asked.

He pulled out his card, which I will never forget to this day.

The business card of Robert Jay Polukoff (pronounced Paula-Cough) was packed with information in small black letters on a plain white card. It was fabulously written. In big bold letters across the middle, it read:

100% SATISFACTION MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

In smaller letters, he then had his name (with the correct pronunciation) and his title - *Lapidary Genius Extraordinaire and Master Craftsman*.

In the top left corner: *If You Like It Now, You Will Love Them Ten Minutes From Now - They Always Look New*. (By the way, he was right.)

In the top right: *Real Jewelry That's Real Treasure For Less Money Than Real Trash*. (He was right on that too. I walked past at least a dozen vendors and didn't see half the quality he had, and all of them were substantially more expensive.)

The bottom right had his contact information, along with the phrase: *Planned My Work, Working My Plan*. (Don't you want to do business with someone who has a Plan? I do.)

And the bottom left was my favorite part: *Coolest Human To Do Business With. High Quality Treasure At Low Price. Fixit Free For A Lifetime. Built To Last A Lifetime The First Time*.

I have yet to take him up on his offer, because three years later, it's still Sherri's favorite piece of jewelry. I will buy from him again soon, because her birthday is on the way, and I know he will lead me in the right direction.

I've seen and heard all those lines before, but I have never seen anyone back them up like Robert Jay Polukoff.

How cool are YOU to do business with? What lessons can be learned?

You don't necessarily need a card with a half-dozen phrases on it. But I'll bet there's something you could be doing-- or doing more often-- that might earn you the title of "unforgettable" in the minds of your customers:

- **Guarantee your work.** By offering a good guarantee, you remove part of the fear of making a bad decision, and you will sell more. Most people will NEVER take you up on it. The few that do will be grateful, and will also tell others about you.
- **Know why your stuff is better – and be able to articulate it.** Shop your competition and learn what makes them successful. Use that knowledge with your customers, and speak confidently to the good and bad of the different options available to them. People want to do business with people that are knowledgeable and confident in what they do.
- **Be bold.** People are drawn to experts. What are you better than 90% of the people on the planet at doing? Don't be afraid to let others know about it in a big way, and be prepared to back up your bold statements with facts, testimonials, or anything else that will prove you right.
- **Be convenient.** How easy are you to do business with? Are there hours, locations, delivery, a cell phone number, or other options that would make you stand out? If no one currently makes convenience a selling feature in your industry, you have a golden opportunity.
- **Put some personality into your selling effort.** Not everyone can be the "Coolest Human To Do Business With." But there's probably something about your unique personality that you could inject into the selling process that would be memorable to others. I've seen people use bold neckties, a certain color or type of signature clothing, or have even added to or changed their name in order to be more memorable.
- **Have a cool business card.** My card is among the coolest I've ever seen, and I'm not afraid to boast about it. My card alone has generated thousands of dollars in business for me from people I had never met before. (If you want me to send you one, just e-mail me at bill@The800PoundGorilla.com.) Good business cards are cheap, and once you have one, you'll never go back to ordinary.

Robert Jay Polakoff made my trip to Florida memorable. What positive impression can YOU make on others today?

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