

The Conference Effect



Coming back from an E0 event will usually light a fire under you bottom to get focused, look at new opportunities, fix or add a process, or just be plain fired up about your business. When you mix it up with 450 entrepreneurs from mainly the east coast and hear from great

speakers, you feel the surge of entrepreneur juices flowing through you. It was interesting the things I got out of the conference. So I thought I would share a few of the take-aways.

I have been hearing for years how culture is key to your organization! But going to one conference and hearing three of the key speakers state this with such conviction, it makes you perk up a little more. From Steve Gilliland, our first key note, to Jack Daly, the sales guru, and Barbara Corcoran, from ABC's show "Shark Tank," they all said that your culture is number one in having a high performing growth company. When you have a culture that rocks and the people want to be there and feel engaged in the company, then an environment for great things begins to form.

Jack Daly talked about three things an entrepreneur needs to have: having a vision, key people in key spots, and culture. You have a culture in your company, whether by design or not, and if you don't implement the culture you want, then an unintended – maybe negative and unproductive culture – may develop. Jack also said that a positive, strong culture makes people get out of bed and want to come to work. An example of a great culture is Zappo's. If you are ever in Vegas, go to the headquarters and experience the free tour. You will get a feel of an amazing culture.

Another take-away I had from the conference came from Jack. He said that if you are a small-to-medium business and don't have a sales manager, one of two things will happen. You will stay small-to-medium, or you will go out of business. He added the CEO, the COO or the best sales person can't play sales manager on a part-time basis. I think this hit home for a lot of people, given some conversations I had after his talks, and others like me will be taking steps to implement a sales management process.

The key note that really made me think about life and where I am now and where I am going was Steve Gilliland, who wrote the book Enjoy the Ride. His presentation was hilarious, along with eye opening and thought provoking. He asked if everyone made the same wage of say \$2 an hour, where would you work? Would you still do what you are currently doing? I had an inner chuckle at this since I know I would be doing the same thing I am doing, given that I have done it many times over the years without getting paid at all. His focus was around having passion for what you do or it was a ride that you wouldn't enjoy. Gilliland said, "Love what you do, love why you do it, and love who you do it with."

This conference was very inspiring and beneficial from a business perspective, and I thank my friend John Bly for leading the charge to make this Nerve Conference happen. I will be discussing more going forward on building a culture by design and my experiences on what we are doing to make our sales process better.