

Intentions (no resolutions) for 2015

 By [Monika D'Agostino](#)

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For the last couple of years, I have set intentions rather than New Year's resolutions. For one, intentions are "the thing that you plan to do or achieve: an aim or purpose" as opposed to a resolution which is "a firm decision to do or not to do something".

If we look at the standard definitions, it seems clear to me that resolutions are designed to set us up for failure. More often than not, we decide *NOT* to stick with something. And once we fall into that pattern, it's easy to give up.



How many people do you know who had made New Year's resolutions to give up smoking, or to lose weight, only to end up falling back into the same habits a very short time after 1 January?

So, in setting an intention - a plan, something to achieve - it makes the purpose more realistic and it helps us accomplish it. Baby steps, good intentions and making a plan - how does that sound?

When it comes to sales, here is a wish list of good intentions that would help me in my mission to elevate the reputation of sales and its practitioners.

Sales culture

Contemplate a change in the culture of your business. Invite your employees to review your sales goals/plan. I mean, ALL of your employees - because in my book, everybody is in sales. If your receptionist is unfriendly and rude, at some point it will have an effect on a prospect or client. You might not hear about it, which is the worst case scenario, but trust me, I have stopped doing business with companies whose employees were rude and I know many people who have done the same.

By providing transparency and helping everybody within your organisation to understand that without clients they wouldn't have a job, you will help them view prospects and clients in a different way.

Everybody is in sales

Everybody, and I mean *everybody*, is in sales. Whether they are client-facing or not. There is internal sales and external sales. How often do we need to "pitch" an idea to an internal audience to make sure that our clients are happy? So, while the research manager providing data for a project might not touch the client directly, they certainly have an impact on the success of the project.

That is the culture that successful companies employ. They help their people communicate with each other, they provide technology to ensure proper workflow, but most importantly, they encourage a culture of honesty and integrity and being customer-centred.

Training strategy

I hope that more companies will implement firm training strategies. And I don't say that for selfish reasons only, I mean that from the bottom of my heart. Better trained employees are more loyal, they represent your brand better and they contribute to the bottom line. We see it over and over working with our clients.

Employees who had been on the short list of the next in line to be fired turn into jewels for their company once they are

trained properly. This is not to say that every employee is trainable and that nobody will ever get fired again, but it means that if you want to be an A-player as a company, you have to have a solid training strategy in place.

Honesty and commitment

Let's talk a little bit about those virtues and let's bring them back. They are essential for every company to be successful. Without honesty, there is no progress. You need to look at the areas of improvement to fix whatever is not working AND improve what is working, to truly stand out.

Commitment (and I am a stickler for this), is another area that is a key ingredient to stand out from the crowd. Once you commit to something, you are putting a stake in the ground and then all you need to do is - well, just do it (Nike!) There is no shame in admitting that sometimes you might have made the wrong decision, but people respect leaders who are committed and good for their word.

So, let us start with intentions to do something, so we allow for small setbacks while intending to stay on course and to achieve our goals. In my world that is elevating the reputation of the sales profession and its practitioners. Why? Because somebody has to do it! And I invite all my readers to join me!

Wishing you a successful 2015 full of great intentions!

ABOUT MONIKA D'AGOSTINO

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