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La Dolce Vita Enterprises

Lessons in Business Creativity, Innovation, Sales, & Life

December 2006

Greetings!

Welcome to the monthly newsletter of La Dolce Vita Enterprises - lessons in business creativity, innovation, sales, & life. For previous issues of this monthly newsletter, [click here](#)

Feel free to provide feedback or to share your stories on these topics of interest with us.

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LA DOLCE VITA - Business Creativity Tip of the Month



CREATIVITY - A LITTLE IMPROVEMENT MEANS A LOT

I once had a discussion with a CEO regarding the evolution of a business. While vision, strategy, planning, and resource allocation at the upper levels of a firm are important, he proclaimed that it's the marginal changes that take place on the front lines of an organization consistently over time that are most significant.

He made the analogy of communism in Soviet Union compared to free market economies. Although the U.S.S.R. built state of the art facilities in the mid- 20th century, by the late 1900's they could not compete. The ingenuity that is prevalent in a system of competition fosters minor productivity improvements that over time become major.

If you're looking for breakthroughs in your business and getting nowhere, maybe you're aiming too high. Think of small improvements that cumulatively make a significant impact. Think about how readily you make information available to your clients, more efficient ways to communicate, ways to help them service their customers, technology ideas that you can share, ways you can track developments in the customer's organization or industry, ways that you can act as a facilitator for your clients to discuss common problems, etc., etc., etc.

Craig Cortello, The "Business Musician" debuts *New Orleans is the One I Love*



The Spirit Of New Orleans Music Alliance (SONOMA) featuring Ms. Romy Kaye on vocals backed by Craig on guitar debuted the original song *New Orleans is the One I Love* at the Chef Duke Foundation Dinner to benefit Children's hospital last Saturday. Chef Duke LoCicero of Cafe Giovanni restaurant raised over \$20K from the dinner and live auction.

We were honored to be asked to be a part of the proceedings, and we applaud Chef Duke for the great work he does to benefit a great cause.

To hear a sneak preview of *New Orleans is the One I Love* [click here](#).

Quick Links...

[Go to the La Dolce Vita Website...](#)

[Innovation & Creativity \(La Dolce Vita Website\)](#)

FUZZY WIDGET SALES SOLUTIONS - Sales Tip of the Month

THE LIMITATIONS OF "KNOWLEDGE-BASED" SELLING

We all know how important it is to know your product or service when you're selling. There's a flipside to that concept as well - just because you don't know it all doesn't mean you can't sell. Often in technical sales, we take the approach that selling is just a matter of telling the prospect enough about our product or service to convince them to buy.



The problem is that we fail to recognize all of the other factors that are playing on the mind of the prospect such as personal compatibility, familiarity with our firm, experience in their (pick one - industry, community, social circles, etc.), reputation, delivery, prestige, or any other factor, relevant or not.

Besides, excessive research can be a subtle form of procrastination. While we're conducting additional research on our firm's areas of expertise, our competitors are having a business lunch with the prospect we're chasing!

Remember that it's perfectly acceptable, within reason, to tell the prospect, "I'll have one of my associates who is well-versed in that area get back to you" or "Let me research that issue further before I give you a definitive answer and I'll get back to you."

When you follow up as promised, you're demonstrating that you are true to your word, and in sales, being known as trustworthy is far more important than being known as a know-it-all.

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[Go to Craig's Fuzzy Widget Website...](#)

Thought of the month

THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON



It's a cliché, but it can't be said enough - don't forget what the holiday season is all about. Every year I watch *A Charlie Brown Christmas* the first week of December, and that officially marks the start of the holiday season for me. The lesson of the over-commercialization of the holiday season and the need to remember what's important is a timeless one. In fact it becomes increasingly more relevant in our consumer culture.

It's not about the money (Sally just wants \$10's and \$20's), the presents (Lucy wants real estate), the decorating competition (Snoopy's doghouse), or the bright shiny aluminum Christmas tree.

Here's one more thought. Do something special in January for your closest loved ones just to remind yourself that the spirit of giving should last throughout the year. **Happy Holidays!**

Craig Cortello

Additional Resources

Listen to audio versions of Craig's lessons in business creativity, innovation, sales, and life online or download to your i-pod or PC in .mp3 format.

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