

Negative Vibes

By Bob Osgoodby

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It never ceases to amaze me that some people trying to do business on the Internet exhibit a bad attitude. It can take many forms. I recently sent out an email request to someone, and the answer I received, was to say the least, brusque. Needless to say, I removed his email addresses from my files, and he won't hear from me in the future.

Now what is the point here? I don't know what his problem was, but he obviously had one. Maybe the dog just made a mess on the carpet, or he had an argument with someone - who knows. But he was obviously in a bad frame of mind when he wrote me. We all receive something that raises our "hackles" every now and then. The best thing is to either ignore it, or wait until you are in a better frame of mind before responding.

When you write to someone you must remember that the only way they can determine your intention is the words you use. If you give someone "short shrift" they will simply write you off, and you'll never hear from them again. If you are doing business on the web, the last thing you want is to send out an email with negative vibes.

Worse yet, some people simply ignore your request and never respond. Why spend your time and effort trying to promote something, and when you do get a response, ignore it? This makes no sense. One of the things that people like, and have grown to expect, is the rapid communication possible on the net. If you don't get back in a timely manner, people will get the impression that you are not responsive. This can be the "kiss of death" to the online entrepreneur.

Sometimes a request for information is sent after you have closed down for the day. So what is a timely manner? That's hard to define, but let's examine a few strategies.

Free auto-responders are a way of giving someone an immediate response. But people are "savvy" enough to recognize where the response came from, and put little faith in that type of answer. All it is really letting them know is that their email was received. Sure, it will give them some information, but you still have the need to give them a timely personal response.

A better way is to have your own auto-responder or a special "filter" with your email package that first sends a response to them, and then files it into a folder for later follow-up. That not only buys you a little time, but sends the response from your email address so it appears more personal. You

should examine that folder everyday, and be sure to get back to them with the information they requested.

Try to pick a specific time each day to answer your email. This should be done from a place where there aren't distractions. If you are upset about something, or something is annoying you, don't answer your email until you are in a better frame of mind. If you receive an email that really gets under your skin, and you feel the need to vent - go ahead and do it - but don't send it yet. Some times the mere process of "venting" will "sooth your savage beast". Wait a few hours, and read your response again. Most of the time, you will either wind up deleting it, or putting it in a more civilized tone.

Never use bad language in an email. Not only will you exacerbate the situation, but if a copy is forwarded to your ISP as a complaint, they may very likely cancel your account. The free email accounts especially have a "zero tolerance" for this, and so should you.

Never answer your email when you are pressed for time. Your impatience will be obvious and many will take offense.

Above all, exhibit a positive attitude. If you receive a negative email, thank them for their input, and let them know you will look into the problem and get back to them. This at least lets them know you care, and are responsive to their concerns. We live in a verbal society, and the need to express ourselves in a clear, simple way is more important than ever. Don't let a "negative vibe", which is normally a transient thing, ruin your otherwise good sales practices.

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