

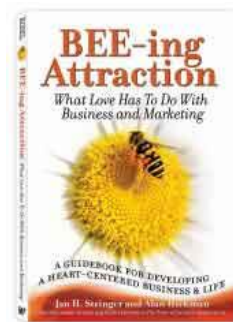
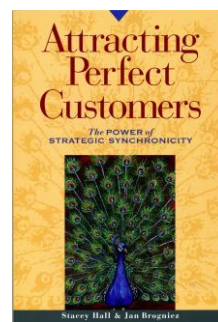
Choosing Collaboration Instead of Competition

COLLABORATION REPLACES COMPETITION FOR SUCCESS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The basic assumptions upon which traditional marketing approaches are built could use some updating. For example, what if we asked whether businesses actually have to compete for customers. Does that seem silly? The answer would be, "Of course, they do! What planet are you from? It's a dog eat dog world--and it's always been that way." But there may be an additional perspective, a way that can create a dramatic shift not just in the way business is done but in how we treat our customers and each other.

This is the perspective of collaboration, which implies that each of us is unique, that no two people are exactly the same. If no two people are exactly the same, then it stands to reason that no two businesses are exactly the same. It is simply not possible for two businesses to serve the same client's needs equally. One will be a better fit than another; the best fit produces a perfect client or customer working with the perfect provider.

Each of us, and the businesses we've joined or created, exist for a specific purpose or mission. Our businesses have developed as a result of our own experiences and needs, and are simply tools for fulfilling that mission. Each



business has its own mission to serve a particular group of customers in a particular way. That is why businesses have no need to compete with each other in the way we've traditionally thought of it. Instead, business owners and managers could collaborate in ways that truly serve their customers' and their own interests.

If this sounds heretical, then it shows how deeply the concept of competition -- "survival of the fittest" -- colors our views of the way we do business.

Today, when consumers have an abundance of choice in products and distribution outlets, businesses can shine even brighter--and be of greatest service to themselves, their organization, their clients, and their communities--when they are knowledgeable about the products and services offered by other businesses in their own and related

Attracting Perfect Customers: Choosing Collaboration

industries. Consumers value services that save them time, money and headaches. By becoming this type of resource through collaborating with others in your industry, you are increasing the overall abundance of products and services and will ultimately bring the greatest success to everyone.

Take a moment to contemplate the following questions, and write down your answers. These questions are designed for you to consider what might be possible for you and your business if you had at least one collaborator in your same industry.

1. Who in your same industry do you consider to be your main "competition?"
2. If you were not serving your customers, who would be serving them?
3. What services do these businesses offer that are the same as yours? Different from yours?
4. Have you ever referred one of your less-than-perfect customers to one of your "competitors?"
5. What would stop you from referring a less-than-perfect customer to one of your "competitors?"
6. Under what conditions would you refer a less-than-perfect customer to one of your "competitors?"
7. Do you belong to an association or organization dedicated solely to your industry?
8. If so, what benefits have you received as a result of your membership in that organization?
9. Who else do you know in your industry who belongs to this organization?

If you want to make a dramatically impressive difference in your business, we invite you to meet or speak with a

new potential collaborator every day for the next 21 days. You will create quite a stir within your industry, you will have a greater breadth of knowledge about your industry than other businesses providing similar services, and your reputation for being open and collaborative will spread very quickly resulting in increased positive awareness and referrals.

So, who will you be calling first?



Jan H. Stringer and Alan Hickman
Founders of PerfectCustomers, Inc.

"What makes us tick is working with people to discover a deeper connection to create heart-centered lives and businesses." Co-Authors, Jan H. Stringer and Alan Hickman.

Shift the inner attitudes of your mind
change the outer aspects of your life.

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