

Some business resolutions worth keeping - Part 2

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7. To think longer term: Stop thinking transactionally and start thinking about the relationships you'll need in 2013, 2014, and 2015. Look at today's business leaders and be sure you are developing strong relationships with the peers and colleagues who you'll trust and want to continue to work with 5 years from now. Begin communications with potential clients when they don't have an immediate need for your services; if your communications are positive and consistent, they'll remember you when they do have a need. You never know where someone's career path may take them. When resources are an issue, go for fewer quality relationships over superficial ones in great quantity. Be strategic.

8. To let your customers know you appreciate their business: Find ways that matter to highlight your efforts on their behalf, and to sincerely show appreciation for their support. This goes beyond doing quality work on a project-that is an expectation-and extends to communicating that you understand and are willing to respond without complaining to their sometimes very demanding needs. Remember, your customers have a choice and if they're not clear why they continue to use your services, they may exercise that choice before you know what happened.

9. To view marketing as investment in the future of your business: Repeat business and continuous new opportunities are the direct result of investment in strategic marketing and sales efforts, period. Most businesses take for granted that a quality work product will be produced. You must invest in communicating those unique factors, and in consistent visibility.

10. To be consistent in your marketing efforts: Look at every interaction as an opportunity to communicate your value. Develop an approach that works for you and stick with your efforts. It's virtually impossible to say which efforts will return the most, and you often find opportunity where it's completely unexpected. It is, however, certain that opportunity will not find you unless you make the effort. Get out there, stay visible, stay positive, and be a good business partner to everyone, not just those who have something to offer you today, every day.

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