

## DON'T WORRY – BE HAPPY

By: Robert S. Sher

“In every life we have some trouble. When you worry you make it double. Don't worry, be happy.”

■ Bobby McFerrin, from the lyrics, “Don't Worry, Be Happy.”

There's never a bad time to put on a happy face. There's never been a better time to do it and wear the smile proudly.

When the song “Don't' Worry, Be Happy” reached No. 1 on the Billboard charts in 1988, the singer/songwriter Bobby McFerrin described it as “a pretty neat philosophy in four words.”

Today McFerrin's lyrics seem more pertinent than ever. As many of you already know, I don't believe piling on negative comments is ever helpful. Don't get me wrong. While I am not a Pollyanna living my life through rose-colored glasses, I do know that people like to be with other people who are positive. It is healthier to look at the bright side than to think doom.

Having a bad day? Wondering if you will lose a major account when you get to work? Don't waste any time pouting and feeling sorry for yourself. Stand in front of your mirror and practice smiling.

Once you have mastered the art of the smile, get to work immediately and hunt for opportunities. Keep a laser focus on what your customers need and figure out a way to provide it at the best cost – and without complaining.

While no one can predict the economic downturn's impact on any industry, every boss, manager and team leader must take positive steps to prepare for an increasingly volatile business climate. Get your financial house in order. Position yourself for stability so that, when the economy turns around, you will be well positioned for growth.

You can sit at your desk and sulk or take a customer to lunch and nurture that relationship. Ask how you can work together to get through the tough times.

Consider this question: With whom would you rather sip coffee or tea? The really nice, well dressed sales rep sporting a frown who comes to see you but can't look you in the

eye, or the upbeat guy dressed from the '80s who stands tall, is pleasant and sports a smile?

I think the answer is clear. No one wants to be with a sourpuss.

Clients and business associates will always be happier to see you when you put on a happy face. In these times, you should devote time to visiting your clients (and former clients) and suggest that while our economy is facing a bad situation, the world is not going to stay this way forever.

As you move from person to person, have coffee, spread positive feelings, and talk about joyous things like birthday parties of your children or grandchildren and other milestones that make you proud, ask about their families and hobbies.

In the face of adversity, spreading some good news leaves lasting impressions. When you say something positive, and put on a happy face, vendors and suppliers might just recommend you to someone else for more business.

We can all learn something from the popular aphorism of "it takes more muscles to frown than to smile." Rest assured it is good for you to smile, stay upbeat and do what it takes to stop negative energy from getting you down.

Laugh and the world laughs with you. Weep and you will weep alone.

As the song goes, "Put a smile on your face. Don't bring everybody down like this. Don't worry; it will soon pass whatever it is. Don't worry, be happy."

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