

TIPS
MANAGEMENT

Are Your KPIs Helping or Hurting?

→ It's pretty much impossible to manage a business without key performance indicators (KPIs). You need to be sure, however, these numerical targets aren't hurting your business. Contrarian shoe retailer Zappos rewards employees for spending more time with customers who phone in with questions, as opposed to hailing service agents churn who through a high number of calls. "For Zappos, customer experience on a call trumps any simple metric that may actually detract from profitability," notes a column on the BBC's business site (bbc.com/capital).



Try Ignorance

→ Want to make better business decisions? Learn to say "I don't know" more often, recommends *Freakonomics* author Stephen Dubner in his latest book, *Retrain Your Brain*. "I understand the need for ego preservation but it's hard to learn anything if you pretend you already know the answer," he says. Once you admit you don't know the solution to a problem, you can start testing new ideas and gathering feedback, he says.

Mission Control

→ Most mission statements aren't written to inspire, they're written to remove an item from a to-do list. End result? They all sound the same: bland and cliché-ridden. "A powerful statement forces the reader to choose between two sides of a line drawn in the sand," says advertising guru Roy Williams. "Rare is that business owner who has the courage to craft a mission statement that effectively asks the reader, 'So are you in, or are you out?'"

FRESH IDEAS TO BETTER YOUR BUSINESS



SHANE DECKER
ON SALES STRATEGIES

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PLAY IT SAFE
PROTECT YOUR STORE'S REPUTATION
BY FOLLOWING THESE RULES OF REPAIR

Having an awesome repair and service shop is an immeasurable benefit for your clients. In some cases, it can allow you to outsell competitors who can't offer these services. However, if you don't protect yourself by following strict procedures, you could open yourself up to accusations that could damage your business.

Recently, a good friend of mine, who has impeccable integrity and a beautiful store, was falsely accused of switching a diamond. Although the jeweler did everything he could to keep the case from going to court, it went to court, and my friend lost the case. This was on the TV news for several nights.

This is a sad story. The integrity of this jeweler's store was severely damaged. They are the type of people I would trust with everything I had. But because of this accusation and loss in court, they will have to do a huge amount of damage control to reestablish their image in the community. This could take a generation.

The bar has been raised when it comes to how you manage your shop. Here are some rules to help keep your store out of trouble.

1. Photograph each item being repaired with a high-res camera.
2. If there is a center diamond,

magnify the center diamond and take a photo so that you can show the client the internal characteristics inside his diamond. And let the client know that if the diamond is dirty when he brought it in, it will look different when he picks it up.

3. Do a critical inspection of the item being repaired in front of the client.

4. It's estimated that over 50 percent of all repairs need more work than the client is bringing it in for. Learn to sell add-ons on repairs. The jewelry may need more attention or repairs than they know.

5. Write up the repair thoroughly so that the jeweler doing the work doesn't have to come out and ask what you mean.



6. Price it correctly — including each procedure being done. Use *Geller's Blue Book to Jewelry Repair & Design*; it makes your shop profitable.

7. Explain every procedure to the client and the price of each one. Let the client know about the skill level

it takes to do some of these procedures.

8. Have three copies when the repair is written up: One for the client, one for the shop and one

that stays in the file. Also, have the client sign a receipt saying he left the item and is OK with the price.

9. Have a three to seven day completion time unless the repair is very complicated. The longer the repair takes, the more doubt in the client's mind that it creates.

10. Overdeliver and underpromise. If you overpromise and underdeliver, it makes you look like an idiot when your word wasn't accurate. But if you overdeliver, it makes you a hero.

11. Check each piece thoroughly before the client is called and make sure everything is perfect.

12. Call when the repair is done and can be picked up.

13. When the client picks up the repair, show him his diamond under magnification and show that it matches the internal characteristics in the photo that was taken when he left it.

14. The client must bring in the receipt he took when he left the repair. You now have all three copies in the same place.

15. Have the client sign his copy saying that the repair was completed to his satisfaction and that he took the item with him.

It's sad that some people try to take advantage of jewelers, but they do. Protect yourself by following these rules. Cover all your bases and leave no room for doubt.