



TIP OF THE WEEK

December 11, 2007

We recently did planning for a small manufacturing company and when we were doing SWOT, strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, a typical consultant's tool, their quality manager listed incompetent customers as their biggest weakness. "These customers, they're so picky. They don't understand our business and they just want what they want and don't care what the reality of life is and they really need to get a better handle on their expectations." Needless to say, I was floored. We had a lot of conversation about his interpretation of his own responsibilities, and I'm happy to say the switch has been flipped.

I remember a quote from Edgar Bronfman, who ran Seagram's. He said, "If you think those customers you have are so difficult, try doing without them for sixty days".

Or how about Sam Walton, who said, "There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else."

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MASS

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So remember, those pesky customers are people that we need in our boat at all times.

Good luck. Work **ON** your business. Stay in touch.

The Markens Group

Ben Markens