



TIP OF THE WEEK

August 12, 2008

Many years ago I knew a salesman named Matt Mullaney. He was a helluva great guy and did a few things that I remember. He was a huge boxing fan and a part-time referee for the Golden Gloves here in Holyoke, Mass. Matt came to see me one day and told me that the oddest thing had happened. While he was waiting for me in our lobby one of his competitors had walked in. The man told Matt that he felt uncomfortable and this had never happened before. Matt told him, Whenever it had happened to him "we both go outside to the parking lot and whoever comes back in gets to see the customer." Then he added, "and I've had this account for eighteen years. " The other salesman just turned around and walked out. A great story, but the other thing that I remember Matt for is this week's tip.

Matt had been our supplier for long before I worked there – had never missed a delivery, had competitive prices, and even made a few middle of the night and weekend emergency deliveries in his car. Well one day my boss, Ronnie – if you knew Ronnie this will make sense – Ronnie had given Matt's business to a competitor without discussing it with Matt (or me) and without a good reason. So Matt sent Ronnie a handwritten note and a five-pound bag of pistachios. Matt made his case. He started the note with "you're making me NUTS." With NUTS all in caps. He explained why he felt he earned the right to be our supplier and used the capitalized words NUTS three or four more times. Matt prevailed and got our business back because he made his case in a clever and memorable way. I have only used Matt's trick twice in the intervening years and it's been successful both times. If you need it, I bet it works for you too.

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

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