

5 TRAITS OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE PRODUCERS

By Susan Toussaint, VP, Growth Solutions

Success is rarely the result of an individual trait or capability, but rather it occurs when a combination of action and character are in alignment. In our roles as trainers and coaches, we at ReSource Pro have seen a variety of people with different capabilities and traits who are successful. We've also seen many who lack the right stuff, fail.

So, are there traits which tend to lead to greater success? We believe so. Below are the five traits possessed by the most successful producers with whom we work.

GENUINE CURIOSITY

While curiosity may have killed the cat, we believe it is the number one trait necessary to succeed. Curiosity, the eagerness to know about something or to get information, is that instinctual trait which serves producers, their agency, and their clients well.

Curiosity is a leading indicator of future success, as it tells us that the individual does not take at face value what they see or know. Instead, they seek a deeper understanding and are willing to invest time to find it.

The curious aren't always the easiest; they ask "why" often and don't settle for fluff answers. They dig until they are satisfied and then use their findings to make better, more informed recommendations, presentations, and decisions.



LEADERSHIP

Probably the number one trait lacking and in need within our industry is leadership. In survey after survey, buyers indicate they want to work with sellers who can teach them something new and help them make more educated decisions.

We find that producers are often fearful of leading. They frequently confuse better relationships with underwriters, access to markets, and value-added services with leadership. They shy away from making carrier recommendations based on which is the best for helping their clients achieve their goals and objectives, and instead provide options, placing the decision, as well as the burden of decision-making on the client.

A lack of leadership could be the reason retention rates in our industry remain high and why organic growth remains relatively low.

BELIEF & GUMPTION

The role of the producer is that of a change agent. As such, it is their job is to develop new business by creating a case for why a prospect should do business with them and their agency versus any other option in the marketplace.

Two traits that successful sales leaders have are belief and gumption. The belief that they have a better, more effective approach and that without it the client is at greater risk. And gumption, the ability to remain strong and true to their approach when their prospects endeavor to follow a less effective, more commodity focused approach of bidding and quoting.

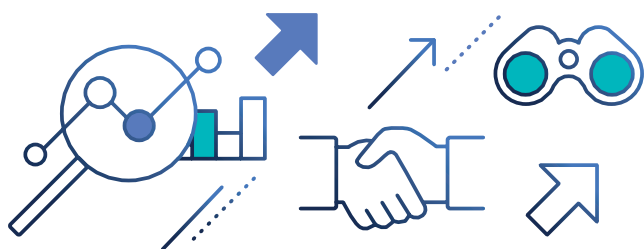
Producers who possess both belief and gumption recognize that they don't find perfect prospects, but create them by helping them discover what a more

effective process and business relationship looks like. They also know when to walk away.

LONG-TERM VISION

There are sellers and then there are consultants. Producers who solely focus on the revenue to be earned are sellers; producers who help their clients embed better business practices and achieve more favorable outcomes are consultants.

It can be easier to focus on short-term wins, to snag and bag a sale and make promises without the concern of actually following through. But to be a consultant, a producer must have his/her eye on the bigger prize: the long-term relationships, a steady stream of referrals, and the insights gained through years of focus and commitment.



New or young producers are often valued for the immediate revenue they produce instead of their commitment to building a book of business that is profitable and resistant to competition over time.

This flawed thought process can be corrected but requires a supportive agency environment.

HUMILITY AND EMPATHY

There's enough arrogance in the world, especially in sales. For some producers, demonstrating humility and empathy is a sign of weakness, and nothing could be further from the truth.

Humility and empathy draw people closer to you. They are emotions that demonstrate humanity and prompt your prospects to drop their guard and share. When genuinely conveyed, they allow others to see you as an individual, rather than a promoter or seller of business.

Genuine respect and caring for another's life and business never goes out of style and is in short demand. We've seen first-hand how opening up to clients and prospects gives them permission to open up to you.

Trust me, no one will ever choose your competitor because they were more arrogant!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



For over a decade, Susan Toussaint has been training, coaching, and developing programs to help insurance professionals overcome barriers to organic growth. She enjoys developing confidence in new producers and creating content that inspires others to think differently.

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