



This Is the Real Deal

I'm sure that ever since you were a small child, you dreamt of making a meaningful difference in your life and in the lives of others.

In the beginning, with your understandable quest to please others, you tried to mold your life to their expectations, but you didn't understand the rules of their game. The harder you tried, the worse you felt. But in the process, you made one of the most important discoveries of your life: you learned to trust and believe in your own heart.

Now look at you. You've put that heart and soul of yours into a business. Your family, your future, and your finances are all squarely on the line.

And as recently as last night, you, once again, lay awake wondering how on Earth to make your business stand out from the competition. "How can I truly make a difference?"

Take heart, my friend. You are about to learn how to play your strong hand. In fact, it is the strongest hand of all.

I'll start with a story. Enjoy it; for while it may contain names spelled differently from yours, it is entirely about you.

At the end of World War II, as with all wars, the hopes and dreams of countless people lay shattered. But because it is part of human nature to believe in brighter days, they gathered their wits and began to rebuild their lives.

Hollywood, in its typical fashion, chipped in to do its share.

Studio execs gathered to produce a movie designed to restore hope. Ticket holders would emerge from darkened theatres full of optimism and promise, which, at that point in the history of the world, was a fantasy. So a fantasy movie this would be.

Writers sat in the coffee shops of heartland America trying to discover a story line that people like you and me would immediately embrace—one that entertained by providing clear choices, exact notions of right and wrong, good and evil, rewards for the former, and consequences for the latter.

The writers were smart. Rather than tell the public what they should want, they listened to what the public wanted.

“Who do you feel, here in your town, best represents a bad guy?” they would ask. And the answers from the rolling hills of Pennsylvania to the timber camps of Oregon all came back the same:

“A banker.”

“Why?”

“A banker doesn’t care about anyone but himself. He’s greedy, only interested in his advancement at the expense of others. There isn’t an emotional bone in his body.”

The writers stared at one another. “A banker?! Why, I know several bankers personally. They seem fine to me!”

But it didn’t make any difference what the writers thought. Because the customer is always right. And if the movie-going customers believed a banker was evil, evil he was. The perception is the reality.

So the writers returned to Hollywood and shared their news. The bad guy in this new film of theirs would be a banker. Right or wrong, it’s what the people believed. And if they wanted to sell tickets, the studio knew not to argue with its customers.

The Hollywood producers put out a casting call for a man brave enough to play the part of an evil banker, whose character would be named Mr. Potter. And much to the horror of Lionel Barrymore’s adoring mother, they picked her darling son.

The writers were halfway there. Now, they needed the “good guy.” So they revisited the communities of America and continued their search for answers. For, you see, the Hollywood writers knew that if they were to truly succeed with their new film, they would need to listen to what the customers wanted and then, quite simply, give it to them.

This wasn’t rocket science.

Town after town, state after state, the writers asked, "Who do you see as the good guy in your town?"

Without hesitation, America said, "That's easy! There's this fella who cares about me and my life. He always listens. He wants to know what I'm doing and is interested in my personal dreams and how he might help make those dreams come true. As a matter of fact, this fella ended up being my best friend!"

"Wow!" responded the writers. "What does he do for a living?"

"Who cares?" they asked. "It's who he is that's important, not what he does."

So the writers once again returned to Hollywood and announced to the producers they had indeed discovered the good guy for their fantasy movie.

"Wonderful!" the studio declared. "Who is he?!"

"A person who cares."

"That's it?" they asked.

"That's it," they responded.

"Well, what does he do for a living?"

"It didn't make any difference what he did," they answered. "It only mattered that he cared about others." And the room of movie producers, writers, and executives fell silent at such a simple notion.

Finally, the studio head proclaimed, "Well, we have to have the guy do something in our movie to make a living. We can't just have him standing there!"

An aspiring young screenwriter raised his hand and offered a novel idea: "Let's make the good guy a banker, too!"

That particular writer was probably at risk of being whacked. "You can't have a good-guy banker," they admonished. "We already know that people don't like bankers."

"But therein lies the rub," he countered. "We'll pit a good banker against a bad banker. The bad guy will be totally believable because he does what people believe bankers normally do. But the good banker is the exact opposite. He genuinely cares about his neighbors and his hometown, even to the point of putting his own dreams on hold. That's the fantasy!"

"Won't work, public will never buy caring bankers. It is an oxymoron—as in clear dark, up down, deafening silence, mournful optimist, or dry wet."

It made no sense.

So they racked their collective brains, thinking of what the boss

would buy. Suddenly, they came up with the Big Idea: divine intervention.

"We'll have angels descend from the heavens to guide the good banker on his caring way. They'll perch on the good guy's shoulder, reminding him that it's okay to care about others, even when the chips are down—even when you're a banker!"

"They'll buy that!" the writers agreed. "If you have angels at your side, people will buy anything."

"We don't know," moaned the producers. "We need more to make sure our fantasy movie hits the ground running. Do we have any actors out there who the public already loves? A hero perhaps . . . yes, a real, live World War II hero . . . a B-17 bomber pilot would be perfect!"

Enter one Jimmy Stewart, a charming young man who'd completed twenty B-17 missions and whose very smile would melt the hearts of America. A "fella" who would endear himself to generations as a caring human being, a family man, a champion of those in need, and a man who gave love and received love in return.

They'd call his character George Bailey. Banking was what he did. Caring was who he was, a very rare person indeed.

"And to vanquish any doubt of that," yelled the producers, "let's cast America's number-one caring female as George Bailey's wife. Get Donna Reed on the phone!"

So Hollywood produced one of the most popular fantasy movies of all time—the story of typical banker, Mr. Potter, a man who didn't care; of financial balance sheets; of P. and L.'s; and of the harsh pragmatics of business. They told the story of an entire town swept away by a human being named George Bailey, an emotional man who made his living as a caring banker, doing what he could to bring happiness to others. From Hollywood came the study of a man who wanted to make a difference.

Almost sixty years later, this fantasy movie remains a family classic, mandatory viewing over Christmas holidays, as parents and children struggle to carve out an hour and a half of quality time in order to assure themselves that, all things considered, *It's a Wonderful Life!*

That would make a good name for a movie, wouldn't it? You should know. You probably own a copy.

Now for the good news of this little story: Dreamweaving gives you the chance to live it. You may even choose your role: George Bailey or Mr. Potter. But this time, it's no fantasy.

This is the real deal.



“But I’m Not a Marketer”

You and I had better get this on the table right away.

You’re more than a little apprehensive about this marketing stuff: how it works, how much it costs, the perceived risks, and the possibility of failure.

You see yourself as a smart businessperson. You’ve spent years, and a small fortune, being trained as such. You have little practical experience in marketing and sales. And besides, marketing is something to do when you have nothing else to do, which in your case is never.

To millions of talented businesspeople, SALES is a four-letter word. Perhaps, it’s because we bear the scars of our childhood horrors, memories filled with the door-to-door fund-raising failures of Girl Scout cookies, circus tickets, and overpriced chocolate bars to revive cash-strapped science clubs.

I’m talking about you and me. We’re two peas in the same agonized pod.

I know how busy you are. I know how much you have on your table, how many dozens of balls you juggle, and that you have no time to learn, let alone implement, a new marketing strategy—which is why Dreamweaving is perfect for someone like you.

Consider it an old friend.

Give yourself a few seconds. Relax. Take off that businessperson hat for a moment. My friend, you know Dreamweaving like the back of your hand. You were a dreamer long before you went into business.

Dreamweaving seeks to reawaken what you already know. The strategy is powerful because your customer feels just like you, is just as busy as you are, and wishes for the same simplicity and clarity.

Give it to him. Even more importantly, give it to yourself.

You're tired of being confused. You're tired of all these advertising claims, the bragging, the boasting, the sales pitches, the grand promises, and the clattering, prattling, and clamoring for attention.

So is your customer.

But there is hope, because just this morning you saw the most brilliant marketer in the history of SALES face to face.

"Oh yeah? Prove it."

Let's take a walk down your memory lane and go back to your first-grade class. Ladies, remember that charming little boy? Gents, recall that freckled-face little girl? Everybody loved 'em. Everybody wanted to be his or her friend. They always got picked first, always seemed happy, and always made your heart go pitter-patter faster than your Capt. Midnight Secret-Decoder Ring. (If I'm dating myself, be gentle.) You wanted to meet this dreamboat more than anyone in your young life. You knew the attraction you felt had something to do with *a kiss*.

Your parents kissed a lot, and the dazed post-pucker look on their faces reminded you of how yours was appearing lately. You knew you were a kissable person; your parents told you as much. Why, your great-aunt would even chase you around the Thanks-giving table, pursed with a flame-red pucker.

And while those interludes were family obligations, your private wishes for your first-grade lip lock were an entirely different matter, but there was no question about it. It was certain. You were a kissable product!

So after three months of wondering what the heck was going on in that young heart of yours, the day of reckoning finally arrived. One kiss, comin' up!

First-grade recess bells clanged and schoolhouse doors flew open. All the little boys ran to the jungle gym. All the little girls flew to the swing set. If you were that kissable little boy (which I was, dear reader—I'm not making this story up), you swallowed hard, rubbed your excited palms together, and stepped forward to meet the love of your life.

"Hi! My name's _____ (insert your name). Give me a kiss!"

What you got was a full-blown nightmare.

She screamed "Eeeeeuuuuu!", ran to her friends, whispered what you had done, and ten little girls loudly echoed, "Eeeeeuuuuu!"

You hollered "Aaaaarrrrrggg!", ran to your wide-eyed buddies, blurted out what you had done, and a half-dozen half-pint brutes yelled out, "Aaaaarrrrrggg!"

You stood there, feeling more alone than you had in your entire life. "They're all laughing at me!" Your heart tore from your chest. With shoulders thrown forward, head hung low, you ran back to your desk, threw your face in your hands, and burst into tears, wishing with all your might that you were dead.

Do you remember? I do. It happened to me, and unless you were very unusual—or very lucky, very popular, very beautiful, very handsome, had no heart in that first-grade body of yours, or were more interested in dissecting frogs—I have a feeling that you were in a similar situation years ago.

Ladies and gentlemen, take a second walk with me. Let's go back to tenth-grade geography class. Remember that six-foot four-inch hunk of a stud muffin? Recall that sleek-lined Corvette of a cheerleader, the one who made your heart go pitter-patter faster than Jimi Hendrix cutting loose with "Fire!" (Okay, so I'm a child of the '60s!)

You wanted to meet this person more than anything in your I'm-not-getting-any-younger life. You knew it absolutely had everything to do with a *kiss*. No question about it, you most definitely were a kissable product.

But at sweet sixteen, you had learned to be much more than that. Since first grade, you had studied and learned the fine art of "courting."

My love-struck friend, don't **ever** forget it. Frankly, you couldn't even if you wanted to. Your lessons, learned over so many years, came too hard.

Bell rings. Class is over. Your idol is up, and so are you. As you made your approach, memories of that day, so long ago, on the first-grade battleground, and of all the subsequent battlegrounds, flooded back. But this time, you would make it all different.

"Excuse me. I'm _____ (insert your name). May I ask your advice?" You stopped talking, smiled pleasantly, and looked your heartthrob squarely in the eyes.

“Uh, sure,” was the reply.

“I sit about four chairs behind you and one row over. All semester long, I’ve been listening to you talk about government subsidy of bean production in Bolivia. And I was wondering . . . are those black beans or brown beans?”

You stopped, smiled pleasantly, looked your sweetheart straight in the eyes, and waited.

As you held your breath, waiting for the response, you had to admit that you weren’t real keen on Bolivian agriculture, and the nuances of bean production had never been high on your gotta-know list. But you knew this person loved the subject, and if you truly wanted to form an emotional bond between the two of you, you must first start by listening.

“Why, those are black beans.”

“I knew it! I knew you would know!! You are absolutely fascinating. And, in Peru, do they do beans in Peru, too?!” You stopped, smiled pleasantly, looked your love-to-be straight in the eyes, and waited.

“Why, yes. Peru also does beans.”

“You are amazing!” You smiled your best smile, and the object of your affection gave you one just as large. “Say, I know we have to get to class, but I was wondering . . . could I buy you a carton of milk during lunch while you tell me more about beans in Bolivia?”

There was a pause as the love of your life took quick stock of you and thought something was definitely different here. The reply: “Well, sure. Okay!” For Bolivian bean production happened to be one of the most important things in your sweetheart’s life. For whatever reason, it was one of their *dreams*.

You knew that. You see, for months you’d been listening. Since first grade, you’d learned about relationships, those that succeeded and those that ended in disaster. You’d learned that the key to any meaningful relationship is an emotional bond between two people, and that there is only one path to a true emotional bond: You must first **listen**, then **understand**, and, *only then*, **tell**.

So lunchtime arrived, as did the milk and your eagerness to listen and to understand. The hour went by like lightning. With barely minutes left, your new friend was beaming. Your noon-time companion was thrilled, and, boy, did you know everything you’d ever wanted to know about beans.

You had shown kindness and respect for this person’s dream.

You'd listened. No one like you had ever come along before. You cared. And because you cared, the light of your life couldn't help but ask: "What about you? What do you like?"

A big smile crossed both of your faces.

You answered. "You've been kind to me, and I like listening to you. So, I was wondering . . . could you and I get together this Saturday for a burger or something? Because I'd love to answer your question?"

Which is exactly what you both did.

Saturdays came and went, and before you knew it, guess what you got?

The kiss.

Because you knew then, and you know now, that no relationship of any meaning can ever exist without the other person believing that you care. More than your common interests, more than your designer clothing and fast car, more than your considerable knowledge, the other person must first believe that you care.

You learned it in grade school.

Want to know who the most brilliant marketer in the world is?
Go look in the mirror.