
MEMORANDUM TO EVERY OFFICE

TO: Everyone
FROM: edmoss@maykit.me.uk
SUBJECT: If you haven't heard from us within 7 days
DATE: Today
CC: Everyone else who might otherwise miss it



Would you have the nerve to respond to a customer with the opening line “If you haven’t heard from us within 7 days”?

Any of you reading this who may have applied for job via email recently will no doubt at some time have received the automated reply:

“If you don’t hear from us with x days, please assume you were unsuccessful on this occasion. Due to the volume of applications we receive we are unable to respond to unsuccessful candidates.”

As the wild and wacky world of HR descends into its ever-increasing own little dysfunctional downwards spiral, sadly, this practice seems to be increasing to levels where it is unacceptably ‘accepted’ as the norm.

So is it really any wonder that 40% of employees who responded to a survey a short while ago thought their HR department lacked any form of credibility whatsoever (my thanks to the wonderful Rod Liddle of the Sunday Times for that snippet).

Then again, the inability of these HR people to recruit for their own company instead of running to a recruitment consultancy proves Rod's point.

So, by this perverted logic in customer service, if you see a prospect browsing in your bookshop, do you totally ignore them?

Or, if you own a restaurant do you instruct your waiter to ignore customers they aren't serving?

Or, if you want to cross a busy road and decide to tag along behind some parents, do you expect to be challenged with “You're not a parent at my school, and as the official lollipop lady here, I'm not going to acknowledge you exist, so go and cross someone else's road”.

Of course not! You, as a business person, have a duty to acknowledge customers and prospects alike, because it's only by engaging with prospects that you can turn them into customers.

Whether it's on the phone, in person on your premises, or at an exhibition, it is so important to engage with anyone who approaches you in a friendly and personable manner. This doesn't mean trying to offload products and services on people that they don't need at a time when they don't need them (any of you who had dealings with insurance brokers Laurentian Milldon some 25 years ago will be aware of how really uncomfortable that approach is).

If you receive an enquiry from prospects, engage with them. They could be customers, and only the foolhardy ignores them. And if they contact you, personally reply to them positively and as near as to ‘by return’ as you can.