



Do Something!

By Aaron Crowley

The other day, we (my wife and our three kids) stopped at the grocery store on the way home from church to get some chips for lunch. Instead of taking the whole circus inside, we stopped at the curb by the entrance so my wife could just run in and out. I then strategically parked our silver Tahoe in a space so I could survey the entrance and see her when she came out.

A couple of minutes later, a guy driving a silver Suburban, same year, same wheels and same road scuzz as our Tahoe, pulled up to the curb and a woman got out. Instead of finding a parking space like other model patrons, he stayed by the curb with his engine running. I was thinking how funny it would be if my wife mistook his Suburban for our Tahoe, when she walked out of the store. To my disbelief, and before I thought to honk, she walked right up to the passenger door of the Suburban, opened it, and started to get in!

Needless to say, she and the driver were in for an awkward surprise. Good thing *he* was paying attention or they might have driven off together. Good thing the guy's wife didn't approach their car while my wife was getting out!

I was laughing when she climbed in and she knew immediately that I had seen the whole thing. "Why didn't you do something? Like honk or yell out the window or something before I embarrassed myself?" she demanded.

"I guess I was so shocked by the fact that you were actually going to get into the car that I was momentarily paralyzed." I replied still laughing. She failed to see the humor. She again failed to see the humor when I told her that the story was going to be the topic of this article.

Are you shocked by the spectacle of this recession and bad news to the point of paralysis? Are you standing by silently while your customers climb into someone else's Suburban? If so, you're not alone.

If so, it's time to do something about it.

Here are three strategic actions that separate the movers on the ladder to success and the shakers, shivering in their rubber boots.

First, turn off the T.V. The never ending drumbeat of unemployment numbers, stock market declines, and bankruptcies can dampen the enthusiasm of the most optimistic entrepreneur. Avoid the negativity and replace it with creativity.

Secondly, get creative in finding new customers. *Who* are the customers who are buying granite counters today? Where are they coming from? You might need to ask them. Yes this requires you to proactively get the information you need to find more leads. Eliminate the passivity and replace it with activity.

Thirdly, take action. Improve your operation and increase the value proposition. If you can provide a unique service, additional products, or a superior experience, at the same price your competitors are charging, it will tip the scale in your favor.

Don't let them leave with an ace up your sleeve.

Friends, there IS business out there. Honk your horn and yell out the window if you have to, this is no time to let the competition drive off with your customers!