



Cultivate Leadership Thinking

How to Change Disempowering Beliefs, One Story at a Time

By Tom Schreiter

"My products are too expensive. Nobody wants to pay that much."

Sound familiar? Does this sound like *distributor thinking* to you?

Distributors believe that prospects make their buying decision based on price. Will it be hard to change their thinking? Not if we use stories and examples.

Let's imagine that I'm a potential leader, but my belief that the products are too expensive is holding me back from making progress. You want to change my thinking from "the products are too expensive" to "the products are affordable because prospects really want the benefits my products are offering."

You take note of my distributor thinking and attempt to change it—not with a lecture, but with the following story:

"Tom, I know you think that the products are too expensive. You could be right. But I think a lot of people buy for convenience, quality, comfort, extra features or prestige. Most people will pay more for products when they can get this extra convenience, quality, comfort, extra features or prestige."

Resistant, I reply, "I don't believe you. Prospects buy because of *price*. They want to save money and will buy the least expensive products they can."

So you tell me, "Tom, you could be right. Maybe a lot of people go out and buy the least expensive products. I don't know. Let's go and find out, okay?"

You take me outside and we stand on the street corner. You ask me. "Tom, what's the cheapest automobile you can purchase?"

I think for a minute and say, "A Yugo. That's the least expensive car you can get. It has four tires and a steering wheel and will get you from point A to point B."

Then you say, "Let's stand on this street corner. Since people buy based on price, I'm sure most will purchase the least expensive automobile they can get—a Yugo. I bet we'll see a lot of Yugos drive by. In fact, I think over 50 percent of the cars that will pass by us will be Yugos."

As we stand on that street corner, what types of automobiles pass us by? First there is a Chevrolet, then a Ford, then a BMW, then a Toyota, then a Dodge, another Ford, a Cadillac, a Lexus, another Ford, a Volkswagen—and we don't see a single Yugo!

You turn to me and say, "Is it possible that people buy automobiles for prestige, comfort or quality—and not based on price? I haven't seen a single Yugo yet. I don't think anybody purchases

automobiles just based on price. People want image, comfort, special features, speed or prestige. But hey, I could be wrong. Tell you what, let's go to another street corner. This just could be a bad location."

We walk to another street corner. What do we see? Nissans, Toyotas, Fords, Chevrolets, BMWs, Oldsmobiles, Cadillacs, and not a single Yugo.

You turn to me and say, "Gee, it doesn't look like any of these people purchased an automobile based on price. Everybody purchased comfort, color, convenience or prestige. Let's go to another corner and look at some more automobiles."

I say, "No, no, no—I get the point."

At this point, you've changed my thinking. No longer do I believe that prospects purchase solely on price. Did my thinking change from *distributor thinking* all the way to *leadership thinking* with this one story or real-life adventure?

No. That would be too easy, wouldn't it? But you have changed my thinking at least a little bit. You'll have to tell me more stories or examples to gradually get my thinking all the way to leadership thinking.

What's another story to change my thinking about price? How about the Pizza Story? It goes like this:

"Tom, have you ever ordered pizza? Have you ever felt like just taking it easy and not cooking an evening meal? Have you ever felt like picking up the telephone and ordering a pizza delivered to your home while you watched videos or television?

"Of course you have. Everyone orders pizza on occasion. But is that the most inexpensive way to have a pizza? No way. You're paying for someone else to prepare it and someone else to deliver it to your home. That's definitely more expensive than preparing the pizza yourself, or purchasing a frozen pizza and cooking it yourself.

"So why do you spend the extra money? Taste? Better quality? Convenience? Comfort? And you probably spent two or three times as much money by not preparing it yourself!"

Whoops! You got me. Even I don't buy based on price alone. Again, my thinking edges just a bit closer to leadership thinking.

One of our leadership skills should be the ability to change our distributors' disempowering beliefs. The technique is simple. Here is what we did:

As leaders, we realized that people can change their beliefs by experiencing new events. We carefully controlled the new events to help our distributor see new a viewpoint. This is the easiest way to change beliefs quickly, and is also the most powerful.

Too often we attempt to change a distributor's beliefs with lectures, testimonials, reports, and so forth. That method takes time and is not very effective. By telling enlightening stories, you expose your distributors to new personal experiences that can obliterate disempowering beliefs and help them grow a leadership mindset.

TOM "BIG AL" SCHREITER writes the "Big Al Report," a free weekly newsletter with tips on building the skills needed for your network marketing business. To download his seven mini-reports and learn cool things to say to your prospects, visit www.networkingtimes.com/link/schreiter