

In the last newsletter I shared with you the tough choices I faced in a severe damage hail storm.

We talked a great deal about saying no, and the consequences you may face when you do. The shop owner was pushing to get worse and worse dents to be fixed paintless. Their paint shop was way behind, and the body men were too.

“Can you help me out?”

I had to choose, and I knew there was a real possibility he could find someone else.

Had I paid better attention to the numbers, this would have been easy. But emotion ruled and it was getting harder to say no.

“Sorry, I’m not the man for what you want.

You might be able to find someone else.”

This is what it came down to.

I knew it was right. The repairs would be sub standard and the grief on me and wear on my body would not be worth it.

Still, it was hard to say.

In a situation like this, you do not want your no to be misunderstood.

You might have heard the sales guys say, “I like to get to the first ‘no’ as quick as I can.

Then I can move them to yes.”

This is fine when making a purchase, not in a business decision.

Have you ever been put in a position like this, where you know it should be no, but you get sold on a compromise?

I have too. Each time vowing not to do it again.

I’m getting better at it. I now go in with this on my mind.

“No means no. Anything beyond this will feel like rape at some point in time.”

Yes, I really do tell myself this.

If I compromise my no, its my fault.

Ever have your no’s confused as maybe?

For this reason, I go in with firm resolve.

My voice contains nothing wishy-washy.

Human relations and tact say you need to acknowledge the other person’s goals.

I do understand and if I were in the same position, perhaps I might be asking for the same thing.

A couple years back, I wrote in this publication about a [book by Malcolm Gladwell called “Blink”](#).

It showed how often, our biological side knows something before our mental side does. Several fascinating stories and psych tests were given as proof.

This led me to a “go with your gut” plan of action for a time.

But then, our gut is not always right. Also, its often only in retrospect when you see it work. Ever have one of those moments when you faced danger or a scammer and looking back, you realized how your body was trying to tell you?

Its exactly what happened in this shop.

I made the decision to not take on worse damage. Knowing full well I might lose the account forever.

“I got nothing else coming in.”

This was the shop owner’s reply.

I took this as ‘fix what you estimated and go home’.

What I didn’t know took my by surprise.

About a month after I left, I get a call from a student from about two years ago.

He was from Boston and now working (or trying to work) this storm in Oklahoma City, about 2 hours from me.

He told me his PDR progress and how he hadn’t taken it seriously until the first part of this year. He came to this storm with another company, but they weren’t giving him work.

The severity of the damage and his lack of experience were the cause.

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But he wanted to make it work, so he picked up the phone and called every shop he could. Ironically, he called the very shop where I was. He was asked to come write estimates and could he fix bad damage. He knew he could not, so he called some experienced techs. They cut him out of the deal and when I left, they came in behind me. Now, if you are thinking I'm angry about this, please understand, I'm not at all.

Remember, I knew the possible outcome and weighed it carefully. I'm only sharing it with you for the irony of it. See, my gut knew there was something in the works. Though the shop owner tried to hide it, my system could sense it. Looking back, it explains the reaction I got when I said, "Hey, if you want to check with another tech, go ahead. Maybe they will fix these cars."

So, what do you think?
Find yourself calling me crazy for leaving work on the table?
"Tim's a fool. I'd do it just to keep busy."
I understand. I once felt this way too.
Let me flash back to 2003. The big one which hit Dallas, Texas and suburbs.
A tech we worked with in another city some years before came by.
"You guys hitting a thousand a day? A little more?"
"Well..."
"You know..."
Our inability to utter complete sentences told him the answer.
"This storm ought to bring about 2000 a day. I just need to find the right shop."
At the time, I thought him an arrogant fool. But over the years, I've made a point to talk to the guys who run big numbers. There is one common thread.
They expect it to happen.

They are disappointed when it doesn't and they quickly start looking for another deal. Here is their list of criteria:

- Right storm.
- Right damage.
- Right part of town (damaged area).
- Right shop.
- Right pay plan.
- Right sized estimates.

Get all these in line and a paintless dent tech can make an astonishing sum in a short period.

Now, the good news is there is room for you in all levels of it.

To get invited to a storm with all the right things in place means you are fast and you push clean.

So maybe you are still rough around the edges. Or you know your speed is not great yet.

Doesn't matter, you can still find work.

My decision to walk away may not be right for you at this point in time. You might well be on the crew who took what I turned down.

This is all well and good, and you have my blessing.

But as you go along, I'd like for you to push the limits of what you expect.

From a storm, yes, but not only this.

Continue to push what you expect as an outcome in everything. There is no sitting still.

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