
Adversity Gives You Strength

by JOHN BOE

How can you stay self-motivated and productive in the midst of turbulent times and a sluggish economy? How do you persevere as a salesperson when times are tough and customers seem to be holding on to every penny in fear of economic uncertainty?

Every challenge, setback and personal difficulty you encounter in life also brings with it the seed of equivalent or greater benefit! The key to overcoming adversity is to avoid the temptation of panic and instead focus on finding the greater benefit. Adversity will never leave you where it found you; it will either strengthen your

character or weaken your resolve.

During the early years of WW II, Nazi submarines, operating in wolf packs, roamed the frigid waters of the North Atlantic with impunity, sinking an alarming number of British military and merchant ships. Hitler was confident that his U-boats could blockade England and eventually starve the British people into submission.

In the summer of 1940, while the Battle of Britain was being played out over London, the Germans unmercifully sank over 300 British military and merchant ships. Prime Minister Winston Churchill, fearing the negative impact these devastating losses might have on the nation's morale, ordered the information withheld from the public. In an effort to reduce the appalling number of casualties lost at sea, Churchill instructed the British Royal Navy to begin a study to determine what, if anything, could be done to save more lives during sea rescue.

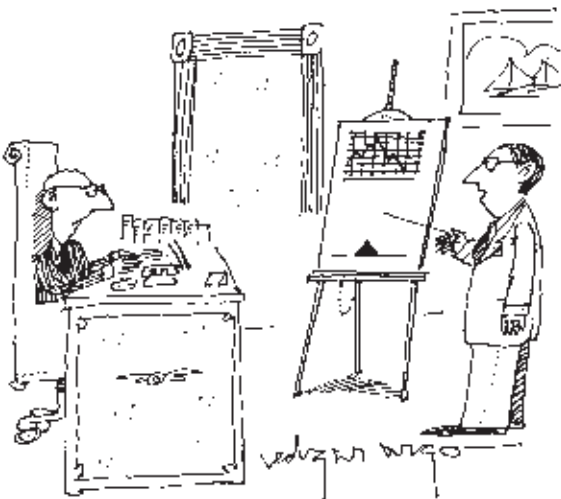
While interviewing the survivors, an interesting discovery was made. To their complete astonishment, the researchers noted that

the survival rate for the younger, presumably more physically fit sailors was remarkably lower when compared to their older shipmates. The study concluded that the older sailors had a significantly higher survival rate due to the fact that they had overcome more adversity and therefore, had developed greater confidence in being rescued than the younger, less experienced sailors.

The head of the research project, Kurt Hahn, was so moved by this discovery that he created the Outward Bound program. Hahn designed the Outward Bound program, utilizing a series of progressively rugged challenges, to mentally and physically prepare young British sailors to cope with the adversity of naval combat. Today, the Outward Bound program works with troubled youth to help them develop greater confidence and self-image.

Facing Adversity

I find it interesting that people faced with similar adversity often experience remarkably different outcomes. Some people become weakened, some become hard-



"It's a lot worse than that — that's just the tip of the iceberg — but I can't continue until your cardiologist gets here."

ened and some become stronger. If you place a carrot, an egg and a coffee bean into a pot of boiling water, each reacts in a completely different manner to their conditions. The carrot goes into the boiling water firm and comes out soft; the egg goes in fragile and comes out hardened; while the coffee bean turns the hot water into coffee by releasing its flavor and aroma!

Selling in these challenging times demands determination and personal fortitude. Having the will to persevere when times are tough is a characteristic commonly found among self-made millionaires. Are you a quitter? The last time you failed, did you stop trying because you failed or did you

fail because you stopped trying?

Thomas Edison documented 10,000 failed attempts to develop the electric light bulb. A reporter asked the great inventor how it felt to have failed 10,000 times trying to invent the light bulb. Edison responded, "Young man, I didn't fail 10,000 times trying to invent the light bulb, I simply documented 10,000 ways that it wouldn't work." Imagine how different our world would be today if Edison had been a quitter.

You must expect to encounter detours, roadblocks and potholes of adversity along the road of life. The next time you are faced with adversity, learn from it and know that you are becoming a much stronger person because of it! □

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

John Boe, a sales trainer and motivational speaker, helps companies recruit, train and motivate salespeople to achieve peak performance. He is a leading authority on body language and temperament styles. To view his online video demo, or to have John Boe speak at your next event, visit www.johnboe.com or call (877) 725-3750.

