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leadership solution



Joe Cala

Bad Company Ruins Good Habits

Aristotle said, “You are what you repeatedly do, therefore excellence is not an act; it is a habit.”

A habit is something you form in your life due to a continued daily practice. Depending on what you are continually practicing, habits can be either good or bad. The time and effort you invest into them determine their development. If you focus more time and effort on some habits over others, those habits will grow stronger, have a larger appetite and desire more attention. The larger the appetite, the more it wants to be fed. The more it craves, the more it gains control to rule your life. *The more it rules your life, the more you’ve lost having a habit, and have allowed a habit to have you.*

We can learn about habits through the parent-child relationship. Good manners are developed through the continued daily investment of example, time, consistency and energy from parents to their children. The parents enforce the habit through influence. When a child receives a gift, the parent says, “Say ‘thank you’.” The child then says, “Thank you.” When the child gives something to the parent, the parent says, “Thank you,” and then tells the child to say, “You’re welcome.”

What is taking place here? The parent is enforcing a continued practice of response through influencing the child to say certain things. These are practices done with the hopes of developing good manners in the child’s character. The parent continues this for days, weeks and even months until it becomes a habit. When it is a habit, the parent no longer has to remind the child to do

it anymore. The thing that was not natural is now a natural response.

Just because the habit is formed, enforced and is a natural response in the child’s life, however, doesn’t mean the habit is there to stay for life; the good habit can be influenced to change. Remember that, “Bad company corrupts and ruins good habits.” This is why it is so important to be careful with whom you’re hanging out. Who you associate with will begin to rub off on you and affect your manners, character and speech. Your company will influence your habits. Your habits will influence your character. Your character will influence your reputation. Your reputation will influence your life. Your life will influence your world.

Good company promotes good habits, good character, good reputation, a good life and ultimately makes a good world. In the same way, bad company promotes bad habits, bad character, bad reputation, a bad life and ultimately creates a bad world.

As professionals in the dealership — and life in general — you have worked hard on developing good habits. You have invested your time, energy, money and efforts into building good character and a solid reputation. Here’s how you can protect yourself from “bad company” destroying your “good habits”:

1. Don’t Hang Around the Wrong People

Don’t associate with people who are always complaining and negative. These people will ruin what you worked so hard on building. It’s always easier to look at the bad side of things. It takes discipline to train yourself to

look at the good and achieve good results. If someone can get you to ruin your reputation, they can effectively ruin your life.

2. Hate What is Bad

We are to detest with horror the results and consequences of living a life that exhibits bad habits. We need to be like *Teflon*. *Teflon* is a material used on cookware for the purpose of keeping the food from sticking to the pan. We need to be *Teflon* to the bad ways and bad habits that try to stick to us. They should slide right off of us.

3. Hold Onto What is Good

This is admonishing us to push away the bad ways and habits of life and to embrace the good ways and habits of life. When it comes to the good habits and ways of living this life, we should be like glue. We should let them stick to us like crazy glue. Don’t switch them around either. Don’t slip away from doing good. Instead, you should overcome the bad habits and intentions with the good habits and intentions you live.

Don’t be overcome by bad habits; rather, overcome bad habits with good ones. It’s in our power to make a difference in our lives. We have the influence to change our world. It falls on us. We are to never hold back the good that is in our hands. Good people who have good habits need to step out and stand up for what is good. What good is it? It is so good that it will change your life and the lives of others.

Joe Cala is an author, seminar leader, and Internet/Fleet sales manager of Gateway Toyota. He can be contacted at 866.859.6402, or by e-mail at jcala@autosuccessonline.com.

