



Business & Finance

How to Keep From Being Your Own Worst Barrier

By Monica Wofford, CSP



Why is it that when there are orange cones and Bob's Barricade signs on the highway, everyone slows to a crawl as if the lane is barely wide enough for them to pass through? I have seen semi-trucks pass through an automated toll booth faster than most drivers will traverse a highway lane decked out in orange doodads. Maybe there is a difference in truck drivers and mere humans; they are on a mission for which they are going to get paid. Hmm.. Well, we are in a nation that is under construction right now and the lanes on all sides of the information, marketing, and industry highway are paved with orange cones. Are you slowing down to go cautious and skeptical of what may lie ahead or are you on a mission for which you are going to get paid? The correlation may seem strange, but let's think about this. Are we not our own worst barrier most of the time? When times get tough, who says you have to slow down, be cautious, pull the cards in close to the vest? Who says so? Yep, I hear ya: "I DO". I hear ya loud and clear and you're right. You DO and if you are saying slow down, don't spend, and be careful then you are the one in your own way right now. So either we figure out that we are all going as big orange cones for Halloween or we figure out how to get out of our own way and

able profit right now. Do you have a service that you could offer, or create, that appeals to these markets? How else can you create an uneven road so that you stand out and have more and are better than perhaps those in your same industry?

Road Delay Expected Up Ahead - Don't be fooled into thinking that you must put off things until the market gets better. You could be waiting a while. You may also find that sales cycles are longer than usual and that you need to be creating a lead generation process NOW for business that you wish to have closed six months from now. Don't sit back and do nothing unless that is what you want to be earning in six months. Wait for no one and determine now how you are getting leads. Create that process and then create what is called a lead conversion process so that you have a formula for turning "interest" into "where do I sign". Most of our coaching clients tell us that when they introduce a lead generation and a lead conversion process, their business thrives!

Fines Double in This Zone - You've seen a police officer in the construction zone and the sign that says you pay more if you break the rules here. The same is true in business right now. More than ever, if you are not providing a high level of service, a significant level of productivity, and a great attitude, you are being seen as replaceable, and breaking the rules. Right now you don't want

future holds for you. If you keep going forward, it is likely that the future looks bright for you, as long as you are paying attention to not only what is ahead of you, but what unexpected curves in the road you might encounter along the way.

Be Prepared to Stop - Sometimes it isn't just about going forward and doing more. Sometimes it's about stopping some of the things that aren't helping you. Let go of the need to keep spending money on things that you have always done, if this is the main reason you keep doing them. Look at your expenses and assess what is not needed. Look at those you work with who are not producing, but are great people. They might be even "greater" at another firm. Look at your own skills and stop putting off improving them. If you have been trying to fix something about you that you are not fond of for more than 2 years... it isn't gonna happen on your own. Find a mentor or hire a coach and make progress already. Stop procrastinating. Stop hanging out with toxic people. Stop doing the bad habits you know are holding you back. And of course, stop getting in your own way.

One simple drive down any city highway these days will remind you of the lessons we've mentioned. Drive through a construction zone on the way home tomorrow and remind yourself that you are the one who is in total control of keeping you from being your own worst barrier. Those

we figure out how to get out of our own way and how to keep from being our own worst barrier.

These easy to apply road side messages will help keep you on the right track and out of your own way, as well as on a mission to get paid and frequently reminded of these lessons as you drive down any major roadway.

Uneven Road Ahead- If ever there were a time to keep the playing field uneven, this is it. By uneven, I mean working on the gap between you and the rest of the folks who do what you do. Now is the time to work on your skills, your mindset, and your marketing. While others are pulling in and tightening the budget, now is the time to spread the word that you are here to stay and have something viable and valuable to offer. Maybe you even target a market that is doing well. Those in air conditioning, repossessions and collections and rental property are making a consider-

and breaking the rules. Right now you don't want to be the one looking for a job. You want to be the one who is being sought out, either by a new employer or your current one. The stakes will be high, maybe even double, if you are not currently adding value by doing what is asked and then some in your current position. There are too many people who would willingly do your job for less.

No U-Turn - If you are still looking back at the good times or for the way things were, give it up already. They are over and now is now. A business coaching client of mine wrote an article about "Stop Looking in Your Rear View Mirror and Drive Forward". Good advice. The rear view mirror is for backing up and you can't do that now. You can't turn around and run or turn around and do over. And there is no need to turn around to see what those behind you are trying to do. Stay the course and stay straight ahead. Look at where you want to be, where you are going and what the

ing you from being your own worst barrier. Those who prefer to stay in their own way are looking for company – remember the whole misery loves company thing? – and they may tell you to remain cautious and remain slow and stay where you are until the market turns. Maybe they are the drivers that I keep running into. I thought you were more like those semi truck folks who are on a mission and had an income to earn and business to run.

About the Author - Monica Wofford, MBA, CSP, is a speaker, trainer, author and coach who brings more than 18 years of experience to her training firm, Monica Wofford International, Inc. A sought-after trainer, Wofford focuses on results instead of rah-rah and though she is entertaining, she seeks to leave an audience with stuff they can use right away. She is the author of "Contagious Leadership", "Contagious Confidence," and "Contagious Customer Service". She can be reached at www.monicawofford.com or (866) 382-0121.