

HOW TO BEAT DEPRESSION!

Here's the story of a small, almost successful mail order entrepreneur, and how he overcomes the blues that comes with his way of conducting business:

What an adrenaline rush! Last week when I visited the post office my post office box was overflowing with orders. One day, I had to get a plastic container just to carry the mail home. At the end of the week, I had made about \$1,200 in orders!

Unfortunately, I spent money to stock up on inventory. I anticipated receiving the same type of business the next week to make up for any overspending I had done this week. That did not happen.

The next week brought in a total of \$150 in orders and the week after that brought in only \$10! After that, depression set in. I kept saying "What will I do now? I spent the \$1,200 and only have \$80 to my name. Rent will be due in a couple weeks and I'm flat broke simply because I let money go to my head because I was temporarily "rich."

This is one example of how a business works sometimes and it's important to not take everything for granted. As employees of other companies, we were used to the fact of receiving a paycheck every week. Whether we worked hard or not, our paycheck was always the same and always on time. All we had to do was put in our 8-hours, 5-days a week.

Also, we were not used to spending any money to fill orders. If we needed to mail something, we sent it to the mail room or ran it through the postage meter. As employees, we didn't pay for the postage out of our own pockets. Our employer took care of it. That also goes for supplies. If we ran out of paper for our typewriter, we went to the supply cabinet and got a pack out. We never worried about spending our own money to pay for office supplies.

But when you own and operate your own business money is hard to come by especially the first few years. You generate your own income! So instead of thinking about riches and glory think about improving upon what you already have. If you have a \$1,200 week pat yourself on the back but don't be stupid like I did and spend it thinking you'll have the same amount next week. This may not happen for another 6 months!

Instead, find out "why" you generated this much money one week and hardly anything the next week. Did you stop marketing because you didn't think you had to anymore? Did you spend time filling all those \$1,200 worth of orders

and generating back-end sales? (A back-end sale is placing some form of advertising in with the orders you fill that will generate additional sales. These items should be for products and services that either compliment or are the same as the product the customer purchased.)

Were all the orders that made up the \$1,200 week for the same product or different ones? Where did you advertise in order to generate this response? Was it a specific publication or a combination of several of them? Were the orders for something that people run out of frequently (i.e., printing, typesetting and advertising?) If so you can have a special offer for these same customers in a few weeks with a money-saving coupon for them to use. This will generate repeat business and the likelihood of another \$1,200 week in the near future.

However, if you do spend the money like I did and depression sets in, just sit down for a moment and reflect on what you do have: a roof over your head, food to eat, a legitimate business that will grow and possibly steady out in the future, peace of mind and the ability to work on your own without employers and people breathing down your neck!

In addition if you spend the money and cannot buy the supplies to fill the orders, DON'T just avoid your customers and hope they'll understand. Instead, send them a postcard that simply explains that you had such a large response that you sold out of the item. Tell them approximately "when" their order will be filled and "when" to expect it. If you can't possibly fill the order within 30 days, give your customer the option of getting their money back or better yet issue them a Credit Voucher to use on future purchases.

If you have no income at all and cannot possibly refund people's money offer them something in return that you can provide. You need to find some way to compensate your customers. Remember that they trusted you enough to see your ad, write out a check and spend their hard-earned money on you. They may not have a lot of money either. Avoiding them will turn you into a "rip-off" artist with no future in the industry!