



THE EGG FARMER

Technology and automation means sales managers can measure and analyse their team's performance better than ever before. But is spending more time on your laptop the best way of influencing the performance of your salespeople? The following fable might just have the answer.

Once upon a time there lived an egg farmer. But he was no ordinary egg farmer. He had special eggs, and the reason that his eggs were so special was that he had special hens. Indeed, he was a special egg farmer.

Now, special hens eat special seeds. Everyday, he sat in front of each hen & peeled the many layers of coating from each seed. As you can imagine this took a long time. While he sat there he spoke to the hens, listened to their problems, and helped them. The hen felt much happier after spending time with the egg farmer. He really was a special egg farmer.

One day a very clever inventor visited the farm.

"I have noticed, Mr Egg Farmer, that despite having the finest eggs in the land, you only produce very few eggs. Why is that?"

"Well," replied the egg farmer "I have to peel the coating from each seed and this takes many hours. I couldn't possibly feed any more hens."

"Aha! I thought so!" replied the inventor. "That is why I am here. I have invented a seed-peeling machine. With this machine you will be able to peel more seeds, feed more hens and sell more eggs than ever before!"

The egg farmer became very excited and despite the machine costing most of his savings, he decided to buy it. With the remainder of his savings he doubled his brood. Now he truly would be a special egg farmer.

Each sunrise thereafter the egg farmer would scatter the seeds, which were now pre-peeled. He didn't need to sit by each hen anymore, and spent most of his time in the basement cleaning and maintaining his seed machine.

What was a concern, however, was that, despite doubling the number of hens, the quality and quantity of the eggs was no better than normal eggs.

The inventor installed many modifications but the problem got even worse.

Meanwhile in the barn there was unrest. The hens had many things to tell the egg farmer but they saw him less than ever before. Besides, it was obvious that he was more interested in the seed machine and their eggs, than he was in them.

One evening there was a fire in the basement of the egg farmer's cottage. The seed machine was completely ruined. The egg farmer was devastated.



Without his machine he could no longer feed all of the hens, so he sold the new ones he had recently bought.

Everyday, just as before, he sat in front of each hen and peeled the many layers of coating from the special seeds he needed for his old hens. As this took a long time, while he sat there he spoke to the hens, listened to their problems, and helped them.

The hens felt much happier after spending time with the egg farmer.

Then, the strangest thing started to happen. Very quickly the egg farmer noticed that the eggs had returned to their former quality, and quantity. Confused, he spoke to his oldest and wisest hen.

“It is quite simple really”, she explained. “When the seed machine arrived, what was your main intention?”

“To produce more seed,” replied the bewildered egg farmer.

“For what reason?”

“To produce more eggs,” he said.

“Exactly. It wasn’t to help us, was it? The reason we produce special eggs isn’t because of the nutrition the seed gives us. In peeling the seed, however, you spend time with us, show us care, and help us when we need you.”

The egg farmer couldn’t believe how short-sighted he had been and from that day onwards spent as much time as he could with his hens.

The hens produced even more eggs and they were even more special than before.

He realised that he wasn’t an egg farmer, after all. He farmed hens, not eggs. He was indeed, a special hen farmer.

The moral of the story is that time with your salespeople is likely to be the most valuable you will ever spend. Don’t get distracted by over-analysing past performance. Get out, or sit with, your team and influence what can be done in the future. Manage your people, not your numbers.



LAMMORE

CONSULTING LTD.

INSPIRE; ENTERTAIN; MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Windsor House, Cornwall Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 2PW United Kingdom

+44 (0)1423 520 814
enquiry@lammore.com