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COMING SOON: NANOCELLULOSE

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The conventional wisdom is wrong

By Jack Miller

Did you ever get into a new job, a new venture, or even a new project and find that some things don't seem to make sense?

There are a few reasons why things might not make sense to you. It could be that they simply don't make sense. Or, it could be that there are facts you don't know that would explain why things really do make sense.

When you are in a new situation, you have the opportunity to ask the dumb questions. It is often said that there is no such thing as a dumb question, and that is at least in part because the fresh eye, the fresh viewpoint, is not burdened by the conventional wisdom. Often, this fresh viewpoint can lead to critical changes.

If I had to guess, I'd say the conventional wisdom is right 90% of the time. It's the other 10% where groundbreaking changes come from. The conventional wisdom says, "We've always done it that way." Or, "We tried that and it didn't work." The conventional wisdom said that digital cameras would never replace film cameras. Heck, the conventional wisdom said that quartz watches were a novelty (see the video, *The Power of Paradigms*, with Joel Barker). Did you know that the Swiss actually invented the

quartz watch, showed it as a novelty in a trade show, didn't bother to patent it, and well, you know the rest.

The conventional wisdom has a lot to say about marketing practices, what works and what doesn't, what customers want, and what they think.

Can you afford to be wrong 10% of the time?

When you lose an order, do you know why? Do your sales people say your prices are too high? Are they really too high? Sometimes it seems like no sales rep ever lost an order for any reason other than price, while no sales rep ever got an order because of price. Now THAT doesn't make sense.

When you lose a customer, do you know why? Are you sure? If the conventional wisdom is wrong 10% of the time, you could be fixing the wrong things. To steal from a common saying: If it IS broke, DO fix it.

Your sales people don't ask the dumb questions because they don't want to look dumb.

And even if they do, your customers always want lower prices, more inventory, and better service, so can you really trust what they tell your sales people?

Sometimes, if you really **Need to Know**TM what is going on the minds of your customers, you need a third party who can ask the dumb questions and get honest answers in an environment where there is no negotiation going on.

For **Need to Know**TM market intelligence, call Jack Miller at 203 925 0326 or email jack.miller@market-intell.com,

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