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## Lost and Found



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*“I lost my position on the basketball team due to a poor attitude. I found that sitting on the bench didn't make it any better. Controlling our own attitudes is a choice. Attempting to change the attitudes of others is a project.”—John A. Jensen*

A few years back, I ran into an old friend of mine from college, John Jensen. He happened to be in the same profession as me: speaking, training, coaching, and writing. As a side note, one of my fondest memories from college was how John and I both ended up selling life insurance as college agents in a small farming community in Minnesota. I remember during our training how hard we laughed at our poor fortunes of trying to separate farmers from their money in order to buy life insurance. After selling life insurance to our families, friends, and ourselves, we both eventually decided that the career was not for us.

John gave me his book, [\*Lost and Found: Finding the Silver Linings in Life\*](#) (published by Putt-Putt Publications, 1997). I found it to be a gem and loved it from page one. It was such a creative approach to understanding life, and I was a little envious that I had not come up with this approach to seeing life and providing insight. Below are a few excerpts from John's book and you will see how profound his thinking is:

*“I lost a significant portion of my hairline. I found all of a sudden, how important the rest of my hair became. We don't always realize how important some people are until we are in danger of losing them.”*

*“I lost respect for my brother Russ when he seemed happy about losing his wrestling match 18 points to 2. I found that, after he'd been pinned 22 consecutive times, 'winning' to Russ was simply finishing a match. My favorite definition of leadership is 'someone who has the ability to surpass himself.' Knowing ourselves and our capabilities allows us to find victory even in defeat.”*

With John's permission and help, I would like to apply his lost-and-found approach to the profession of selling.

*I recently **lost** a deal. I **found** it is my responsibility to ensure the prospect understands my value more clearly. Sometimes when we lose, it is a wake-up call to do our homework and go back to the basics.*

*I **lost** my motivation for my work. I **found** that if I make time every day for the things I like to do to recover my energy, my motivation stays consistently high. There are numerous barriers to one's motivation. It is our personal responsibility to understand our own personal motivation drivers.*

*I **lost** my positive attitude. I **found** that if I interact with positive people, I feel better and my attitude improves. Surrounding yourself with positive people is the quickest way to improve your own attitude.*

*I **lost** my confidence to take risks (prospecting, going around gatekeepers, elevating contact level to executive decision makers). I **found** that if every day I challenge myself to step outside my comfort zone, my confidence rises proportionately. The more you challenge your comfort zone, the bigger your comfort zone gets. Life becomes more interesting when we challenge ourselves and take risks.*

*I **lost** a chance to improve because my company decided not to make an investment in training me. I **found** that it is my responsibility to develop myself and improve my results. Accountability means I own my development and my business results.*

*I **lost** a chance to make quota as I did not have enough opportunities in my pipeline because marketing did not provide enough leads. I **found** I need to spend more time networking on the front-end of the quarter to ensure I have enough opportunities to make quota. I need to focus only on what I fully control and have responsibility for.*

In conclusion, life and your business career will never be perfect. In the end, you really need to focus on the things that are in your sphere of control such as attitude, motivation, and effort.

Question: I lost\_\_\_\_\_. I found\_\_\_\_\_.

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