

I believe that a strong attribute of a successful entrepreneur is to accept criticism and to do it graciously so that the person offering it will give it again.

Sounds simple enough, but a great number of people just can't do it. They get angry, petulant, standoffish, etc., and resent the person offering it. The opposite should happen as most people offering it like you and are doing it to help you. In fact, it may be uncomfortable for them to do it. Those receiving the criticism should thank them.

To grow your business and yourself, you should seek out criticism. We all like to say we welcome feedback. However, you must remember feedback goes two ways. We love good feedback because it affirms our beliefs or actions. Often it is negative, and you should welcome it and delve into the reason behind the negativity as it could be very beneficial to you.

Most people offer criticism on a positive note. They don't call you stupid. It's hard to be gracious to someone who offers criticism in an insulting manner. However, your company may have treated them egregiously. Think about your experiences with large companies who have treated you poorly re: your purchase of their product or service. The airline has lost your baggage on your long awaited vacation; they don't even call you with an update on your status; and if you call them, the phone is busy. You want to scream and will do so if you ever had a human to talk to. Your bank makes a mistake and bounces your check; when you call, they immediately suggest you made an error. If these companies would listen to their customers' complaints/criticism, they would learn how to correct their problems, which would improve their bottom line and create long-term loyal customers.

This acceptance of criticism extends to all your human activities. Certainly, your employees will be more motivated and productive if the boss really listened and sometimes acted on their criticism. Once you understand the benefits to you of accepting criticism, work hard at taking it graciously. This will ensure that the process will continue. . . all to your benefit. Criticism can be a source of continuous learning.

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