

10TH COMMANDMENT

Always Take the High Road.

A Stanford University study identified the single most important factor that leads to success: the willingness to delay gratification.

Taking the high road means forgoing the short-term gratification that one might get from making a snarky remark, a clever retort, a painful critique or pointing out to a client that you have other clients that have to be serviced too. It means you're keeping your eye on what you want in the long run.

Too often when challenged by clients, associates or significant others, we give into to the momentary satisfaction of self-defensively lashing out.

Client calls on Friday afternoon with a project that will cost you a weekend? Take the high road. Can't get an appropriate budget for a project that's really important to the client so you won't be able to charge what's fair? Take the high road. Client asking for changes that won't have any impact on the final result

(see 1st commandment) but will create unnecessary work? Take the high road. Your significant other wants you to attend an event you'd rather chew your arm off than go to? Take the high road.

Stop thinking about the short-term implications and focus on the long-term benefits to your relationship. Welcome the insanity and embrace the seemingly impossible. Each challenge is an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment and reinforce the notion that you can always be relied upon. There is also the empowering feeling of camaraderie and achievement you and your team experience after successfully completing a demanding assignment.

Make no mistake: it's not altruism. It's actually the ultimate form of self-interest because you're focused on getting what you want — not for the short-term high, but for the long-term goal.

LIVING BY THE 10TH COMMANDMENT

This might be the most difficult commandment to live by because human nature is the obstacle. In our 40+ years as marketers, however, we have found that taking the high road leads to intense client loyalty, enduring employee commitment, 30+ year retainer relationships and client advocates who bring us along when they switch firms.

Taking the high road and always focusing on our long-term goals has strengthened our associations and even made things more fun.

After all, as they say, life is a marathon, not a sprint.

The Right Point of View Comes With Experience

For 40 years, Adler Branding & Marketing has been advising clients about all facets of brand strategy, communications and design.

"The Ten Commandments of Marketing" series is the distillation of our decades of experience, epiphanies and, of course, mistakes, into something useful. We welcome your thoughts and comments.



For more information on Adler and the Ten Commandments of Marketing go to stanadler.com or e-mail info@stanadler.com.

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