

Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation?

Ben:

Good Morning! Welcome to the Inspiration Agents Chamber Conference Call. This is Ben Turpin and I'm your host today. We're delighted that you're here this morning and we're just going to jump right in! The title of this call is 'Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation?' This is an opportunity for us to do something that we don't usually think about a lot. I'll tell you a quick story that was on my heart and on my mind, and was something that I wanted to share. It's interesting, the way life works – this morning, I was sitting here at my desk, watching the kids go for a bike ride and doing my work, and my wife brings me the phone. It's my dad who's called, just to see how we're doing. They called just because they miss us; there's no agenda, there's nothing that they need. It's interesting because last night, I was in half a mind to call them; but it just got too late and I didn't get to do it.

So, what we're going to talk about today is 'Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation?' All of you are doing great stuff in your chamber work – you're running committees, your running your chamber... you're the shepherd herding all of your sheep and making sure that everyone has their needs met and attended to. And sometimes, the daily pressures get in the way. Sometimes, you get caught up in your schedule, and have so many things that need to be done – you get caught up in your weekly duties, or the weekly things that you have to do for your monthly meetings – and are just, flat-out short of being wholly crazy with your hair on fire!

We could just suffice it to say that most of us find ourselves busy. Most of us find ourselves with full schedules, full days, full weeks and full months, and there's just not a lot of extra time for the touchy-feely stuff, and the relational side of things. Sure, we've got a way to stay in touch with our members built into our system, and to see them at events, and to follow-up with them, and all kinds of things, but what I'm talking about here, in this 'Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation', is something bigger and deeper than just the common occurrences where you come across people that you're going to come across anyway.

You're doing your job and you're doing a great job of doing your job, but that's not all there is. In my opinion, there needs to be something more. And so, you ask yourself – and some of the people we work with have asked themselves – “Is this all there is? Is there something more that I should be doing or should not be doing?”

So, as we go, we wonder, “Gosh! What is there more, that I should do? Am I in too many things? Should I join another group? Should I start another group? Should I do more?” And one of the things that I am starting to see, as we work with chambers and businesspeople, is that the Art of High-Touch is coming back. What I mean by the Art of High-Touch is the old-school relationship side of things. For those of you who are in the South, you'll understand this. For those of you who are not in the South, you may have seen it in the movies. It's that old-fashioned, sitting on the porch and having nowhere to go, and nothing to do, except for drinking a glass of tea or a glass of lemonade, and catching up with the neighbors about what's going on. And that's really the Art of High-Touch – it's that time in our lives when we, as a culture, as a society and as a people, knew what our community was all about. And that can be good, or bad.

As a child, I can remember not wanting so much for everyone, especially my parents, to know exactly what I was doing, and was involved in. In our society now – and we are advocates of this new technology – we have Twitter, Facebook and all great kinds of ways to stay in touch with our members. These are frequency and ease-of-use tools. We also have the e-newsletters which, I'm sure, you are sending out. We also have hard-copy newsletters. I know some chambers, which we are members of, send us hard-copy newsletters. All of this is good, all of this is important and it all has its place, but it misses the touch of high-touch relationship marketing. It misses the old-school mentality of, “How can I help you? What's really going on? What are your basic challenges and issues? How can I help?”

This brings us to the question of, ‘Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation?’ You're all very skilled at motivating people, and people love to be around you – that's why you're in this business. When we look at the motivation-side of things, we go, “Gosh!

People love me. People love to be around me. I'm motivated and am motivating them. People are inspired by me" and all of that; but who needs to hear from us? As we looked at this, we came up with a few people who we felt need to hear from you. There may be a few more, or a few less, but these are the people that we felt, needed to hear from you. People who are heavily involved need to hear from you. Some who is heavily involved needs to hear from you. You might be going, "Gosh! I've got Tom Smith, and he's on every committee that I've got. He shows up on every networking event. He is the chairman of this group." And then you go, "Why does Tom Smith need to hear from you? Tom Smith is already heavily involved. So, you guys are crazy saying that Tom Smith needs to hear from you."

The reason we're not craze in saying that Tom Smith needs to hear from you is because Tom Smith needs your wisdom and your insights from a non-committal point. He needs to know that you have a relationship with him that is outside, and above and beyond, the chamber. It isn't so much that the only reason you need Tom Smith is for a particular committee; Tom Smith needs to know that you care about Tom Smith as a person, and that you care about his business as a person, and you may be already demonstrating that through things that you talk about with Tom at meetings, and so forth... But Tom needs to hear from you separately from all of that. I'll discuss this at the end; we've got Action Points for you to follow. I'll discuss that at the end, so that you have clear Action Points about what we mean by 'hearing from you' and the motivation that you can share with them.

But the first person that you need to contact, and who need you to be heard from, is people who are heavily involved. One of the other reasons you need to touch base with people who are heavily involved is because we never know when their situation might change. And by being in touch with them, and being connected to them relationally, we will have the ability to know the turning points in their lives. And we may have the ability to provide motivation, or a word of encouragement at a turning point in their life, which is pivotal and keeps them connected to us... although, that's not the most important thing.

The most important thing is the connection and the relationship that we have with Tom Smith. The second person who needs to hear from you is someone who used to be involved – a

person, or a group of people who used to come to everything, used to be the vocal people, used to be visible and see what was going on, and they knew what was happening. Those people need to hear from you. Some of you may be saying, “Wow! I did it! I know exactly why they need to hear from me. They need to hear from me because I want them to come back.” Clearly, we want them to come back. But they don’t need to hear from you because you want them to come back. They need to hear from you because it is a relationship. Think of it in this way - it is an important relationship that used to be a garden flower that was in your garden, and was growing, and flourishing. It was beautiful and people enjoyed it. They walked by and commented, “Wow! What a wonderful rose bush that is! That’s absolutely beautiful! How do you do it? It’s so incredible!” And now, they’re gone!

Now, people walk by your garden and see either the vacancy, or the lack of life in that particular area, and they start to wonder. You as a gardener are thinking, “What is it that I missed here?” The thing that we miss with those people who used to be involved is the relationship-side of things. I’m going to take a quick moment here and explain what I mean by that: All of us invariably have family members. As much as we may, or like to, or in some cases have, separated ourselves from our family members because of rights, wrongs or differences, they’re still family. They are still a part of our lives and a part of who we are, and what we’re doing.

For example, you’re going to show up at Aunt Nelly’s house for Thanksgiving dinner, and Aunt Betsy is going to be there. You may have had a problem with Aunt Betsy six or seven years ago, but the reality of the matter is that you’re just going to have to face her at some point in time. And the reason that these people who used to be involved need to hear from you from a relational standpoint, is because they are important. This is my opinion, and everybody knows that I’m a little weird – everybody needs to hear from you for some reason. I think that they need to hear from you that they are important, and that you are doing good things. They need that relational high-touch thing that we’re missing in our society. They don’t need another email; they don’t need an e-card; they a high-touch hear from you. They need to hear from you because they need your motivation, and they need something that you have to offer them, that nobody else can offer.

The third group that needs to hear from you is someone who is new. The reason that someone who is new needs to hear from you is because you need to begin to develop that plant in the garden. You need to develop that relationship and nurture them in such a way that they can experience the gift that you have, which only you can give them. It's that special thing which you have, that no one else has. I don't know what it is – for some of you, it's different than others, and that's just the way we're all put together. I don't know what they need from you, but they do need something from you.

People who are new need to hear from you, and they need your motivation, because they don't have a relationship with you. It's like a little baby born into a family – a little baby born into a family gets visited by everybody at first, they get visited on their birthday, and then on holidays and Christmas... more and more touches occur because you want to be a part of that person's life. It's a new baby that's been born into a family. So, those are the three people who, we feel, need to hear from you. There probably are more, and you may be sitting there, thinking, "I get those three, but I really think this person is important, or that person is important for this reason or that."

The purpose of this call is to make you think about who needs to hear from you. The next topic is, 'Why do they need to hear from you?' What do they need to hear from you about?

In the 80's, there was a gentleman by the name of Harvey MacKay. I know that some of you may be familiar with his work; he wrote a book called 'Swim with the Sharks without Being Eaten Alive' and 'What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School'. He took some of the best companies, and some of the best and brightest ideas, and he came up with a phrase called 'Earn your MBWA'. We're all familiar with MBA – Management of Business Administration. But this is an MBWA, and it means Management By Wandering Around. One of the things that he came up with, when he learnt that, is that the brightest and the best CEOs and executives were really wandering around their company, touching base with people, discovering who they were, discovering how things were working in the day-to-day operations, and they were gaining tremendous value and insight just by wandering around. They weren't wandering around to say, "Hey Larry! You're doing that wrong" or "Hey! You could do this in this

way.” They were wandering around to gather information on the current status of the affairs of the corporation, and the things that were going on.

The reason that these people need to hear from you is one of the famous things which, I’m sure you’ve all heard. You’ve probably heard it first from your parents. The reason they need to hear from you is ‘just because’. You’ve asked your mom, or dad, “Why do I have to do this?” And the answer is, “Just because”. That’s the formal answer. The most important thing I want you to remember every time you sit down with, or telephone these people who definitely need to hear from you, is that there is no agenda.

There is absolutely, positively, no agenda. You’re not calling them, you’re not going to see them, or you’re not communicating them in such a way as to get them back involved in the chamber if they’re not. You’re not talking to them about a future committee that you want them to be involved in. You’re not asking them for sponsorship dollars, or for leadership opportunities. You’re not coming to them with any agenda.

It’s simply like sitting on the front porch with Aunt Nelly, drinking a glass of tea or lemonade, and shooting the breeze. You have absolutely no agenda. It is simply relational. So, that’s the way – it simply is ‘just because’ and there is no agenda. It’s just simply relational – I want to get to know you better because you are important to me.

The benefits of this are simple: you’re going to discover hidden secrets. You’re going to discover things that they would never, ever have shared with you because you weren’t a trusted friend and ally. You are the ‘Chamber Person’ or the ‘Executive’, and they could never share that with you because they don’t have that relationship with you. But once they develop that relationship with you, you’re going to discover hidden secrets which are not only about your Chamber and things that you are doing, but hidden secrets about them and their business, and how you might be able to help them.

It's going to be a little challenging for some of you because at that point, you're going to want to say, "I can help you there." That's not the opportunity, or the reason, for this. This is simply about relationships. You're there, and your job is to listen to them, communicate to them, be interested in them, and to discover more about them. You're also going to discover powerful opportunities, which you can go back with to your office, or team, and say, "Hey! Listen, I've discovered this." You don't necessarily want to "rat out" your source. You don't want to say, "I spoke with Tom Smith, and I discovered that we have this tremendous opportunity." You want to go back to your team and say, "Hey! I was out and about, wandering around and managing by wandering around. I was communicating with the people. I was sitting on the front porch with Aunt Nelly and I discovered that we have a powerful opportunity here. Our mission is not being communicated clearly." Or, "The community, at large, is looking for this particular piece from us." You'll discover powerful opportunities for you to serve, take advantage, step up to the plate and give more.

I know you are already giving a lot, but each of us has the capacity to prune some things from our lives, so that we might give more and do more in other areas that have a greater impact... and you'll discover some of those. The other thing that you're going to see as a benefit is that you've created a strong bond of love. Now, I know that sounds a little hokey, but the reality of the matter is that it is that relationship which says, "I care about you." You create that bond of love which says, "I care about you as a person and as an individual" and nothing is better than that. For those of you on the call who are married, or have a significant other, you totally understand that there is nothing stronger than that bond of love. Imagine if you could have that with business relationships, not in a weird way, but in a very powerful strong way, where you would have the ability to communicate with them in a way that they understand how important you are to them. They understand how important they are to you. It's a team deal.

So, you're going to discover hidden possibilities, you're going to discover powerful opportunities, and you're going to create a strong bond of love. Those are the benefits of making this call, or touching base with these people – these people need to hear from you, and they need your motivation.

So, how do we do this?

We're busy. We've got Twitter, Facebook, e-newsletters, hard-copy newsletters, which are all our standard things. This is not a standard thing. This is above and beyond – an exceptionally different thing.

There are three ways in which, I personally think you can hear from, or touch base with your members and communicate with them.

The first way is: A random stop-by, or a call-in stop-by:

You physically show up at Bob's place and say, "Hey Bob! I wanted to see if I can have 5 minutes of your time." Obviously, if you've got a moment to call them and see if they've got time to see you, that's better. But if you don't, just stop by and say, "Hey! I was just in the neighborhood (and name your purpose of being in the neighborhood) and I wanted to stop by." You're not going to say, "I wanted to stop by and I have to agenda", but you're going to say, "I wanted to stop by and see what's going on", or "I wanted to stop by and say 'hello!' and see what you're doing."

The other way to touch base, so that your members can hear from you, is to telephone:

I know some of you use the telephone for a lot of different things – a lot of it is incoming calls. Some of you use it for outbound calls. But what I'm talking about is the lost art of using the telephone. It's that opportunity that you have to pick up the phone, call someone and say, "Hey! I'm calling just because. I don't have an agenda. I'm just calling to see how you're doing, what you're up to and see how the kids are. I want to communicate with you and find out what's going on!"

The third way is to send them a card:

Send them an unexpected card which says, “Hey! I was thinking about you. I don’t know why, but I was prompted to pick up the phone” or “I was prompted to come and see you”, or “I was prompted to send you this card.” You just send them a card. It is not an agenda card. It is not an agenda phone call or agenda stop-by. You just say, “Hey! You’re important to me. I wanted to touch base, see how things are going and if there might be an opportunity for me to serve you. I’d like to know you better. Maybe I can buy you a cup of coffee. Maybe I can take you out to lunch” or whatever the case may be. Please do not include any sort of agenda in any of this correspondence. Don’t say, “Hey! I’m calling to remind you about the upcoming meeting.” This is strictly relational. Does anyone have any questions, before I get to my Action Points?

Audience One:

This is Doris from Pittsburgh. We do a lot of that here. A lot of the things you said about touching base are common sense – for instance, if you know someone for a long time, but you don’t live near them, you always manage to send them a Christmas card. This is going one step better than that. We try and do this every quarter. We’ve only got 600 members to manage, and some are probably larger, but we try to make sure that we either have face-to-face contact, or talk to them on the phone, because everyone is tired of all this email and electronic communication. Even though we need this electronic communication, they still like to hear your voice.

Ben:

Absolutely! And with the Action Points, some of you are going to think, “Gosh! That is going to be such a minor dent in my people, because my numbers are so big.” You’re going to feel, “There’s no way I can do what you’re talking about in the Action Points”, because my Action Points are a little ambitious. I know that some of you are doing this, and when we get to the Action Points, I want you to consider taking this Chamber Challenge and these Action Points seriously, and doing them, even though you are already doing something like what you guys are doing in Pittsburgh.

So, we have four Action Points to implement in this 'Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation' program.

Action Point One: Block off one full day

That's 8 hours. I know most of you are working longer than 8 hours, and I want you to block off 8 hours. I don't care if you block it off in two 4-hour segments, or four 2-hour segments; it needs to be a full 8 hours, and it needs to be in the coming week. You may think, "Gosh! I've got loads of things going on."

Here's the reality of the matter: Factually, absolutely, positively, without a shadow of any doubt, if you email me your calendars, I can take half of the things off them, and delete them. I can cross out half the things from your calendars for the next week, and not one hiccup will happen because of it. And that's because we are so busy – we have things on our calendar that are not important, but are on there because it is designed to manage things for us, but isn't getting us the mileage we need.

So, the first action point is to block off 8 hours in your week, sometime next week. This could be 2 hours a day, for four days, or two 4-hour segments. I don't think it should be an hour everyday because you just lose the momentum. You need some time to get into this, and you need some time to get the momentum going.

Action Point Two: Write down the names of 15 people

Don't write down any more than 15 names. These 15 people are the ones you're going to contact in those 8 hours. Using very rough math, that's about 2 people per hour who you have to call, stop by, or send a card to. Please don't cheat and use one hour, send 15 cards and say, "Hey! I did this Action Point. I met the Chamber Challenge and I communicated with these people."

You could do just that – sit down for one hour, send 15 cards, and it would be impactful. But we're looking for the full 8 hours to be used to contact 15 people. Stop by, make a telephone call, or send them a card. You're not going to be able to stop by for some people; others, you may not be able to reach by phone. So, you're going to have to send them a card. Communicating with these people is not currently on your schedule, so don't cheat and think, "You know what? I've got to commit a meeting with Nancy Smith. I'll take 15 minutes afterwards and sit down." These meetings, phone calls and cards, are above and beyond. They are different.

So, don't use something that's currently on your schedule. These are 15 people that you need to contact in the next week, using your 8 hours.

Action Point Three: Remember the focus

The focus is them, them and them alone. You don't have an agenda. Your communication is simply relational, and when they ask you, "Why do you want to get together?" the answer is this, "Because you are important to me." I've used that phraseology very specifically – not because you are important to the Chamber, not because you are important to the organization, but because you are important to me.

I want you to think about this for a minute. If somebody called you and said, "Hey! I'd like to get together for a cup of coffee", or "Hey! Do you have a few minutes? I'd just like to talk to you on the telephone", you asked, "Why?" and they said, "Because you are important to me", how's that going to make you feel? You have to remember that nobody's going to remember what you did, nobody's going to remember who you are, but they will absolutely remember how you made them feel.

Action Point Four: Repeat, repeat and repeat

This is the simplest of all the Action Points – I don't care if you decide to do it monthly, or weekly or even quarterly. Make it a part of your day. In my opinion, you need to get to be what a friend

of mine refers to as a Level Four Connector. Level Four in anything is the stage where the action happens all the time, unconsciously. You don't even think about it anymore. It's just like brushing your teeth. All of us are Level Four Teeth-Brushers. I don't think that there's anybody on the call this morning, who hasn't brushed their teeth yet today!

You get up in the morning, shower, fix your hair and get your clothes on, and you brush your teeth sometime within this routine. You don't get in your car and go, "Oh! I forgot to brush my teeth" and go back in and brush your teeth. We're all Level Four Teeth-Brushers. So, I want to encourage you to get to the point where you are a Level Four Connector where, you touch base with a couple of people everyday, just because. You pick up a phone and call them, have a cup of coffee with them, or send them a quick note – not electronic, but an old-fashioned note which says, "Hey! You are important to me. I'm just touching base. This is 'just because', and the 'just because' is because you are important to me."

So, that's what I have for you today. It's one of those things which is different from our high-tech society. It's the Art of High Touch. It is 'Who needs to hear from you, and who needs your motivation'. It is people who are heavily involved, people who are not involved and people who are new. The reason is 'just because'. You can stop by, or call, or send a card, and I just encourage you to take the action. The Chamber Challenge and the Action Points are straightforward. Here's the thing about the Action Points – they are easy to do. And because they are easy to do, as Jim Rome says, they're also easy not to do.

And so, I just encourage you to take the Action Points and the Chamber Challenge. The benefits that you'll see from this are incredible. I wish I could explain this to you in a different way, to make you see how passionate I feel about this more deeply. It's really powerful. I hope you have enjoyed the call today. Does anyone have any questions before we wrap up?

Audience Two:

Thank you very much for reminding us to be human.

Audience Three:

Thank you very much! That was very good.

Ben:

You're welcome! Thank you so much for being a part. This call is on recording, and the recording should be posted here in a couple of days. We're also going to put a PDF together, which you can download.

Audience Four:

Thank you so much! I'm really motivated!

Ben:

Thank you! Have a fabulous Thursday! Bye!