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We’ve all heard the saying: “Under-promise and over-deliver.” Abiding by this concept allows a customer or client to be pleasantly surprised even if the product provided isn’t as good as it could or should be. Some also say to never promise the moon. Instead, to promise moon pies and then try to deliver the moon. Others say to make no promise at all and then to try and deliver the moon.

Well, we all can probably agree that over-promising and under-delivering can hurt anyone who provides a product or service. It would be frustrating for a customer or client to be standing with moon pies in their hands if they were promised the moon. And what good can really come out of under-promising? Sure, it can lower expectations in hopes of preventing disappointment. But, if someone wants or needs the moon, why would they agree to pay for moon pies?

The problem with all of this “over” and “under” stuff is it can lead to

Where’s my moon?

deceptive behaviors and inconsistencies in the business or service world. The under-promising and over-delivering seems to gradually lower the bar on quality of service. How about making a promise and delivering on that promise? Why can’t the promise be the moon? The best businesses and entrepreneurs learn how to provide the moon first and then go out and promise it. And when the moon no longer meets the demands and wants of the people, they get in the business of offering and providing planets and solar systems!

The world and its people are constantly changing. Its dynamics are constantly changing. What it needs and wants constantly change as well. Therefore, you must stay in tune with these changes. So instead of under-promising and over-delivering, simply promise and deliver!

The time to truly over-deliver, though, is when the customer, client, associate, or boss is the one who makes a request or demand on you--when someone comes

to you with an expectation. In this instance, it’s an opportunity for you to provide the deliverable better than what was requested or faster than expected. This type of over-delivering typically results in a pleasant surprise for the requester and increases the likelihood that the requester will be back to make more requests.

In fact, over the years, I’ve given many people the following advice: anytime someone asks you to do something, try to do it either faster or better than what was asked of you. The more often you do this, the more often people with influence and power will notice, and the more often your name gets tossed in the hat when decisions are being made about promotions or new opportunities.

So promise the moon and deliver the moon! Or, if being asked for the moon, provide it sprinkled with a few stars or have it ready faster than expected. This is how great reputations are formed and sustained.

~ The End ~