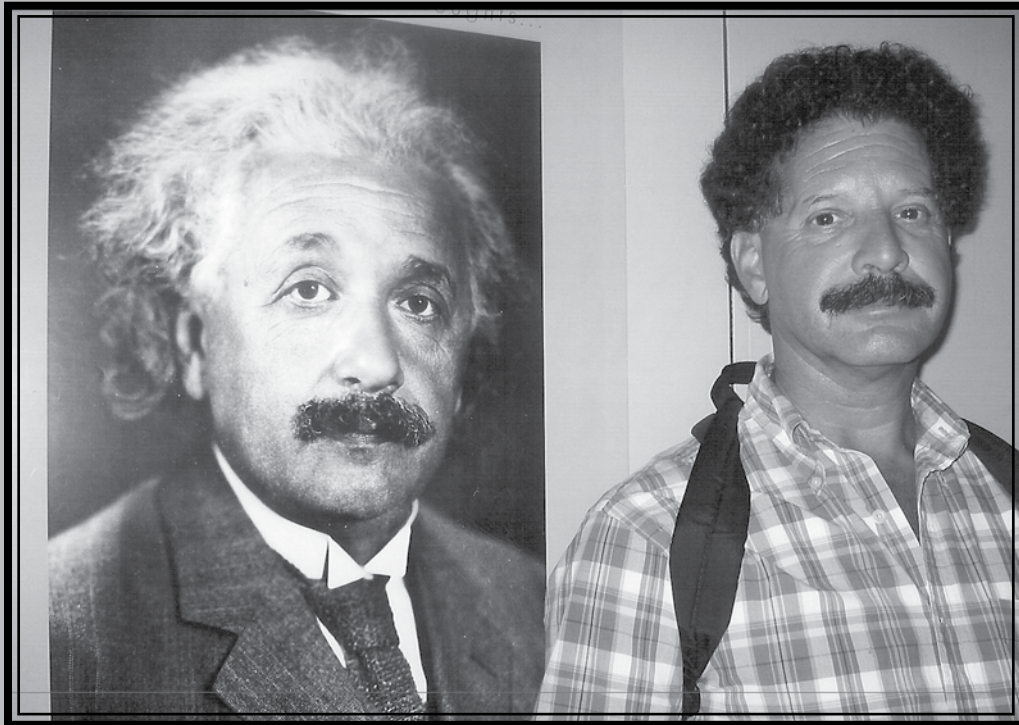


PAUL KRUPIN:

## The Magic of Business



**A**re you ready to do business? Are you sure? Really sure? Really, really sure?

How do you know when you are really done designing and developing your products and services? When do you say “I’m done creating,” and say “I’m ready for business”?

How do you know when you have what it takes to be successful? Have you reached a point where you truly know you are ready to fulfill your destiny?

It doesn’t matter who you are, you’ll need to pull a rabbit out of your hat. If you are an author or a publisher, you’ll need to be successful with your book. If you are an inventor then your invention will need to be remarkable and sell. If you’re a scholar, you have to sell the importance of your work to your peers. If you’re a nonprofit, you have to sell the value of your program to funding agencies. Even if you’re a parent, you have to sell your vision of the family to the rest of the family members. If you are married, you need to be effective at communicating so your marriage succeeds.

It doesn’t matter what your business is, there is a way to make sure your business works and works well, indeed, whether it’s on the very first try or it’s your tenth or one hundredth time at bat. This involves learning how to become remarkable. All it takes is a little homespun business magic. Let’s first take a look at a simple definition of business success:

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*Business success is reaching the people you can help the most and not losing your shirt doing it.*

This means providing people with a product or service and making a profit, after salaries and expenses, or at least not losing money as you do it. If your business maintains, then you get to live another day. This is business success.

Now, to achieve business success requires the delivery of a product or a service that people will buy. Let's say you are a publisher of books—even one single self-published book. You are in business. To be successful as a publisher, you have to sell books. That is, you have to write to sell and your job of writing isn't done until the book sells. This is where many self-publishers go astray. They publish their book without verifying that it is really ready for market. They sell very little of their product. They get no return on their investment. They may even operate their business at a financial loss because they failed to sell their product.

Yes, choke you may, to be a business success you have to *sell*. In order to be successful, you have to test your ideas and test your product on real live people. You have to identify your end users and the people who will buy the book for your users. And finally, you must learn what it takes to sell your product.

So you must write to sell and test, test, test your sales process. You do this in small doses till you get the right buy signals. Reliably. Not just once or twice, but repeatedly and reliably. Nowadays, you can do this in small quantities using print on demand (POD) technology. You can do 25 to 50 POD versions and test it with these important people.

The same is true with any business. To achieve success, you have to design your product and services so that you really and truly deliver what people want, and so that you can sell your wares. In marriage, this is called keeping love alive. In business, it's called survival.

If you can be even a little remarkable, you can sell quite easily. To be even just a little remarkable you have to use a little magic. How do you find this magic? You create it. And there is a way to make sure you create magic.

## Creating Magic in Business

But first, what is this magic?

It is the spark of energy that you create when you communicate effectively with your prospect or your customer. It is the energy-

packed communication that creates the intense desire to have what you offer. It is the force that instantly converts a prospect and turns them into a willing customer.

Where do you find this magic? It is the things you say or do when you talk to a customer. It may also be in the things you hear about a product when someone else is talking about it. It is the feelings that are created and the energy that is imparted to a person when they pick up your product. It is the mental affirmation that comes with a realization that your product can make their dreams come true.

The bottom line is that it is information that galvanizes your prospective customers' attention, commands their interest, and persuades people to take an action—to buy what you are selling. Do you want to see this magic?

Look around you and you will notice when it occurs again and again. Here are three key typical examples that illustrate this magic and when it occurs:

1. You read an article in the newspaper or a magazine and it motivates you to find the source so you can buy a product, using the toll free number at the bottom or through the web site listed at the end of the article, or even through a search when the contact information isn't listed.

2. You are driving down the highway in traffic at 65 miles an hour. The announcer on the radio says something and, despite the hazards all around and coming at you, you are so galvanized by what the announcer says that you take your eyes off the highway and stare at the radio—even though it doesn't show you a thing.

3. You are shopping in a bookstore and you pick up a book. You look at the front cover, you look at the back cover, and you then open it up to look at a few pages. Done deal! Without any further hesitation, you head straight to the cashier.

4. You hear about a product or a service from a friend, an expert, or a trusted colleague or consultant, know in advance that this is what you need to have, and, sight unseen, you buy it.

Do you see the lightening spark in action? Do you see the point at which the instant realization occurs? If you are in love it is in the looks your beloved gives you when you say something or do something that makes them feel wonderful.

If you are in business, you can build this magic into your products and services. You can also design this same magic right into your promotional and marketing communications and your public relations. Here's how:

The first thing you need to do is pay close attention to your prospects and customers when they look at what you offer. Watch customers when they shop in your store. Look at their eyes. Study their body language when they interact with your sales personnel.

You must watch and wait till you see something magical occur. You will know it when you see it by what the person does. Their body language and the action they take will tell you. What signals do you see? What signals do they send that confirm to you that you are giving them what they want? How do you know when you have built a remarkable experience into the product? How can you tell when you are done? Here are some questions to ask:

- Does your product or service give them a spark when they touch it?
- Do they experience magic when they pick it up and hold it in their hands?

You will see something very special when you give people the magic they want! You'll know by their behavior and response whether you really have what it takes. You will also know if you don't have what it takes:

If you can't get people to even look at it, then you're not done.

If they look at it and put it down, then you still have work to do.

If people look at it and grab it, you might be done. It depends what happens when they then pick it up and peruse it. If they put it down, then you're not done.

If people walk away without taking the desired action, then very simply, you did not produce magic.

You may have to redesign and re-write until you know you are done. You have to work with your prospective audience to get real feedback, and you must listen to what people say and address the issues you receive. This may take a lot of reiterations. But one thing is for certain: There is a point that you will reach when you know that you are done. It's a wonderful thing when you get to this point and know it. This is because you will see the magic. You know when you are done...

- When people look at it, grab it, and head to the cashier.
- They pick up one, look at it, grab four or five of them, and head to the cashier.
- You show your product to someone and they turn to their colleague immediately and say "get a load of this!"
- If people look at your product, pick it up, hold it close, and won't give it back freely – you've got them.

- You show them the product and, while they are clutching it in their hands, they reach for their wallet.
- One person picks up the product, grabs it, and goes to show his or her friend the book – and they both buy one for themselves.

You know that you have something when kids pull it off the shelf and haul it over to their mothers and fathers with a look of desire and wanting and excitement in their eyes that says, "Please!" I call this the *clutching response* or the *hoarding syndrome*. There is no doubt that you have seen and experienced this in a variety of ways.

This occurs when people clearly indicate to you that your product has such inherent value and importance that they are willing to pay for it. They know it and you know it instantly. This is what you have to create. You have to create something that people covet when they see it, feel it, or touch it.

## Identifying Your Magic

It is very cool to observe such magic directly, and it is very clearly an accomplishment when you design your product and service so that it produces this response reliably and repeatedly. The next challenge is figuring out what it is that produces the magic. This is what you want to identify and document. And you want to do this systematically, so that you can tweak it and reproduce it – and make it better and better.

The bottom line is that you build to sell. You create to sell. You design to sell. And you must redesign to sell, and redesign, redesign, and redesign until your product sells. You don't stop revising and improving until you know it sells, and sells easily and continuously. You can prove it with small test numbers. Use the technology that is available to create and test your products, services, and processes wisely. Then move it up through the production and promotion chain level by level.

What should you do if you think your product should excite and grab people, but it simply isn't happening?

You still have work to do. You can't speculate about what's wrong, you need real data. So ask your candidate customers for feedback and advice. How would you improve this? What would you like to see? What would make this product magic to you? Ask until you are blue in the face and get the hard data and feedback you need to redesign and redo this project.

Think about other super-successful products. Learn why they are magic to people. Learn why people love products. The think about

how to add magic to what you do. You are not done until people fall in love with your creation. And guess what? What those people really want turns out to be what most people in the world want! They want a remarkable experience. They want to experience a vivid emotion. They want energy, hope, vision. Yes, they want physical satisfaction—but what they really crave is emotional satisfaction. They want to feel loved, to feel your heart speaking to their heart.

This should come as no surprise. People want an emotional experience that takes them out of their boring, humdrum lives and temporarily transports them far, far away. They want information, education, or entertainment that allows them to experience the dramatic personal gain, pain, suffering, pleasure, or achievement that someone else is going through. You'll see this in the media almost everywhere. Look around you and you'll see that all news coverage is basically designed to cater to this very special goal; this is what the people want. People want to be stimulated emotionally and spiritually. Not just intellectually, but deep, deep, deep inside. They want to feel what it's like to be in someone else's shoes. Once you realize this, then you'll realize and learn how to push people's hot buttons.

## A Real Magic Spell

If you are going to be successful, then you must give people more than just what they need. You must give them what they crave, fantasize, and dream about. This is not rocket science. It is psychology.

If you hope to jumpstart your business by getting publicity, you will aim at getting coverage for your business in newspapers and magazines, or on radio and TV. Editors and producers are publishers. They produce magazines and newspapers. They are in business and survive and thrive because they provide their audiences with written, audio, or visual materials that people are willing to pay for. They are always looking for useful, educational, entertaining, and inspirational content. This is how they make a living. This is what drives them.

You can't get them excited by sending a news release that begs for a commercial endorsement. Don't write a commercial ad. Don't ask for free advertising. This is not what they want. This will not help them survive. They want education and entertainment. This is what you must provide them. You must analyze what you have that an editor that will truly appreciate. So what do editors want?

Study any publication. Listen to the radio or watch any TV show. You will find that they want distinctive, informative, remarkable, and

emotion-provoking material. They want to positively affect the lives of millions of people. They want to generate or contribute to social controversy that produces beneficial social change.

In order to do this they need written materials that can produce enthusiastic thank you letters in return for their information and insights. They want to be appreciated by their audience in the form of repeat subscriptions that result from their publication providing the best information available in their field.

This is where you come in. This is what you need to provide. As a publicist or promoter of your own product, services, or creative work, you can make it to onto the page only if you provide the materials a publisher needs to fulfill his or her business needs and those of their audience.

If you study what the media actually publishes you can boil it all down to one simple, magical little formula that describes how they do what they do. Here it is: DPAA+H.

These letters stand for Dramatic Personal Achievement in the face of Adversity, plus a little Humor. If you look at almost all the media around you—from the front page of *USA Today*, to coverage of the Olympics, to the evening news, to the sitcoms on TV—you'll see that this is the magic that describes what the American public wants, desires, and craves the most.

As a culture, we crave to see the human spirit triumph in matters of the heart, and in trials of hardship and tragedy. We ask to be uplifted right out of the humdrum of our everyday reality into the exhilaration and extreme emotions of those who are living life on the edge. This is the magic that galvanizes our attention. It rivets us to our seats. It captures our attention and our hearts. And this is what the media seeks to provide. This is what works.

Now look around you and see that this magic exists everywhere. Look at the front page of the newspaper and at each and every article. Look at the TV news, shows, soap operas, and even the commercials. Look at the shows produced by the shock jocks and reality TV.

One thing is for certain: You will see these elements everywhere you look, in varying degrees. It is a rare media feature that doesn't contain most of these elements. In fact, if you think about it you will realize that the media constantly uses better and better technology to increase the assault on our senses, enhance the effect, and make our experience ever more compelling and memorable. This is how they command people's attention. And to get a piece of the action for your business, you must be memorable as well.

Describe the 5 Ws—the What, Who, Where, When, and Why—in

dramatic personal adversity and achievement terms. Use a little humor if you can. This helps you cast your spell to the widest possible audience. There's a real business reason why this works: Attention results in sales and profits. So use DPAA+H.

When it comes to whether you'll be successful getting publicity, if there are more dramatic personal stories of achievement in the face of adversity, plus a little humor, available that day, you lose. If not, you win. If there is a more dramatic, more personal product or service that delivers more achievement in the face of similar adversity, and even offers more fun, then they will get the business, and you won't. One thing is for certain. If you learn how to use DPAA+H your message is more likely to reach your audience.

## Casting Your Magic Spell

It takes a little thinking and self-analysis, but you can identify the right things to say and products and services to provide. You do this by analyzing your own experiences to identify the successful sales pathway.

First, think very carefully about who your customers are. Visualize them. Identify the representative customer and create a word picture of who they are. Think about a real situation. Think about the very last time you were in front of a person like this. In fact, think about all the times you've been in front of people like this. Now ask yourself: "What did I say or do, very specifically, that resulted in them buying my product or service?"

Get this information! This is the crucial data. Document what you said. Make a list of the things you said, the order in which you said them, and think about the other person's response. Think very specifically about what you say that speaks from your heart to their heart and results in their decision to buy your products or services.

If you don't know, then you need to first pay close attention when you are speaking to your clients or customers. You may need to have someone watch you and take notes, or record what you say so that you figure out just what gets heads shaking up and down. You may even need to ask them "Why did you buy my product or service? What did you like the most about what I said or did?"

You need to identify the hot buttons that you can push to galvanize attention and get people to buy your product or service. It may be things you say or do individually, or when you speak in front of a group. Whatever it is, the crucial thing is that you must know what you do and be able to repeat it again and again. This is the essence of your potion. Get it right and you'll have very powerful magic.

You must be sure that you've identified the right sequence of statements. You must repeat the experiment till it works just about wherever you go. Once you carve a positive known reaction using your formula, you can tweak it carefully and experiment with modifications using the following criteria to guide your actions: If it works, do more of it. If it doesn't work, stop doing it. This is the essence of continuous improvement, and, even though it is simple, it is the most powerful thing you can do to create magic in your business.

So the first step is...identify what works!

The second step is to verify and prove that it works through repetition.

The third step is to apply these hot buttons to your products, services, and communications.

The fourth and last step is to improve it. When you discover something new, you add it to your potions. At any time you can always return to your basic formula.

## Sprinkling Magic Dust Wherever You Go

The amazing thing here is that, once you define the hot buttons with one person, and then with two people, and then with three people, you really have developed a truly amazing and magical tool that can renovate your business and the lives of those that you hope to serve.

What this means to you is that when you design and build and then publicize, promote, or sell your products and services, you must carefully identify those magical things you say and do that motivate people to buy. When you have discovered what you can do to trigger and produce emotional feelings on command, speaking from your heart to someone else's heart on a reliable basis, than you have figured out the key to your success.

This is why people buy what you are selling. They want to have what you have. They want to be able to experience more of what you've just allowed them to taste or experience. Sound like fun? It is! This is the magic of business.