Want Positive Rewards? Pursue Positive Actions.

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Portions of this article are adapted from Entrepreneur *contributor* and *Entrepreneur Press author Ivan Misner's recent, independently released* Infinite Giving: The 7 Principles of Givers Gain*.*

The concept of Givers Gain is a principle related to the law of reciprocity, a social-science theory that a positive action results in another positive action, which potentially rewards both parties as well as having a ripple effect that continues to help other people.

Giving has many cultural and legal differences around the world. In some cultures, it's viewed negatively, but it is ultimately a positive societal force that can be applied in every business regardless of location or culture. What's important in acts of giving is our motivation. Here is a list of motivations that fits with the philosophy of Givers Gain:

1. We give because we understand that in a community, what we do affects what others will do, and we all benefit.
2. We give because we know that in the same situation, others would do the same for us.
3. We give because we want to give back where we have profited.
4. We give because when we work together, we get bigger and better results than working on our own.
5. We give because we enjoy it.

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Having an ethical motivation is key to giving. You can easily justify giving once, but giving over and over again requires a motivation that's understood not only by you, but also those you surround yourself with. Adopting one or more of the motivations above will help you stay grounded.

Here's one example of how giving in business changes lives: Allen is a commercial real estate agent in Orange County, California. A number of years ago, Allen met with as many businesspeople as he possibly could using his network. The more people he met, the more he was able to become a super connector for the local business community. He was generating a ton of business for the local economy simply by making connections and giving the gift of a referral.

He even won awards for it and became the star of his group. He was recognized as having the most one-to-ones, and he also gave out the most referrals. Allen focused on building relationships, and once he was convinced he had found a good business opportunity for both of his contacts he would often phone them on the spot and put them together, thus creating a powerful introduction much more likely to lead to business.

When I asked him how all of this activity had affected his business at a bad time for real estate, he said, "I am completing the best year in my 26 years in the business."

Giving in business, as in life, works in many different ways. Take David, who runs a fantastic print business offering a brilliant service, great value and reliable delivery. If you ever try to pay him a compliment, he'll offer a sheepish smile and an explanation that he was only "doing his job."

Just up the road from where his business is based is the area's largest independent hotel, which he is a trusted supplier for. After turning around an order on a particularly short deadline, the hotel manager, exemplifying gratitude,

offered David a meal for two at the hotel's restaurant as a way of saying thank you.

David graciously declined the offer and instead asked for something else – to take the call of one of his other clients, a commercial designer and project manager named Suzanne. Suzanne had recently asked for help, and David decided to use this opportunity to get her the introduction that her business needed. The introduction was made, business was done, and both of David's clients were happy.

In the true spirit of giving, Suzanne's additional revenue has allowed her to take on larger development projects, which David now prints for. The local subcontractors she uses on these projects have increased revenue and now come to David when they are in need of his products, becoming ambassadors and referrers for his business. The cycle of giving continues to benefit him and those around him.

Acts of giving change lives. Acts of giving can be powerful in business regardless of the size. We can give many things. Here is a list of the types of giving that make a real impact in a business community.

1. Give a referral opportunity between two other businesses you know (maybe a supplier and a client).
2. Give mentoring to a business that needs your expertise.
3. Give your knowledge to local business groups.
4. Give to local education and youth community groups.
5. Give to the elders of the community.

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All of this giving activity is part of an eco-system that will come back and benefit you and those you care about in a positive way. You can choose how to practice Givers Gain in whatever way is right for your business.

The more this happens, the more energy can be given to

important global social concerns. Infinite giving allows us to focus on the bigger picture, on living in a world of plenty where resources are plentiful and suffering is scarce.

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