

What Do You Reflect?

There is a folk tale attributed to the Japanese called “The House of 1000 Mirrors,” and it is a good way to talk about the raw ingredient of referrals.

In the story a little dog hears about a house that sat at the top of a hill. The house was known as *The House of 1000 Mirrors*. The cheerful, energetic little dog decided to visit this house of mirrors. He climbed to the top of the hill, and when he found the house he nosed his way through the front door, ears lifted high and eyes wide with anticipation.

To his great surprise he found himself staring at 1000 cheerful, energetic little dogs with their tails all wagging in unison with his. He smiled a wonderful smile and 1000 smiles were returned.

As he turned and padded lightly down the hill he thought to himself, *That was a great place – I’ll return often.*

The following day, another dog, not as cheerful, learned about the house and also decided to visit. He slowly climbed the hill with his head hung low, ears drooping, and eyes vacant. He nosed in the door and saw 1000 unfriendly dogs staring right back. He gnarled his teeth, and 1000 dogs gnarled right back at him.

As he padded heavily down the hill he thought to himself, *That was a horrible place – I’ll never be back.*

The moral of the story is obvious. What we give to others is given back in kind. A cheerful generous person receives the same. A negative, critical person also receives the same.

In the referral world, this is an important idea. Other people become mirrors of you. Think, first of all, about customers. They are mirrors of the service you give them. Is it cheerful? Always looking out for their best interest?

Then there is your marketing team. Your MBX champions. What do they see? Someone who is glad to see them? Someone who is engaged and curious about them? We know that the opposite is always possible as well.

Finally there are all those other referral contacts in the community. They too mirror what they see in your face. Do they quickly and willingly tell their friends and contacts about your service, both its quality and integrity?

It is easy, like the second dog, to come with a scowl and pessimism. “This will never work.” “I’ve got to look out for number one.” But the end result is that 1000 mirrors soon become, not a positive but a negative reflection.

To conclude, here are some questions to ask about what you communicate to the other mirrors in the room.

1. How do you express ourselves?
2. How enthusiastic and energetic are you?
3. What value do you bring to the table?
4. What effort do you put into quality referrals for others?

The MBX *Golden Rule* philosophy is a mirror that never lies. Take a good look . . . but be prepared to see yourself as others see you.