



**Donald Cooper, MBA**  
*Certified Speaking Professional*

**Donald Cooper** is respected by clients in over 40 industries as both a “thought leader” and a passionate visionary in the areas of marketing, service and business excellence.

Drawing from his real life experience as a world-class manufacturer, award-winning retailer and business speaker, he has helped thousands of businesses throughout the world to add more real value to their customers’ lives...and more dollars to their bottom lines.

To subscribe to Donald’s thought-provoking, idea-generating, **FREE** monthly electronic **Newsletter**, email us at [newsletter@donaldcooper.com](mailto:newsletter@donaldcooper.com).

His website, [www.donaldcooper.com](http://www.donaldcooper.com) also offers free articles and business tools.

## **Just like winning in sports, generating a healthy bottom line in your business is a 'game of inches'!**

In most sports, winning is about being a just little bit better than your opponent at the basics of the game. It’s about blocking, tackling, back checking or hitting just a little bit better. It’s about winning a few more free throws or getting the ball deep into the corner of your opponent’s court. It’s about being a millisecond faster or being just a little bit stronger. Winning is a game of inches.

And so it is in business. Generating a healthy bottom line is about being just a little bit better than your competitors at a few key things. It’s about selling just a little bit more. Increasing sales by just 5% could grow your bottom line by 20% to 40%, depending on your gross margin. Turning your inventory just one more time each year could increase your profit by 25%.

In some industries, reducing energy or fuel costs is a key profitability factor. Papa Johns, the world’s third largest pizza chain, worked with an oven manufacturer to develop a more efficient oven that will bake a pizza just two minutes faster but will save 25% on energy costs.

Cathay Pacific, one of the world’s best airlines, stripped the paint off all their freight-only aircraft, except for the tails. The 200 Kg weight reduction will save them \$190,000 US per plane, per year. Then, they cleverly renamed their fleet of freight aircraft “The Silver Bullets” to put a positive marketing spin on their innovation.

In other businesses reducing waste will have a major impact on profitability. A pizza restaurant owner recently told me that she got tired of seeing carelessly spilled grated cheese on the floor near the “make line” (the area of the kitchen where the pizzas are assembled for baking) where the crew scoops big handfuls of loose cheese out of a bin and spread it on the pizzas...and, apparently, on the floor.

Cheese is the biggest expense in the pizza business and even a little waste will impact the bottom line severely. So, my restaurant owner friend simply bought a few three foot square plastic tubs and three sizes of zip-lock bags (the ones with the actual slider for efficiency) from the dollar store and created a little portion control program where just the right amount of cheese for each size of pizza fits into the appropriate sized bag. The bags are filled while being held over the large tub of grated cheese and any that falls, falls back into the tub. Filled and zipped bags of cheese are placed in plastic tubs on the “make line” where they’re quickly unzipped and the cheese neatly dispensed. Simple? Yes, but it immediately increased her bottom line by 25%!

## Generating a healthy bottom line in your business is a 'game of inches'!... (Cont'd):

So, are you winning the “game of inches” in your business...or are a lot of little things, not done well, eroding your profitability? The solution is simple. Start a list of all the things that you can do just a little bit better to amaze your customers, grow the business and increase your bottom line.

Get your staff involved. Schedule a two hour “Winning is a game of inches” rally (call it anything but a “meeting”). Use part or all of this article to create an invitation to the rally and to explain its purpose. Make it fun. Go to the dollar store and get a bunch of little “prizes” for each idea that’s generated. Then do something, improve something, fix what needs fixing. Get the group’s commitment and assign specific responsibility to specific people. Ultimately it’s about “who will do what, by when”. Then follow up. Remember, businesses do not die from a single shot to the head. They die, slowly but surely, from a thousand uncompleted tasks. Finally, celebrate and reward success and deal firmly with non-performance.

**For more information** on how Donald Cooper can help you redefine and reinvent your business to create, deliver and communicate compelling, customer-owning Value, visit our website at [www.donaldcooper.com](http://www.donaldcooper.com) , email us at [sharen@donaldcooper.com](mailto:sharen@donaldcooper.com) or contact us by telephone in Toronto, Canada at 1-(416) 252-3704.