



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.

His website, www.donaldcooper.com also offers free articles and business tools.

Donald Cooper, MBA
Certified Speaking Professional

What could you learn from your suppliers?

We had a friend visit our cottage this weekend who supplies fashion accessories to many of the biggest retail chains in North America. She's a sharp, insightful business woman who's seen it all over the years.

I asked her how many of her customers ever ask for her thoughts, ideas or general input on how to run their business more effectively, and her reply was that in 20 years, it has never happened.

Lots of companies survey their customers to find out how to improve their business...but few companies ever think to ask their suppliers. This is nuts!

I suggest that you sit down with at least one supplier a week and ask them for their thoughts on how you could improve your business, your products or services, your technology or market intelligence in any way. What do they know about market trends or best practices in the industry that you don't know? How could they help you with product knowledge, staff training, system integration, or improved processes?

Ask them if there are any special offers, additional discounts or other buying opportunities that you've been missing out on. Find out if they know of any star performers in your industry who are unhappy where they're working now.

Find out what new things your suppliers are working on and ask to be the first to see new stuff. Offer to test it out for them. Suppliers love that and you get a head start on your competition.

When we listen to our suppliers, two things happen. First, we learn from them...and, second, we honor them. Both of those are good.

Most of your suppliers will be delighted to help you. It's how they add value to the relationship... unless, of course, you're one of those many businesses who beat up on their suppliers so badly that they wouldn't help you even if you begged. If you're one of those, consider the value of a true partnership with your suppliers, rather than what you're doing now.

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, email us at sharen@donaldcooper.com or contact us by telephone in Toronto, Canada at 1-(416) 252-3704.