

“As You Perceive, So Will You Be Perceived”

Regional Agency Meetings

1983

During this speech, Mr. Rapoport holds up a verbal mirror for the Agents. He gives them some advice about perception: How they perceive themselves will be the same way others perceive them. He elaborates on this observation by offering examples from his own life and then passing the question onto his audience. He asks them how they see themselves, and then he tells them what he sees. Their perception of their abilities, their career, and their product will have a direct effect on how successful they will be.

Successful people see the potential within themselves so that others can see it too. Rapoport explains this by telling the audience how his perception of himself evolved over the years. In 1936, Rapoport was going to college and working at Zales jewelry store earning \$10 a week. He asked his assistant manager if his work was worth \$10 a week. Rapoport says the manager responded, “With my enthusiasm and willingness to put in the hours as I had been, I was worth every penny that I was receiving.” Rapoport had had a low perception of himself up to this point. However, his opinion of himself began to change. He went from a jewelry store clerk to an assistant manager to an owner of a jewelry store by the time he had graduated college. He decided to try selling insurance and his perception changed again. He ran his own insurance agency and then owned his own insurance company. Rapoport says, “Each year, fortunately, for me, my perception of myself has changed.” He constantly assesses whether he could be achieving more than

he is currently. He moves his goals higher and higher by changing the perception of his talents.

Now Rapoport addresses the audience's perceptions. He asks how many of them reply to a question about their profession with, "I'm only a salesperson." This statement communicates a lack of faith in their abilities and their career. Rapoport says they should have pride in being "the crème de la crème" of salespeople. They are trained professionals with incredible opportunities. Rapoport asks how they perceive their product. He says, "Everything you sell with American Income is a product which you can be proud, and more importantly, one that is needed." Then he asks how they perceive their career. He says, "Do you perceive that you are truly rendering a meaningful service?" If an Agent has high lapses and cancellations, then that salesperson does not believe his or her career is meaningful. Rapoport says, "When you are in there cementing that sale, you do it with conviction and sincerity and that piece of business will stay on the books forever." Rapoport first asks them to establish how they currently view themselves and their jobs in order to set up his next point.

Rapoport perceives them as the kind of top-notch salespeople who earn \$50,000 a year. They can do this by making 30 calls a week, which result in 10 sales. If the Agent makes sure each sale has a life policy and an H&A policy, he or she can be making \$325 a home. If an Agent makes 20 calls, then there will be 6 sales or \$550 a week; if an Agent makes 10 calls, then there will be 3 sales or \$300. Rapoport challenges them to check his math. They can track the amount of sales they make and see if their income correlates. Then he says, "Let me shake you up a little." He asks if they would be happy making the same progress in five years. He hopes that all of them say that they would

not. American Income encourages Agents to stretch themselves and reach for bigger goals. Those who continue to grow, “accept and enjoy the disciplines that make their opportunity unlimited become a reality.” Those who cut corners in their business will cheat themselves out of financial and professional success. Rapoport asks them to become their own managers. They should take on an unlimited perception of their ability and apply the discipline necessary to succeed. He warns that the price for failure is “intolerably high.” Their self-perception will determine the path of their career.

Rapoport says, with the right perception and enough hard work, the only ingredient left for success is perseverance. An unknown author rhymed the message Rapoport is trying to get across to the Agents: “The man who quits has a brain and hand / As good as the next, but lacks the sand / that would make him stick, with a courage stout, / to whatever he tackles, and fight it out...For the man who quits lets his chances slip, / Just because he’s too lazy to keep his grip, / the man who sticks goes ahead with a shout, / while the man who quits joins the ‘down and out.’” With persistency and the right self-perception, Rapoport knows that they can do anything.