

# The Don Hutson Report

Global Expert on Sales & Negotiations

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## Tracking Trends Gives You The Edge!

(Part 4 of a 6-part series on “Mastering The Mind Game”)

**When we are leaving the house** each morning, we all need to have a feeling of confidence that we are ready for the challenges of the day. One key is to be current on our perspective of today’s marketplace and the values of those we will deal with.

**The effective tracking of trends** should be a goal for each of us. Let’s carefully evaluate current trends and how they will affect us and our industry. When we do it well, we will be in a position to capitalize on a trend rather than become a victim of it!

**According to Daniel Burrus**, noted author of the best-seller, *The Anticipatory Organization*, there are two primary types of trends. There are *hard trends* - the ones that have been proven and validated - and *soft trends*, which we have observed as emerging, but have not yet been validated. When we take a close look at both, we can better deal with the today’s realities, and go to market with more confidence and relevance than ever.

**Here are four concepts** to consider in our quest to always remain equipped to face the challenges of the day:

1. Have you made a sound assessment of your approach to success in today’s market? How many of us are still using “Old School Ideas” that aren’t working as well as they used to? Some top of mind examples include:
  - a. Too much talking;

- b. Not enough listening;
- c. Shallow efforts to learn customer needs;
- d. Asking for business before we have earned the right;

Let's make every attempt to attend the "New School" for communicating, persuading, and displaying exceptional interpersonal skills. That entails reading the books, blogs, and articles on the latest and best practices, especially as related to each customer's specific needs and wants. Example: There is a good chance you are dealing with more *Millennials* now than *Boomers*, which means you'd better be a willing and proficient *texter*, and up to speed on the values of both age groups .

2. Listening to your marketplace is critical today. What are your customers telling you matters most to them and how does that vary from previous comments? What are the circumstances that changed that dynamic? What types of solutions in your space are gaining the most traction today? Where will your best opportunities lie in the immediate future? What are the most meaningful innovations that have taken place in your industry lately and how do you and your company stack up to capitalize on them?
3. One solid trend impacting all of us is the use of social media in communications. How much more engaged are you today in social media than you were one year ago? Be certain that you are communicating with each of your customers based on their preferences, not your old habits for best results!
4. What are you doing to assure maximum engagement with the right people in your market? Are you participating in networking events, community-related groups that will expand your sphere of influence, and conferences for learning the latest and best ideas in your field?

**All of these can help.** As we develop more relational capital we can enjoy greater levels of success.

**Another trend** that is rapidly gaining heightened awareness is Artificial Intelligence. Research how it will likely affect your industry or profession. While it isn't a substitute for human intelligence or our ability to reason, it will nevertheless have a powerful impact on all of us.

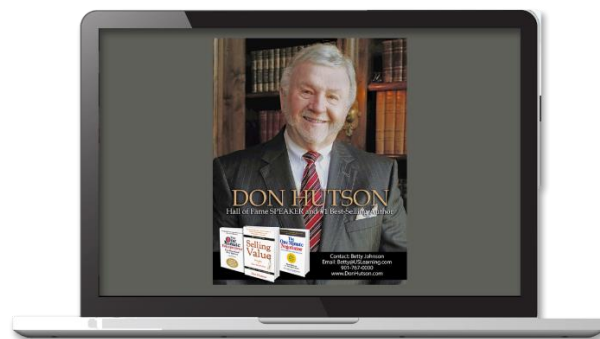
**Getting smarter faster** than our competition is a prerequisite to our remaining assured of always having an edge that can make a big difference in our professional destiny!

*Know somebody who might benefit from these thoughts?  
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*This article is Part 4 of a 6-part series on "Mastering The Mind Game"*

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