



The “AND” Option

Have you ever been stifled when choosing between two options? Every time you tried to weigh the pros and cons, you came to an impasse?

What if you took a different approach? Instead of looking at a right-or-wrong, this-or-that, all-or-nothing approach, you could ask yourself, “What is the “and” option?” That is, what if you took a bit of both choices?



Throughout my career, I’ve tapped into the “and” option.

Whenever there were choices, I would often consider a new solution that incorporated those choices. Over the years, it became natural for me to tap into this type of mindset. It didn’t really hit me on how powerful this mindset was until, out of the blue, I received a call from a former union representative with whom I sat across at the bargaining table many, many years prior. After seeing a story that was written about me in a newspaper, she called me to congratulate me. While she, too, was no longer

negotiating contracts, she mentioned that in her entire 25 year career, I was the fairest employer representative with whom she negotiated. Admittedly, I almost fell off my chair. Many people go their entire life without hearing such a compliment, especially from someone with whom you sat across the table. Honestly, I felt the same about her.

In retrospect, I believe what she saw in action was my “and” mindset. While many people who are part of a collective bargaining process will say there are two sides, I believe there are actually three sides: the employer, the employee, and the union. Each one has their own perspective. Often times, however, they get stuck on us-or-them, this-or-that, option 1 or option 2. Yet, when the “and” option is introduced, that is, a bit of option 1 and a bit of option 2, you can introduce a new alternative and cultivate agreement.

Today, this “and” option comes in handy when coaching my clients. When one of my clients had an idea that the perfect profession was out there waiting for her, she used her principle of “AND”. Instantly she broke through from her stuck place and thought of a way to integrate two options in her business model. While at times it is necessary to choose one path and go with it, there are times when you combine options and end up creating an even better alternative or service model.



The next time you're wavering between two options, remember to apply the "and" option. Simply ask the question, "What is the "and" option?" When you implement this approach, you will see the creative juices flow and discover how easy it is to master your inner game of decision making.

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