

How to increase client success when they don't want to



As a content marketer, do you take client success personally if a client rejects your advice, fails to complete your program, or complains they didn't get what you promised?

Maybe you write them off as a difficult or uncommitted client. Or, do you torture yourself by trying to figure out what you did wrong and how you can fix it?

You want to believe as a content marketer your offer is a solution to your client's problem. They should be reaping the success benefits, yet they don't.

What you may not realize is that you are in the role of changing the minds of people who find it hard to change their minds.

The Brain Threat

One of the reasons clients may fail to make beneficial changes is because change itself is an underlying fear and anxiety threat.

Two primary brain areas are involved. You are probably more familiar with the limbic system with its *fight or flight* responses. The other is the VMPC (ventromedial prefrontal cortex). A large sensory processing area affecting emotions, risk assessment, fear, and decision-making.

Your brain is wonderfully designed to find ways to protect you even if lions and tigers are highly unlikely to cross your path. Today's dangers are more likely to be your own conscious and unconscious beliefs. These beliefs are known as "*cognitive biases*" and take many different forms.

Cognitive Biases

- Similar patterns of information processing and thinking that support personal beliefs
- May be held as either conscious or unconscious beliefs
- Affect behavior, judgment, and decision-making
- May appear to be unreasonable, illogical or show poor judgment in relation to circumstances

Confirmation Bias

Clients often have a confirmation bias of preconceived ideas and expectations. Some may think your solution will be a quick

fix, it doesn't require having to learn a whole new process, or require making changes that carry risk or uncertainty.

Anything that may be a challenge for time, learning or having to change can be perceived as a threat.

Even though the benefits would far outweigh the threat of change, the brain's decision choice is to stay with the status quo and avoid risk and uncertainty. Yes, even when they have fully paid and are not asking for a refund.

Ego Biases

It's common for clients to also believe they are the masters of control. It's an illusion that also extends to overestimating their confidence, optimism and being able to plan for everything.

For some, being asked to make changes can be perceived as a threat to these abilities. It can even be interpreted as an attack on freedom of choice. It's easier to rationalize an illogical reason to abandon ship than to surrender any ego biases.

Authority Bias

Clients also seek out authority figures for their knowledge.

However, there's a kind of authority bias according to Denise

Green, author of *Why Brains Hate Advice*, where the focus is on superior information rather than personal benefits. In other words, clients want authority information but it doesn't mean they are going to change and act on it.

Others are clients who resist the authority of the impartial assessment or advice they've paid for. This doesn't seem logical since they claim they want the service yet reject the results.

For them, it's easier to reject making any changes that challenge their beliefs about their business. It would not be uncommon to avoid success by saying *"But, you really don't understand me, my business, my vision, or what and how I want to make things happen. "*

It almost comes down to a test of wills. You the content marketer with a solution versus clients who want your services but are resisting any changes to make them successful.

Client Success

However, that doesn't mean there's nothing you can do!

Researcher Emily Falk found a simple technique that has an effect on cognitive biases. In a study, when subjects were asked to review their personal core values first, they were more receptive to taking subsequent advice.

According to Falk, the act of focusing on core values appears to stimulate the VMPC area of the brain (emotions, risk assessment, fear, and decision-making) changes how it responds to messages.

Doctors find this valuable for patients who are resistant to making changes to improve their health. Having patients focus on their core values first helps them to be more receptive to taking health and life-changing advice.

The same can be applied to clients by using their core value to increase their chances of success when dealing with their own biases.

In the next posting, we'll explore how to uncover your client's core values and how you can use them to help your clients achieve greater success.

Do you have any thoughts as to why you think your clients might not take advantage of all the benefits you promote?

Resources:

<https://brillianceinc.com/why-brains-hate-advice/>

<https://www.riskology.co/core-value-therapy/>

<https://www.nbrii.com/employee-survey-white-papers/do-you-ignore-the-advice-that-you-pay-to-receive/>

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