

# Strategy tip for taming problematic clients and customers



The Wild Mare Strategy

## Strategy tip

There are all sorts of experts to turn to for advice and guidance when it comes to problematic clients and customers. However, maybe it's time to step out of the expert's field for a moment and into the horse arena.

Janice Terra is *The Lady Horse Whisperer*. She has over thirty years of experience helping people and animals from the boardrooms to the barn stalls. In her brief video about working with wild and difficult horses, one thing caught my attention and immediately made my business brain buzz.

According to Terra, "... in the wild, it's the dominant mare that rules the herd not the stallion."

Hmm... if a dominant mare can rule a herd rather than the supposedly all powerful stallion, is there a strategy here that business women can apply to their own herd of problematic clients and customers?



## The dominant mare strategy

It begins with the understanding that horses like clients and customers come wired in their brains the way they are.

One aspect of this wired brain is behavior unpredictability – meaning they can bolt from you and then you have to start building a trusted relationship all over again.

The usual attempt to lure them back is with rewards (carrots and love). But, according to Terra **what they really want is leadership**, and that's what the dominant mare provides.

## How the strategy works

The dominant mare establishes her authority by moving the members of the herd. She nudges, nips and guides them in the right direction. The secret behind this leadership behavior is that “If you control the feet you control the brain.”

When Terra is in the horse arena, she's applying the same strategy with problematic horses.

She becomes the leader by first having the horse move in one direction. To change direction, she stops the horse, makes sure there is understood communication between them and then guides the horse into the new direction. If there is an attempt to revert to old behavior, she gently redirects again to the desired behavior.

## Our problematic clients and customers are no different.

We expect all of our clients and customers to move in the right direction that will benefit them the most, but somewhere along the line some of them bolt.

- They download a free offer but shy away from the buy button.



- They remain on the email list but sporadically open email offers.
- They become a one-time low end buyer but never return to invest in higher-end products or programs.
- They never become word-of-mouth referrals because they fail to follow through and get the benefits.

Whatever the experts may tell you, it still comes back to horse sense.

By recognizing that problematic clients and customer are really looking for leadership, women marketers can leverage their success with the dominant mare strategy.

- It means not only understanding where your clients and customers are coming from but also understanding their leadership needs.
- It means that despite your great products, programs and irresistible offers, you also need a leadership strategy, as well as, a marketing strategy.
- It means in order to tame your problematic clients and customers and get them moving in the right direction, you need to let them know that you are the leader that can guide them to success.

More about how to be that leader in our next post.

Sources: The Lady Horse Whisperer –  
Video; [theladyhorsewhisperer.com](http://theladyhorsewhisperer.com)

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