

Concept Eight:

“DON’T BE INTIMIDATED BY THE REPS!”



I hardly know where to begin. Anyone that knows me, knows: I simply... do not work with Reps. Never have, never will! Or... more accurately put: I have mastered the art of working around the Rep. How? Simple...

I do all of my own negotiating DIRECTLY with the STATION, and then ANYTHING I book, I book THROUGH the Rep, unless the station tells me not to.

I have no desire or intention to cut the Rep out of his or her commission. If I did, then I would not be creating a win/win for the station and his Rep. I would be creating a win/lose instead!

My Biggest Disparity with the Reps:

They work for the station, and I work for the client. We work for opposite ends of the stick! I get paid to get the lowest rate, and they get paid to get the highest rate. So it has never made any sense to me... whatsoever... to use them to do my negotiating... on behalf of my clients and myself!

My Second Biggest Disparity with the Reps:

It is their job to put on make up, look great, and take clients out to lunch... while I on the other hand... have probably gone out to lunch only twice in 25 years! And when I did... it was with ... whom else? ... the Rep! All this to say... they are not the easiest people to reach! In contrast; the stations are relatively easy to reach!

Years ago, one of my favorite stations called me, to give me some avails that had just opened up... and of course I was all happy and grateful... and in closing he paused and said... "Gabriella, I just want to thank you for always being available. I really appreciate it!" I learned something from that. The easier you are to reach... the more the station will want to pick up the phone and call you, without the frustratingly endless days of phone tag.

I know it seems like you are saving a ton of time by using the Reps: You say, "After all... it is their j-o-b to bring me the avails"... But...

My Third Biggest Disparity with the Reps:

Since they don't work at the station or live in the market, they really don't know all the nuances of the station and market like the NSM does. It is the NSM's full time job to know his station and his market.

I am a 'Campaign Buyer' that really educates myself on a market and the station's reach in a market... the station's strength and weaknesses, limitations, possibilities... etc. I want to know: "How can I maximize my campaign Reach, in this market?"

Anytime I ask a Rep just a few of the many questions I have regarding the station, they say: "Oh, I don't know...(or) I am not sure... I will call the station and get back to you." That is waaaaay too inefficient for me!

Not to mention, I am getting my station education 3rd party, instead of 'straight from the horse's mouth'! Really knowing the station is a huge factor in how I price their avails.

Many of you will say: the NSM always send me back to the Rep!

There is a very easy way to move past this objection...

You always say: "Oh, I am not calling you to book time, I just want to ask you some questions... And, IF we did book anything... I would Definitely put it back through the REP!" He will immediately say, "Oh Great! How can I help you?"
[Guaranteed!]

Problem solved!

The NSM just wants to honor his contract with the Rep, and not cause double booking conflicts. He is more than happy to talk to you about his station and answer all your questions! He just does not want to cause conflict with the Rep any more than you do! Regardless; you are 100% entitled to talk directly to the station! And... get all of your questions answered directly!

Ok, Now you can proceed to call the NSM? Oh... No you can't...because ... what about the Rep just being plain ole' bossy and bent out of joint about you calling the station?! "How dare you?! I will answer all of your questions!!!"

Reps, to me, are like Customer Service personnel. When you ask to speak to the Supervisor... they will keep you on the phone (forever) just telling you why you can't. They try to assure you, you will get the exact same answer from the Supervisor that you will from them. What I never say, but always think... is ... "Then why aren't you the Supervisor?"

My experience is that the Supervisor has a much larger win/win picture than the Customer Service Rep, and I am never proved wrong, once I finally get to the Supervisor. The Supervisor's job is to improve Customer Relations and to Keep Business, rather than send it scurrying away!

Reps are the same way. They get soooooo defensive and angry when you call the station directly.

So, most buyers get very intimidated, and very afraid the Rep won't continue giving them 'the best time periods at the best rates' because they have pissed them off.

Without belaboring this point, I will only say... "If you are calling the station to get the best time at the best rates, then you do not need to get the time from the Rep." In the final Negotiation chapter, I will give you detailed 'scripts' to overcome objections from the station and the Rep to buy and communicate directly with the station.

The one thing I can guarantee you... is the station has the power to meet your needs. The Rep has to call them and get

permission first. Jeeza Louisa! There is no way they can pitch your needs better than you can!

I told you I have been to lunch two times in 24 years...

This is lunch one:

I was working with Katie Williams, and it was only her and I working in the company, and a Rep was in town, and wanted to meet with us. I did not want to go, but Katie felt like she 'should', so she did. Katie and I were clones in how focused we were as 'buyers'. We just wanted to buy!

However: She accepted the reps invitation to meet at one of the nicest restaurants in Los Angeles, "Ivy at the Shore"... and I chose not to go...

I was working away when the company phone rings, I pick it up, and it is Katie, and she says, "The Rep really wants you to come and have lunch with us; can you leave the office, and make it here for lunch?" I was only 10 minutes away.

Me: "Ooh, Katie, I really don't want to! I think it is a waste of time, I have so much I could be doing here instead!"

She said, "I am asking you as a favor... he really wants you to meet us for lunch!"

Me: "Ugh! Ok... I will be there in 10 minutes."

I arrive at the restaurant, and there is this older man, and I sit down, introduce myself, say "Hello", act all nice, and without skipping a beat, this older man starts berating me.

"I don't like you one bit! You don't work with the Reps and I can't stand that! You are hurting 'our' business, and I will not tolerate it another second!"

I was SHOCKED! I just sat there stunned, and really did not know what to say for a few seconds, all the time thinking: "I knew not to come here and meet with this man!"

I had no earthly idea what to say to him. I did not want to

walk out and show him he had insulted me, but I had no idea what to say to him either: then the answer came to me, as the waiter approached our table and said, "Are you ready to order?" I immediately answered first, and said,

"Yes... I will have... the Lobster!"

This is lunch two:

The Second time I went to lunch was because a Rep from MMT called me and said the President of the firm wanted to have lunch with me.

In a strange way, I was flattered, and definitely up for the challenge, but knowing innately... I was in 'trouble'.

We met, had lunch, and at the appropriate time, the President did his whole 'pitch' on how wrong I was not to use them to 'get my time'. It was well known that Katie and I only worked directly with the stations. More than anything, we had simply become a challenge to the Reps!

When it became my turn to speak, I had come along way since lunch one: I was completely relaxed and confident as I explained to 'them': "Your job is to get the highest rate, and mine is to get the lowest rate, so there is no way that makes any sense whatsoever, that I would ask you to negotiate on my behalf! I will always do a better job on my client's behalf! It is a given! I work for them, you don't!"

"However; I work on straight commission, and so do you, so there is also no way, I would cut you out of your commission. I am saving you work, and that should not be a problem for you. The only problem is with your ego, because you think you should be doing the work in the eyes of the station. I am not selling my time and rates short because of someone's ego."

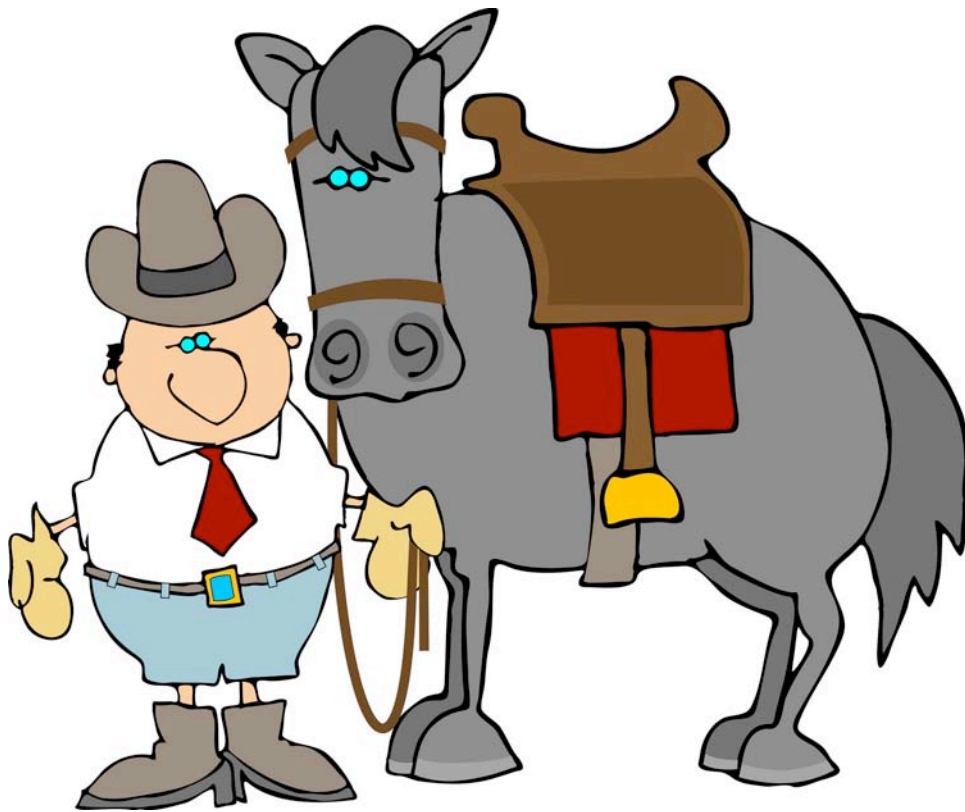
"I will always do my deals direct with the station, and I will always put my deals back through you."

"Why don't you just thank me for the billing?"

THAT IS THE ONLY THING I SEE MISSING HERE!"

CASE CLOSED!

***I definitely need to get all my info:
Directly from the 'horses' mouth!' And so do You!***



***OK... Now... can you call the Station Direct?
If you can't... wait... there is one more thing I need to
cover here, regarding Reps....***

Collusion



collusion |kə'luʃən|

noun

secret or illegal cooperation or conspiracy, esp. in order to cheat or deceive others : *the armed forces were working **in collusion with** drug traffickers* | **collusion between** media owners and political leaders.

colludere 'have a secret agreement' (see **collude**).

collusion

noun

there has been collusion between the security forces and paramilitary groups
conspiracy, connivance, complicity, intrigue, plotting, secret understanding, collaboration, scheming.

Basically, collusion is a fraudulent conspiracy. A harsh description, but nonetheless, true. Reps want you to enter into a relationship with them; which stops you, from being true to yourself and your own instincts. That means you are being fraudulent to yourself and your clients!

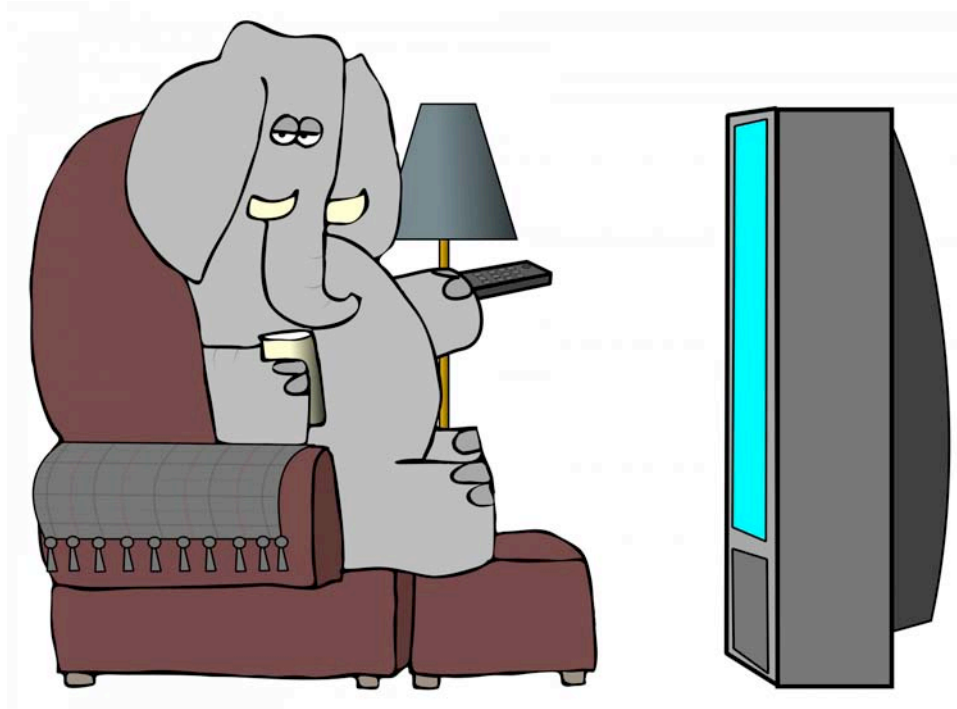
The Reps take you to lunch & woo you... because they want to be in control of your Relationship with the stations.

What happens, is the buyer becomes so afraid to upset the Rep because the Rep set it up that way, and the buyer bought into it.

Buyers do not work for the Rep, they work for the Client. The Rep is hired by the stations to sell their time. As long as you put the time back through the Rep, you have done him or her... absolutely no harm! They just try to make you think you have, when you call the station direct. In reality, the only harm is to try to cut them out of their commission.

Another way to describe collusion is: How many times are you talking to the Rep, and not really saying what you are thinking? Actually afraid to ask 'them' for what you really need or want? Concerned to do anything they don't want you to do, but at the same time, you don't like what they are doing? How much are you holding back to keep up a buddy/buddy appearance with them?

Collusion is Analogous to:



*'There is an elephant in the living room that no one is admitting', ... which is equivalent to:
'The Emperor is Wearing No Clothes!'*

*Your loyalty and honesty only needs to be...
Pointing Towards:
Getting great time periods at rates that pay-out!*

*OK... now let's call the NSM
Just to introduce yourself.*