

Do what compels you.

For any given situation, there are multiple possibilities that each have its own set of benefits and consequences. Whether it is making the decision to hire your first employee or purchasing a food item or supply. Over many years the following approach has served me well in analyzing opportunities.

I act only when I am compelled to act.

The hard part is determining what is compelling. Is it the sense of satisfaction that comes with providing employment opportunities for hard-working Nevadans? Is it making the best possible deal and saving a bundle of money? Is it providing exemplary customer service? Is it providing quality meals and beverages?

To some degree, the answer to each of the above questions is yes (except perhaps the last question). Each of us is motivated by different things. Further, what compels us tomorrow may be vastly different than what compels us today. Determining what compels us is like identifying good art – we can't describe it, but we know it when we see it.

Being compelled to act is akin to being pregnant – you either are or you aren't. That's what makes this business approach so practical. If you are compelled, act. If you are not compelled, don't act.

An example may help illustrate:

Suppose you operate a restaurant inside a hotel & casino in Nevada, serving primarily business travelers. You determine that the two most important challenges your restaurant faces are controlling costs and increasing revenues.

Now suppose that you have a meeting with a well-known publication that has a proven history of helping restaurants such as yours increase business. The publication proposes a three-month advertising contract at a cost of \$2,500.00 per month.

While you want to increase revenues, your higher priority is to control costs. Therefore, you don't see the value in contracting for \$2,500.00 per month. You tell the publication that you decline as you are simply not compelled to act. The publication counters with six months for the price of three. You again are not compelled. You sleep pretty well that night, but wonder whether you should have accepted their offer.

Several days later, the publication calls you back. You are a signature restaurant and just the type of advertiser they are looking for. They are willing to give you a six-month contract at a rate of \$1,000.00 per month, and you will have the right to cancel the contract after two months. Even sweeter, they will allow you to pay 50% of the contract rate in the form of gift certificates to be redeemed at your restaurant. You accept the

deal, which is now too good to pass up. Sleep well, you have been compelled to act, and you made a great decision.

Although this example relates only to advertising, it may also be used in virtually any decision, whether money is involved or not. For example, if you are compelled to provide benefits to employees, you may establish a 401(k) plan. If you are not so compelled, you may divert your attention to that which compels you more, such as spending time with your family. In fact, it is my belief that the whole fuss some years ago about work/life balance is nothing more than an identification of what compels us more: work or personal life.

For me, I feel compelled to help the restaurant industry in Nevada to the point where I am even willing to pen articles about being compelled.