

# WHAT SKILL OR TRAIT HAVE YOU PICKED UP TO IMPROVED UPON THROUGH YOUR INTERACTION WITH HORSES?

*Blog comments from the LinkedIn site Horse Lovers of the Business World*

The skill I found most improved in my business repertoire is the fine art of negotiation. The skill I found most improved in my business repertoire is the fine art of negotiation. As a sales negotiator I was completely focused on "what's in it for me?". Dealing with my thousand pound cutting horse mare I learned quickly to pay close attention to the goals and objectives of the person (or horse, in this case) sitting across the table from me.

The practice of reading body language. I have found that because of my constant evaluation of my equine's posture, head, ears and general attitude, I tend to focus on people when someone is speaking to me. Reading body language is now a general practice!

My style of interacting with humans became more empathetic as my style of interacting with horses became more holistic. Now I look to see what could be causing that behavior I don't like and what I am doing to contribute to it, or what could be changed in the environment to make it easier for the horse. Doing it on a regular basis has not only made me more effective, it has also made me a "horse magnet". Horses come to me wherever I am.

I have learned to trust my instincts as well as the horse's instincts. I've always done as I was told and did not question authority. Now I listen to my instincts and intuitions and ask those questions. The "authority" isn't always right. I've learned that I can accomplish just about anything if I am patient, creative and determined. I've learned to be more flexible and that winning is about accomplishing things, although not necessarily what you set out to accomplish.

Learning to love people as they are and not as I want them to be as my horses love me. My horses live in the "now", not in the future. While I am still a planner with goals, I have learned to appreciate the "now" and enjoy it. I love their honesty with me and sense of humor some of my horses have.

To be patient and celebrate each little step that is made towards a goal rather than worrying about what we didn't get accomplished that day. Don't get discouraged on those less than stellar training days, and if someone, horse or human doesn't get what I'm teaching, it's not their job to get me...it's my job to figure out a way that I can be understood by them.

This is how you know God has a sense of humor: When you sorely lack patience and he brings horses into your life.

Revel in what you did as opposed to fretting over what you didn't...as long as we accomplish SOMETHING it was a good day.

My mare taught me that sometimes you just gotta listen to another opinion on some things.

With many of my human interactions I'm still very defensive out of painful experience. But the horses help me put that into perspective by giving me an honest interaction to come home to. This has helped me be at least open to an empathetic relationship with another person.

Most importantly to believe in myself. Practicing patience a trait I did not possess but developed through my interaction with my equine friends and their humans. So I guess they taught me the two most important lessons in life, patience and perseverance.

I've become much more effective at delegating (and selecting the right talent to put into the mix) business tasks to people.

Body language is universal. Horses don't wear watches and people who have horses should not either (you are done when you are done). One is best not to make or teach assumptions. Horses have responsibilities and it is up to me to expect and allow them to respectfully uphold them (people too). Focus - to concentrate; be able to see the little tiny beginning and the big picture. Feel is another universal truth; the emotional kind of feel (feelings) the physical kind (touch) and the energetic kind (intuition). Timing - Understanding the sequential relations that any event has to any other as past, present or future. Balance -Mental steadiness or emotional stability; a habit of calm behavior and judgment (keeps you in the game and on the horse.) How to let things go; when it's over it's over, the relationship is more important than the infraction.

Seek to understand before expecting to be understood. This lesson is very powerful when applied to business, teamwork and relationships in general.

Peripheral vision, awareness of changes and opportunities in the environment (works for business too). Live in the present time; assess every situation on its own merit. Don't hold a grudge. Patience

They have reinforced my ability and trust in using or reading "body language." Patience and humility are the other two that come to mind immediately.