

The Buyosphere: The concept of R vs. I

Purpose: This tool will help you communicate with greater empathy and clarity

Definitions:

Our “**R**”: Our Role, who we are to others; the most selfless and giving part of who we all are

Our “**I**”: Our Individual self; who we are when no one else is around; the most selfish part of us, the needy part of us; “Take care of me.”

In our **R**: we serve others

In our **I**: we serve ourselves

Both **R** and **I** are an important part of who we are. Both are necessary. What’s also necessary is staying in your **R** at work and reserving your **I** for times when you are not expected to serve others.

Customers are in their **I** – shopping is inherently a way to fulfill a human need.

Our Role, as employees – is to take care of customers and help meet their needs.

The customer’s **I** will sometimes be angry, afraid, upset, conflicted, confused and will act out. Being in our **R** means we have the responsibility to maintain a cool head, to be empathetic and compassionate and above all, to stay in our **R** – even when our personal human instinct might be to slip into our **I**, to fight, to defend ourselves from what we see as a perceived threat.

Pressure, stress, fatigue, fear all tend to pull us out of our helpful, happy **R**. Being aware, and doing things to protect your customer, and you, from your internal self-defense mechanism, will help keep your **I** out of it!

Strategies for staying in your R:

- Avoid overuse of social media and obsessing over the news.
- Focus on what you CAN control and let go of what you can’t.
- Ask for and accept help when you need it.
- Relieve stress as much as possible and use proper breathing techniques.
- Take scheduled breaks away from your workspace.
- Remember the three F’s: flight, fight, and forgiveness.
 - Choose forgiveness
- Remember anger in the moment is usually not about that moment, but a past moment of unresolved anger, or a present moment of anger that is about their life situation and not about you. Don’t take it personally because it’s not personal.
- Remember the goal is NOT to win the argument, but to win the person over
 - Your I wants to win the argument; your R needs to win them over
- Remember to take the high road, the one that serves the customer over yourself.
- Serve yourself at home, away from the workplace, but do serve yourself. Take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and mentally.
- What other strategies do you find helpful?

THE BUYOSPHERE