

Use ‘great’ or ‘garbage’ ratings to identify what needs attention

When I was in the throes of reading *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson, it would have been an understatement to say I could not put down that book.

As we all know, Steve Jobs was an incredibly complicated person who was passionately dedicated to creating great products that were uncomplicated to use.

Jobs had a strict, two-sided — and often brutal — perspective on how to evaluate people and products: they were either great or garbage (he used a different word for garbage!). His passion for clarity, elegance and simplicity played a huge role in how Apple and Pixar created and developed beloved products and user experiences.

I’ve been trying out his “great-or-garbage” yardstick to see how my efforts measure up. I’m humbled by the experience. Here are some of the activities I evaluated using Jobs’ method of measure.

- **Recent sales conversations: garbage.**

Oh, how I wish there were some wiggle room here, because many conversations I am having are quite rich. But I could talk less and ask more questions, and I need to get better at telling stories, using metaphors and offering challenging insights.

- **Taking care of my health: great.** I shine at eating healthy foods and exercising.

- **My website: garbage.** I see all kinds of ways to improve it.

- **Professional development: great.** I’ve read a number of excellent books and articles in the last year and have participated in many inspiring workshops.

- **Delegating: garbage.** I outsource a lot but still end up working six days a week.

- **Networking: garbage.** I know I need to find more events where I can meet people in person. But knowing and doing aren’t the same thing.

I invite you to try the “great-or-garbage” perspective as a way to highlight where you need to pay attention. But be kind to yourself when you look at the “garbage” pile. Remember that this is a black-and-white equation and doesn’t include the grays in between.

And if you haven’t already, read *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson. You will learn so much.

Talk back: Let me know what happens when you evaluate your efforts against the “great-or-garbage” yardstick.



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Nicki Weiss is an internationally recognized Certified Professional Sales and Leadership Coach, Master Trainer, thought leader, speaker and facilitator. Since 1992, she has trained and coached more than 20,000 business leaders, sales teams and reps. Nicki has a particular passion for working with manufacturers, distributors and rep firms in the electronics industry.

Nicki is ERA’s sales consultant, the brainchild and facilitator of ERA’s free teleforum programs and the founder of the SalesWise Academy. Every day, leaders wake up knowing that they, their technical reps and field sales engineers need to sharpen their focus and their skills. But they don’t have the tools, resources or patience to continually help enhance their strategy, communication and relationship building skills. The SalesWise Academy fills that void and delivers those skill-building lessons. To learn more, go to saleswise.ca or call 416-778-4145



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