
Former Importer Swaps Petals for Pushing Positive Thinking

After a quarter century of selling flowers, Barry Gottlieb has written a book with a message everyone could benefit from hearing a few thousand times a day.

Industry veteran Barry Gottlieb's new book helps readers get through tough times with a positive attitude. The book is called "TGIT: Thank God It's Today," and the Cliff Notes version is this: Next time you start to send yourself a mental nasty-gram, replace it with a positive thought.

"Recent research indicates that the average person has approximately 60,000 thoughts a day, of which 80 percent [48,000] are negative," says Gottlieb, former partner and vice president of sales at Continental Farms and among the first group of importers in Miami. "It is no wonder that we have over one-fourth of our adult population suffering from anxiety. All of these things have a huge impact — on our happiness and our success."

While the motivational book aisle may seem a long way from Miami's ports, Gottlieb's sales, management and teaching approach has always been grounded in changing attitudes. From his first pupils at an elementary school to his sales teams and colleagues at Equiflor Corporation, Allied Farms LLC and Continental, Gottlieb's audiences have always been pushed to focus on what they can do and to find opportunities instead of obstacles.

That philosophy made business coaching a natural next step after he left the floral industry in 2005. "As a coach, I have been able to help companies increase performance and profits by helping them change the attitudinal culture," Gottlieb says. "When people focus on and look for solutions, rather than focus on the problems, being critical, condemning, and complaining... great results follow."

In "TGIT: Thank God It's Today" Gottlieb drives home the think positive mantra with practical examples of how managing the messages you send yourself can help you manage your life. The book arrives on shelves not a bailout too soon. Negativity doesn't need any more messengers on its side getting out the bad news.

"There are companies and businesses that are doing very well in this economy," Gottlieb explains. "Why are some companies in the same industry doing well when others aren't? Attitude, their culture and how they're approaching this."