

The Tradition Continues

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TO A BETTER 2024

2024 RESOLUTIONS

for the Floor Covering Industry & all Retail Professionals

MY PERSONAL NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE

Practice positivity and daily improvement because anything we do can be done better.

**Ten two letter words behind your & team's success:
IF IT IS TO BE, IT IS UP TO "ME" (you) or "US"**

Greetings and Happy New Year friends. Over 25 years' tradition of New Year Resolutions is something I will not break, and it continues to be consistent with the new chapter in my professional life at The Dixie Group (TDG), the finest flooring manufacturer (I may be biased, but I can prove it). Sharing resolutions is an expectation from most of you, so I will not disappoint you. Thank you for your insights, critiques, input, support, friendship, inspiration, and the knowledge you share with me. You make me a better person with your wisdom, kindness, evaluations, requests, and love.

Wow, 2023 went so much faster than any other year or so it seems. We left behind the scares (and scars) from three years of chaos, and looked for some kind of normalcy, or as many say the "New Normal." Whatever that may be, we are here in 2024. The future is not written in a book, it is in your hands to write it the way you want it to be. Ten percent of life happens to us (uncontrollable events) 90% we happen to life (controllables). Let us focus on making it happen and do our 90%. I am always thankful for your friendship, partnership, and business. Please accept my deepest and sincerest gratitude

Welcome to 2024, the start of a new year, AI creeping in life, much faster change of pace in everything and a world in turmoil. We are a year older, hopefully wiser, and more experienced. At the start of 2023, we had goals, resolutions, projects to complete, improvements to be made. Some we did and some we were not able to do that we can plan to do this year. We have so much to be thankful for in our lives, let us express our gratitude. With a renewed faith that "we can do it" rather than "it cannot be done" let us make 2024 the best year yet.

My 2024 personal resolution: Absolute commitment to doing my part in making this world a better and more positive place, helping you improve personally and professionally with a focus on multiplier effects. Shared herein are my personal views/thoughts independent of TDG.

New Year's Resolutions for Retail Professionals Choose 3 that you like for your improvements in 2024

- 1) Front load your Efforts, Marketing, Sales, and Projects.** Being an election year (in so many countries), 2024 has three productive quarters. Advertising and social media will be expensive in the months leading up to the election. Plan to conduct more promotions, direct mail events (postage cost does not change) and clean up pipelines of current customers in the first three quarters. With such a focus you may even have a better fourth quarter; you can thank me later 😊. The possibility of media noise, distractions, negativity, and confusion increases as we come closer to the election. 2024 happens to be a Leap Year; February 29th is on Thursday; therefore, conduct a promotion starting on Thursday for 4 days. Create a headliner; "Sale/Event So Big, IT ONLY HAPPENS ONCE IN 4 YEARS." Please reach out to me, I will be glad to help.
- 2) So-so Vs. Amazing, Good Vs. Great & Ordinary Vs. Extraordinary:** The simple difference is the power of "1" – One. It is doing just a little extra to be extraordinary, one more thing, one more call, one more minute, one more customer, one more presentation, one more effort, one more sale, one more project; you get the idea. Do not try, just do it. As Yoda said, "do or don't, there is no try." 100% of the things that you will not do, will not work. We all have ideas in our minds and hearts; the difference is some do, and some do not.
- 3) Back to Basics:** Last three years have not been normal; whatever is the definition of normal. We are all longing for a new normal; that is another way of saying, "Back To Basics." Simplify things, simplify buying and selling; that is what we all want. Make your presentations and processes as simple as possible.

- 4) Use Technology in Selling:** Learn and use technology in selling. Is your website reflective of your products, values, and story? If you do not have a story to tell, all you have is a price to sell. If you can facilitate the purchase so that your customers can visualize your products (room visualizers) in the comfort of their homes, rather than making five trips, they can decide in one, if you can send samples to their home, if you can help them measure their homes, or go measure before they have to come to your showroom, you increase the likelihood of your success multifold. Do you have a brag sheet? Why should they buy from you? Do you know how to use a room visualizer? Do you know products that are featured on your website? Learn new ways to connect and build trust with your pre-sale communication.
- 5) Quality Over Quantity:** We always knew it, but the meaning of “life is short” was highlighted to a different height in the past three years. We all want quality materials, craftsmanship and an experience to buy from you. We all want to buy the best we can afford. Are you starting at your best? In flooring, during my visits to many of you, I use an example; “If you do not have a \$20 sq. ft. product in your showroom, you will never sell it, if you have it but never show it, you will never sell it, if you have it, show it but do not believe in it or know what benefits and value it creates for the customer, you will never sell it.” Reduce clutter at the bottom while improving the top.
- 6) Growth Vs. Real Growth:** Everyone is trying to reach out to more customers. Real growth is serving the customers you currently have so that they buy better products and services from you. They are not only willing to pay you more but are willing to promote you and become your ambassadors. Do not make a sale, do not make a customer, make an ambassador. Have a plan to make your customers become ambassadors!
- 7) Your Wish Is Granted:** 2024 is a second chance or an opportunity to improve what you always wanted to but did not get to. In 2023, you wanted to improve yourself, you worked hard but you missed the mark. Now you know from experience what could have been better and where you did not do better. Make a list of the top 3 to 5 things that you would have or could have done better. Pick the one that will create the most value for you, your family, your company, your world and focus on it. Write a clear description of it. Put it on your desk, by the bedside, on the mirror in the bathroom and practice it for 30 days. I promise you that you will want to give up on day 10 or 11; please do not. You will be glad that you were persistent, and it paid off.
- 8) Twelve Months – Twelve Improvements:** “We are what we repeatedly do, therefore excellence is not an act but a habit” – Aristotle. Three simple words – **Repeat – Improve – Excel**. It could be a word, a technique, a tool, a process that you want to improve. Start on the first of each month and make a sincere effort for thirty days. Sum total of all the little improvements makes a huge difference. Anything we do can be done better.
- 9) Double The Positivity Please:** Start your day by inducing a positive thought of the day. “Just one small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day” – Dalai Lama. When I share this with many of you, invariably the question that comes is – how I do it. Do not get out of bed unless you have a positive thought. Here is a little start. “My customers are going to love me. I am going to make that sale, I work with some amazing people, I am going to smile no matter what. I am going to focus on situations, not people. I am not going to worry who gets the credit, I am just going to do it.”
- 10) Give a Lasting Last Impression:** People always ask me what impression is more important; first or last. Well, I am not diminishing the value of your first impression; however, if I have to only choose one, I will always pick the Last Impression. Here is why; if my first impression is not good, I have 5-10 minutes or half an hour to recover. But if my last impression is bad, the customer is already gone. I cannot say, “Mrs. Jones, can you please come back, pretend we never met and let us start all over again.” Here are three simple steps to give a lasting last impression. **1.** Sincere thanks for coming to your store, working with you, or buying something from you. **2.** Always ask if your customer has a question that you did not address or anything else on their mind before he/she leaves. **3.** Give the permission to call you with any questions and always connect him/her with the next steps of the transaction, process, or progress.

Bonus: Build and nurture a respectful and trustworthy relationship with your suppliers’ representatives. Your reps can move mountains to make things happen for you, they are focused on your success because their success depends upon yours. Make an effort to know your reps on a personal level.

I appreciate your love, friendship, and critique to make me a better person every day. Please do not stop as I have a long way to go. Thank you for your continuous support. Do your part to make this world, flooring industry or your industry better. Share these resolutions generously with others (flooring or other retail) to make a difference in their lives. I am always available for you.

Respectfully,
Pami Bhullar

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