



Patrick Lencioni Bio: NY Times bestselling author of eight books and president and founder of the Table Group. Pat has consulted to CEOs and leadership teams in organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies and start-ups.

Authors Purpose: This book is about overcoming the fear of becoming vulnerable (naked) before our clients, which is not easy. To show that by becoming naked you can develop stronger and stickier relationships with your clients.

Quotes:

“There is old adage never let them see you sweat. The truth is, our clients almost always know when we are sweating, often before we do. And so we have a choice. We can either pretend we’re not sweaty and try to hide our weaknesses, and then watch our credibility erode. Or we can raise up our arms, acknowledge our sweatiness, and show them that we are honest and self-assured enough to be worthy of their trust.”

This book is written from the personal experiences of the author and his staff on building the Table Group. From the beginning they adopted a simple and informal approach to serving clients that provoked surprising levels of loyalty and trust. This book is about that approach which we call naked consulting.

Results: Clients have welcomed us into their most critical and sensitive discussions without hesitation. They have consistently sought our advice and counsel, often about matters that were outside of the scope of our services. They have kept us around even when budgets are tight. And enthusiastically and authentically vouch for us with other clients who were considering working with us.

What is naked service? At its core naked service boils down to the ability of a service provider to be vulnerable, to embrace uncommon levels of humility, selflessness and transparency for the good of a client.

The Three Fears

1) Fear of Losing the Business

While no service provider wants to lose clients, this fear actually hurts our ability to keep and increase business, because it causes us to avoid doing the difficult things that engender greater loyalty and trust with the people we are trying to serve.



What clients want more than anything is to know that we are more interested in helping them than we are in maintaining our revenue source. When we do this to protect our business, they lose respect for us and question their trust in us.

Perspective: in dating, girls prefer honest and self-assured guys over desperate ones who tell them what they want to hear.

2) Fear of Being Embarrassed

This fear is rooted in pride and it is ultimately about avoiding the appearance of ignorance, wanting to be seen instead as smart or competent. Naked service providers are willing to ask questions and make suggestions to be laughably wrong. They readily admit what they don't know and are quick to point out their errors because protecting their intellectual ego is not important to them.

Clients want to hear all our suggestions and are yearning for transparency and modesty – qualities that are immensely more attractive than intelligence.

3) Fear of Feeling Inferior

Beyond ego, this fear is about preserving our sense of importance in social standing relative to a client. Naked service providers purposefully put themselves in a lower position. They do whatever a client needs them to do to help them improve, even if that calls for the service provider to be overlooked.

Why? Because there is nothing more attractive and admirable than people who willingly and cheerfully set their egos aside and make the needs of others more important than their own.

Shredding the Three Fears:

Always Consult Instead of Sell...fear of losing the business

Naked service providers transform every sales situation into an opportunity to demonstrate the value of what they do. They start serving prospects as though they are already a client. They don't worry about their generosity is going to be taken advantage of, because nine others will appreciate the generosity.

Sales situations then become service giveaways, which are more enjoyable experiences because they give the service provider higher levels of confidence than they would have had if they were simply to convince a potential client to make a decision.

Give Away the Business...fear of losing the business

This part is pointed toward the financial end of the business. It entails always erring on the side of the client when it comes to fees. Because you're interested in a long-term relationship with a client, it is in your best



interest to show them that you are more focused on helping them than you are in maximizing your short-term revenue.

Tell the Kind Truth...fear of losing the business

Naked service providers will confront a client with a difficult message, thus putting the relationship at risk. But they do it in a way that recognizes the dignity and humanity of the client.

Example: A native New York client was having trouble working with his Southern colleagues, he was far too direct. The consultant knew he needed to address the client, but in a way he could hear. Drawing on characters from the movie *The Godfather*, he said, “Maybe you could be a little less like Sonny and a little more like Michael.” The client got and was very thankful for the advice and the way it was delivered.

Enter the Danger...fear of losing the business

Entering the danger has to do with having the courage to fearlessly deal with an issue that everyone else is afraid to address. Perhaps more than any other service a consultant provides, this one provokes the most appreciation from clients, many of whom have grown weary of avoiding the “elephant in the room.”

Ask Dumb Questions...fear of being embarrassed

Naked service providers are the ones who ask the questions that others in the room are afraid to ask out of fear that they would embarrass themselves. They realize that if they ask five dumb questions and three could be considered “dumb”, the potential benefit that comes from the other two makes it worthwhile.

Making Dumb Suggestions...fear of being embarrassed

Naked service providers go beyond asking questions that others shy away from: they make suggestions that they aren't sure of, knowing they are putting themselves in a position to be even more embarrassed. Sometimes the obvious is blind to those on the inside.

Celebrate your Mistakes...fear of being embarrassed

Naked service providers don't enjoy being wrong; but realize it is an inevitability. And rather than attempting to hide or downplay their errors, they readily call them out and take responsibility for them.

Make Everything about the Client...fear of feeling inferior

Seems obvious, but naked service providers throw their full attention into the world of the client. They do not try to shift attention to themselves and their level of experience or knowledge; rather, they make it clear that their focus is on understanding, honoring the business of the client. They downplay their own accomplishments, allowing clients to discover them for themselves.

Admit your Weaknesses and Limitations...creates Trust quicker than anything else.



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