



# Of dentists & petrol stations

Let's pretend you are a dentist with a practice that includes many families and children. You know that kids are often terrified of visiting you. Will you do the almost mandatory 'lollipops in a jar' to calm them down? And would that be a good idea given the fact that you don't really want kids to see sweets as a reward? Or would you seek some other innovative solution, perhaps to entertain or distract them while they are so scared?

One dentist, let's call her doctor M., asked this question ...

## What are the things that really make kids laugh?

Sure enough she and her team came up with some excellent ideas. When it came to boys, it was either anything to do with electronics and anything to do with... Farting! [Yes, I know.]

So she bought a few whoopee cushions, and even some little electronic devices with a speaker and a big red button that when pressed makes farting noises. And she cracks jokes about it all of the time.

When she gives boys any treatment, she says, "And you can expect that this is going to give you some epic farts. She also created a really small 'Kids Zone' which doesn't consist of some old, frayed children's books, but is more like a small video arcade, and represents something similar to similar zones in family restaurants.

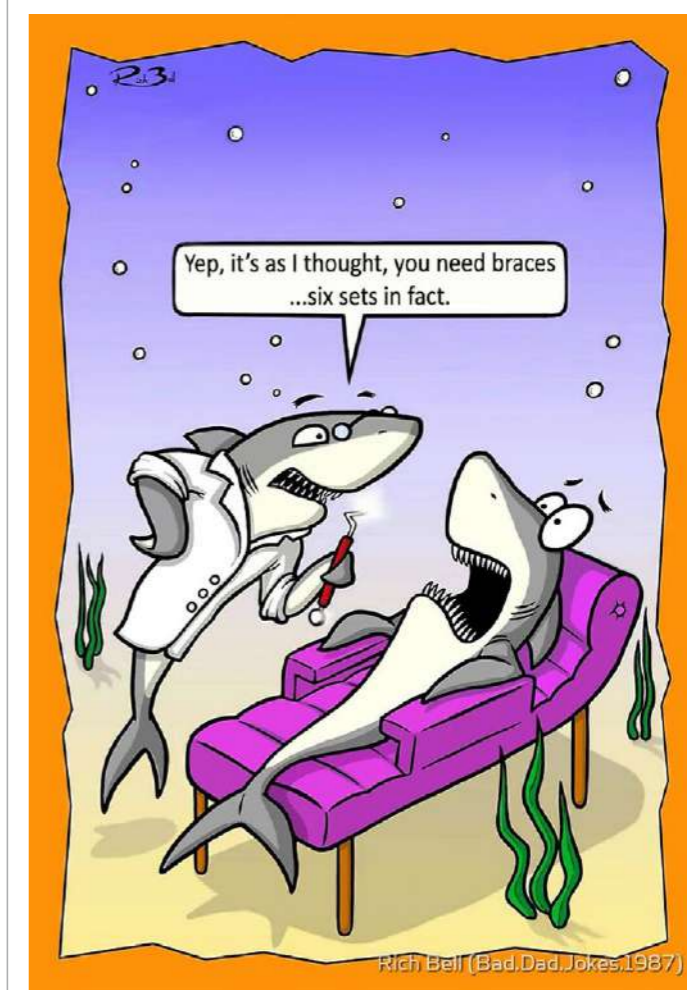


Illustration: <https://hotcore.info/>

How behavioural economics and 'being human' affects your business.

By Aki Kalliatakis

**N**ever-ever underestimate people's capacity to change. Ricardo Semler, CEO of Mexican cement company, CeMex, made this lovely statement ...



Ricardo Semler

“If only minds were as easy to change as machines. I'll wager that it's easier to invent a new generation of microchips than to get a generation of middle managers to alter the routes they drive to work every day.”



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Now if you have just spent a small fortune and sacrificed seven years of your life to become a dentist, there is a good chance that you will follow traditional processes and strategies for healing your patients – and there is probably also a little bit of academic snobbery ingrained in you. “This is really beneath me as a dentist to respond to this kind of tactic,” you’d probably say to yourself.

And you’d be completely wrong. All you need to know you is that Dr. M. is booked months in advance and is doing so well that she now works with (employs) a whole bunch of other dentists just to keep up with the demand. Moms are delighted because they don’t need to wring blood from stone to persuade their children to visit the dentist and kids don’t feel that fear that they used to when they visit the ‘Kids Zone’.

## Now let’s pretend again ...

You are planning to open a new petrol station where you live. What would you do to make sure it succeeds? There are probably dozens of tactics that you would come up with like decent branding, great service, or an attractive shop.

But I’m willing to bet that in your top five priorities will be the location of your business ...

“Traditionally, all new petrol stations were built on really busy roads, and they had to be really visible to loads and loads of people. If customers couldn’t find you easily, you couldn’t sell them petrol and then you’d be out of business.”



Illustration:  
Eric Lopatka,  
Birds Tattoo.

So in some ways, just like peacocks and their magnificent feathers, petrol stations had to be conspicuous, recognisable and obvious. And, just like peacocks, this attractiveness came at rather a heavy price. Expensive real estate, tons of huge branding logos, signage and symbols, and powerful lighting to shine on everything. That’s how these businesses evolved – and succeeded – over the past few decades.

But something has changed in the world of cars and travelling – and that is your SatNav system. Identifying petrol stations even in an unknown neighbourhood has just become really easy.

By the way, I predict that as electric cars become more and more popular, the idea of charging stations on main roads will become completely irrelevant.

Can you see how this has all sorts of other implications too? For example, the petrol station owners need to talk to all the various app developers and make sure that they are very visible on the maps.

But they also have to change customers’ perceptions by stating the benefits of visiting a petrol station that may be a little off the main route.

This is something that may not be as difficult as it sounds. When you take a long trip on a main highway, you are probably going to turn off the highway to fill up anyway. Why shouldn’t this also be so in cities?

Visibility in today’s world isn’t just physical visibility – it’s also digital visibility. And that’s why working with customers’ perceptions are so important. Whether you are a dentist that wants to make her practice more popular and less stressful, or a petrol station operator who needs to make a profit, you simply can’t keep doing the same things that we’ve always done.

As one anonymous inspirational writer put it ...

**If you always do what you’ve always done, you will always get what you’ve always got.**

Just in case you misunderstand me, I’m not one who thinks that change is always a good thing. I’m not a proponent of, “If it ain’t broke, fix it anyway.” And this is particularly true when finance executives want to save money by using technology to replace people.



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- Post nasal drip
- Sneezing



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- Painful Sinuses



- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Swollen tonsils



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Illustration by Babak Shahian Jahromi Medium

For example, on a recent trip to the UK, I saw those self-help checkout tills where customers can scan their own groceries, pack them and pay. Apart from the obvious reasons this wouldn't work in South Africa,

I also observed another really silly thing ... as you scan your item, you put it onto a little shelf right next to the scanner/till. Once that's full – and it only takes a handful of items to fill up the shelf – there's nowhere to put any additional items you want, so you abandon the extras and get on with completing the transaction.

In other words, they are actively discouraging customers from buying more than just a few items.

But, technology apart, what else has changed in your world – and more importantly in your customers' world – that you need to review right now, and change before your business becomes irrelevant? **SR**



Aki Kalliatakis is the managing partner of The Leadership LaunchPad, a company dedicated to helping clients become more customer driven. He can be contacted at +27 (0) 83 379 3466, or via the website at [www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za](http://www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za)

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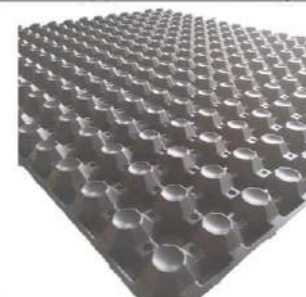


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1200mm x 1000mm x  
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Serves: 4  
Preparation time: 5 minutes  
Cooking time: 20 minutes



Ideal for a family meal

Tasty & Delicious

## GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY Chicken Livers

### INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp (30ml) oil	1 tsp (5ml) chicken spice
1 onion, sliced	½ tsp (1ml) paprika
2 garlic cloves, chopped	salt and pepper
250g chicken livers, cleaned	1 tsp (5ml) brown onion soup powder
	½ cup (125ml) cream

## CREAMY CHICKEN LIVERS

Guests staying over? Add creamy chicken livers to your breakfast table and serve with hot, buttery toast.

### Method:

- In a large pan, heat oil, add onion and sauté until soft. Add the garlic and liver pieces.
- Cook the liver, stirring them occasionally for 5 minutes. Season with chicken spice, paprika and salt.
- Stir in the soup powder, cover and cook for 3 minutes. Pour in the cream, stir and set aside.

# Great South African Chicken Every Day!



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Serves: 6  
Preparation time: 10 minutes  
Cooking time: 80 minutes

## GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY LEG QUARTERS

### INGREDIENTS

#### Chicken:

6 leg quarters  
4 tbsp of butter  
Salt and pepper  
600g baby potatoes  
3 sprigs thyme  
4 tbsp canola oil

#### Sauce:

1/2 cup white wine  
1 1/2 cup butter, cut into pieces  
1 cup whipping cream  
Juice of 1 lemon

### INGREDIENTS

#### Salad:

600g peas  
20g mint, roughly chopped  
150g radishes, cut into quarters  
1 block of feta

#### Dressing:

1/2 tsp white sugar  
1 tsp white wine vinegar  
2 tbsp olive oil

## BAKED LEG QUARTERS WITH CREAMY LEMON SAUCE AND PEA AND MINT SALAD

Guests staying over? Add creamy chicken livers to your breakfast table and serve with hot, buttery toast.

### Method:

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Put the chicken on the bottom of a rimmed baking sheet or baking dish. Melt the butter and brush it over each chicken piece. Season with salt and pepper. Cover the pan with foil and bake for one hour.

Increase the oven temperature to 200°C, remove the foil and bake for an extra 10 to 20 minutes until the skin is crispy. Let the chicken rest for 10 minutes before serving

Parboil the potatoes in boiling water. Crush them lightly with a fork – you want to break their shape but keep them whole. Put the canola oil in a roasting pan and place into the oven (200°C) until the oil is smoking hot. Remove hot oil tray from the oven and add the potatoes, thyme, salt and pepper, and roast for about 30 minutes, or until crispy.

To make the sauce, heat the wine in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil and reduce over medium-high heat until 2 tablespoons of liquid remain. Reduce the heat to low and whisk in the butter, a few pieces at a time, until the sauce is smooth and the butter is incorporated. Whisk in the cream and lemon juice. Keep the sauce warm in the top of a double boiler set over hot water until you are ready to serve.

To make the salad, boil peas in a pan of salted boiling water until cooked. Drain and set aside to cool. To make the dressing, put the white sugar, white-wine vinegar and olive oil into a jar and shake. Mix the peas, radishes and mint in a bowl, toss in the dressing and crumble the feta over the top.

Serve the salad with the chicken and potatoes.

Ideal for a family meal

Tasty & Delicious

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