

Nothing Good Happens After Midnight

By Tom Searcy, author of *Hunt Big Sales*

Nothing good happens after midnight.

Your mama taught you this, and you probably were like me and you spent a lot of time out past midnight before you figured out that she was right.

I have more sins than Saturday night confessions in my history on this topic, so when I tell you that there are seven rules for client entertaining, I know because I have broken a few.

Here are my rules:

- 1) **Don't go anywhere with a client** that you wouldn't take the person in your life you respect the most.
- 2) **Don't set the fastest pace-** whether it is drinking, dancing, eating, talking, karaoke-ing, or any other activity. When you set the fastest pace, things tend to spin out of control, and the focus becomes you rather than the client.
- 3) **Take the check, but don't fight for it.** Everyone's on expense account, so this is just shadow boxing anyway.
- 4) **Lead, don't follow.** If a client is taking you somewhere that doesn't fit your own beliefs, your company's code or common sense, don't go. Just because they are the client does not mean they have say on your values.
- 5) **Protect your company and its people.** If someone on your team is making a bad decision, you have to take the responsibility for resolving the issue. Don't watch the train wreck happen and then give a detailed report later. Stop the train wreck.
- 6) **Everyone is watching** – How you treat the servers, the doormen, other patrons is all on display and your clients or prospects are watching. You cannot be too polite or too gracious.
- 7) **The party closes at midnight, or earlier** – Nothing good happens after midnight, but a lot of not so good can happen.

This isn't preaching, it's protecting. In the moment, if you don't have your rules, you can get swept away in the energy of the evening and that often does not serve your interests.

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