

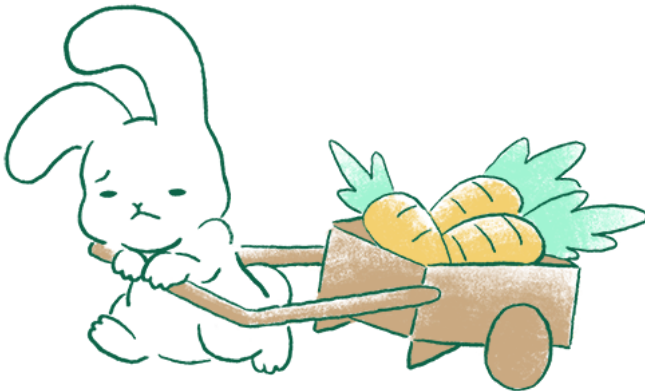
# Buy Dearly

Oyasama once said to a follower who ran a hosiery shop:

*“Merchants should buy dearly and sell cheaply.”*

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 165

A fortune-teller says: “When a customer comes to me, I look steadily into his or her eyes and say in a low, quiet voice: ‘You have done so much for others. Yet your efforts have not been rewarded. You have been losing out, haven’t you?’ Then most customers reply: ‘That’s right. For all the hard work and effort I’ve put in, my current job position and salary are far from reasonable. I feel I am treated unfairly. Hey, you’re an amazing fortune-teller. You only took one look at me, and. . . .’ I can easily earn my customers’ trust like that. Actually, though, I think that most of my customers are getting a fairer reward for their efforts.”



We tend not to forget things that we did for others. We may even use words that are deliberately designed to make people feel indebted to us when we talk about what we did. At the same time, we tend to undervalue and quickly forget the kindness with which others have done something for us. We eventually end up saying things like “After all I’ve done for him (her).” This may cause friction in relationships.

The question is whether we can look at ourselves and others with an impartial eye. In fact, it would be wise to deliberately undervalue ourselves and overvalue others.

If we undervalue our work, we can put in every effort without begrudging it. If we highly value others’ kindnesses, our sense of gratitude will grow and may even bring a smile to their lips. Oyasama’s instruction couched in the language of business—“Merchants should buy dearly and sell cheaply”—is an important one for us all.

