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One Minute Ideas

Achieving Potential

April 2010

In this month's edition of our monthly newsletter "Achieving Potential," we address the issues confronting business in these economic times. The Chinese word for crisis is made up of two words; danger and opportunity. Successful companies such as Microsoft and Apple saw opportunity instead of danger and developed successful businesses during economic recessions.

Grant Schneider, founder of Performance Development Strategies, will be speaking about success in tough times on April 13. Register here: <http://wnfpevents.webs.com/apps/calendar/showEvent?callID=2065588&eventID=70544731>

We coach individuals and organizations and help them achieve their true potential.

Strategic Planning is No Longer a Discretionary Decision -

It has been said, "We'd better pay attention to the future because that's where we're going to spend the rest of our lives."



Success in any business is a clear picture of where the business is going and even though there is technically no "end," What will the end result look like? The propensity of most management

Managing Motivated Employees

- Don't let a failed project squash your spirits - throw a failure party
- Studies show you can increase creativity just by adding plants or flowers in the office
- It may sound simple, but if your employees know you believe in them they'll want to please you
- Make time to get feedback - it will not only uncover your own management problems, it could uncover organizational problems as well
- Have employees write down top qualities of their coworkers - peer encouragement is always a big motivation boost

Source: 101 **One-Minute Ideas for Managing Motivated Employees**, manageBetter.biz

teams right now is to focus on the present, to put out fires, and manage by crisis. With all of the changes in the business environment of the last 24 months, that propensity is understandable; however, crisis management doesn't prepare your organization for future growth and opportunity. Planning your business's future is no longer a discretionary decision. If you want to control the destiny of your business then you need to create it!

Stage 1. Visioning

A company's vision is a statement of potential. A vision statement is a description of what your organization wants to become.

Stage 2. Strategic Thinking and Planning

The term strategic thinking can be defined as the process that determines the future direction of the organization. This process addresses all aspects of your business and its resources. Its foundation is a strategic thinking process and its conclusion is a logical and well thought out plan that when implemented will ensure the organization's success.

Stage 3. Business Planning

Business planning is the process that actualizes the strategic plan. During the business planning process, your mission is crystallized into specific goal categories. These categories then become actionable through goals and actions steps. If there are multiple departments each will have a mission and business plan which is their contribution to the organization's mission. The progressive achievement of the mission or all of the departmental missions will propel the entire organization toward the realization of its vision.

Stage 4. Implementing the Plan

The real key to the success of this process is action. Vision alone does not ensure success. Even the most comprehensive plan will not ensure success without action steps and measurement. Without action steps, time frames, and accountability the process is just a mental exercise that, while it may be stimulating is meaningless or a waste of time and energy.

Stage 5. Review and Continuous Improvement

Without measurement, it is difficult to see progress, and it is impossible to manage a business. Creating a dashboard for the communication of goals and objectives is critical for measurement. Everything relies on execution. Success requires continued learning and improvement. There is always something you can do to gain control over any situation. There is always something we can learn to become better!

Take a moment and be honest. Do you have an actionable strategic plan for your business? Do you know where you want to take your business one year from now, five years from now? Do you want to learn how to better manage the inevitable fires while

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focusing on growth opportunities? Make the commitment with your management team to develop a strategic plan now as your future results depend on it!

Source: Resource Associates Corporation and Performance Development Strategies, LLC.

Developing Tomorrow's Leaders Today

Many studies document the Boomer exodus from business and industry.

Albeit some Boomers may be reevaluating their time line based on the economic changes, but there is no question that a high percentage of the 77.5 million Boomers will be vacating corporate America in the next five years. *(Study conducted by AARP-2008)*



56% of business and industries' Boomer population hold leadership positions. Conversely, there are only 46 Million Gen X and Gen Y's to take the place of those vacating Boomers. These numbers reflect why business and industry need to be so concerned about brain drain and develop a strategy to combat it.

A recent report conducted by OI Partners state that 54% of companies surveyed said they did not have enough qualified candidates working for them to succeed their executives and managers and 14% weren't sure if they have enough leadership successors in place. The survey included responses from 212 primarily large and mid-sized employers throughout North America.

The luxury of time is gone. Organizations must get prepared and begin implementing a leadership succession plan. Having prepared leaders at all levels of an organization is a management strategy and a competitive business advantage. Organizations achieve sustainability and growth through their leadership and the quality of that leadership. The important skills necessary to lead a company to succeed in the upcoming years will be different. In addition to being able to lead people, new leaders will need to plan strategically, inspire commitment, and manage unyielding change. However, to be an effective leader takes much more than skill. It also requires the appropriate attitudes and behaviors. There are many tactical skills of leadership, but without the appropriate attitudes and behaviors, the skills are almost meaningless. We talked in a previous post about how actions speak louder than words. It is difficult to inspire commitment in a team when the leader's body language, tone of voice, and behaviors reflect something entirely different. Managing change

becomes very difficult if a leader's attitude is "this too shall pass." In order to manage unyielding change a leader needs to be aggressive, innovative, and responsive. And yes, it takes certain skills to be aggressive, innovative, and creative, but success in these areas requires the right attitude equally as much as the right skills.

In working with clients to develop their leadership bench strength we have found the following formula works extremely well:

ASK + Goals = PBC → IR

In order for your business to achieve Improved Results (IR) there needs to be Positive Behavior Change (PBC). We have found a successful way to achieve Positive Behavior Change (PBC) by customizing a process unique to the client that addresses the needed Attitudes, Behaviors, and Skills (ASK) combined with a Goal Accomplishment (Goals) model that drives Positive Behavior Change (PBC) which leads to measurable and improved results.

As your organization develops future leaders for your organization, you need to ensure there is a solid base of leadership skills is important. What attitudes and behaviors do you want people in leadership roles to exhibit? What messages do you want them to send when they are not talking? What example do you want them to set when no one is officially watching? To identify a true leader, observe his/her behavior and attitude as it will tell you a great deal more than an evaluation of their skills.

Resource Associates Corporation and Performance Development Strategies, LLC.

The Leader as a Mentor and a Director

As a leader you must be many things to many people.

In previous articles we have discussed the need for a leader to be a visionary because involving people in realizing a compelling vision provides a beacon for the future and a standard of excellence. We have also talked about the leader's role as a coach. A leader as a coach reinforces the results they believe people are capable of achieving as winning depends on execution.

In addition to the roles of visionary and coach there are two additional roles that round out an exceptional leader: The role of mentor and the role of director.

The Leader as a Mentor

While many aspects of the mentoring role are similar to coaching, the significant differences lie in the mentor's advisory or teaching role. A mentor is a trusted advisor and tutor. Mentors share the benefit of their experience and knowledge. It is a critical role in developing individuals who will collectively be responsible for the success of the organization. As a mentor you should seek innovation, encourage experimentation, reward appropriate risk taking, drive out fear, and create an environment where everyone communicates freely, honestly, and positively.

Establish an environment that encourages and rewards people to develop their skills, improve their results, and learn new skills. Actively seek to help people learn from your experiences and knowledge. Develop a culture where people feel responsible for their own results and are supportive of others, as well as provide the model, knowledge, training, and freedom to achieve their goals. Today's leaders must foster a culture where continuous learning and continuous improvement are the norm not the exception.

The Leader as a Director

In the director's role, the leader is like a symphony orchestra conductor. Everyone knows their part, comes in on cue, and maintains the tempo that had been established. The conductor does not play the instruments, that is the role of the musicians. Each musician does not decide when to play, that is the role of the conductor. The role of the conductor is to elicit the best possible individual performance in concert with the entire orchestra to create a symphony of sound. The leader/director establishes the direction for the organization and for the people. This does not mean the leader is the authoritarian expert who knows all of the answers. Rather, it means that the leader, as director, gathers the input and ideas from everyone in the organization, establishes goals, and aligns the resources to achieve those goals. The director creates conditions under which peak performers can thrive. The director continuously evaluates whether the direction serves both the organization's best interest and the best interest of all individuals involved.

All leadership behavior must create an environment in which people are encouraged to seek out innovative ways of doing things which will ultimately lead to more revenues or lower costs. Excellent leaders use their complimentary skills as a visionary, a coach, a mentor, and a director to accomplish just that. In the words of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he/she wants to do it."

Tammy A.S. Kohl is President of Resource Associates Corporation. For over 30 years, RAC has specialized in business and management consulting, strategic planning, leadership development, executive coaching, and youth leadership.

Motivational Quotes

"In the last analysis, what we are communicating far more eloquently than anything we say or do."

- Stephen Covey

"Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. The fearful are caught as often as the bold."

- Helen Keller

"A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new."

- Albert Einstein

For results you can count on, contact Performance Development Strategies, LLC at 914-953-4458 or Email: grant@pdstrategies.com

Make it a GREAT day,

Grant Schneider
Performance Development Strategies, LLC
