

In This Issue

[One Minute Ideas](#)

[Operationalizing Strategic Planning](#)

[Determining and Improving Performance Gaps](#)

[Creating A New Normal](#)

Quick Links

[Visit Our Website](#)

[Workshops](#)

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

One Minute Ideas

Customer Service

Use positive language - not negative - to ask customers how satisfied they are.

Say

"Can you suggest ways for us to improve our service?"

Achieving Potential

May 2010

In this month's edition of our monthly newsletter "Achieving Potential," we continue with the strategic planning theme. This time we talk about operationalizing those plans. If you are a sole proprietor your performance is key to your business. In a larger organization you need to get performance from your team. The articles below address these issues.

Businesses today are achieving more success by eliminating the performance gaps. If you have your plan in place are you measuring results against your plan?

Operationalizing Strategic Planning



"Success is ... the continual achievement of your own predetermined goals, stabilized by balance, and purified by belief." -

Resource
Associates Corporation

In real life many people get stuck in a professional or personal position where goals are defined for them. The result is frustration where no one feels fulfilled and the goals often are never reached. However, sometimes developing a successful business does not come easily or in a time frame that is initially envisioned. This is not only frustrating, but often creates self-doubt. Our research

instead of

"Do you have any complaints?"

Communication

Remembering these six words-clear, mean, honest, feel, direct and want-can help you communicate better.

Be clear by saying exactly what you mean.

Be honest by saying what you feel.

And be direct by saying what you want.

•

Author unknown

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

shows that one of the key factors to a successful business is the commitment to a plan and persistence to make it.

However, there are a set of principles, that if applied will pay rich dividends toward your personal and professional success. These eleven principles will give you some additional direction in creating a balanced, successful life. As you continue to read, challenge yourself to identify which principles if implemented will take your business and life to the next level. Success, accomplishment, and life balance are right around the corner if you choose to do something about it - so - carpe diem - seize the day!

Earn trust by giving it. We live in a cynical world and it is becoming commonplace for people to want to see "it" before they believe "it." Trust in the business world is critical, and you can build trust by being a person of your word and encouraging people to trust you by trusting them.

Take responsibility for your actions. Do what you say you are going to do! Admit it when you are wrong and take corrective action immediately. Make sure your actions are consistent with your values, and remember actions will always speak louder than words.

Get the facts before making a decision. Take the necessary time to collect the facts in order to make the best-educated decision. However, do not overdo it-too much information can cause paralysis by analysis, which causes inactivity, and inactivity causes failure.

Go the extra mile. Decide to make a difference! Go the extra mile for your customers, your family, and yourself. The little things always matter and they will add up to a stronger business and better relationships.

Put first things first and last things not at all. Use your "must do" and "should do" lists effectively. Focus on the activities that will impact your business and life goals-let the rest go. Simplify your world by knowing what is important to you and prioritize accordingly.

Accentuate the positive. Focusing on the negative will always net negative results as well as make everything seem incredibly challenging. Focusing on the positive will unveil new possibilities and opportunities that will directly link to your goals ... and it just feels much better.

Center your life on specific goals. Specific, measurable, attainable, realistically high, and time trackable goals are the key to success and the fulfillment of your purpose.

Devote yourself to lifelong learning. What goals have you established to exercise your brain muscles? If you are unclear about the answer to this question develop those goals now! Develop goals that will force you out of your own comfort zone-it will be a liberating and exhilarating experience.

Discover and follow your calling. We refer to it as discovering and following your passion. Understanding your passion is critical to your success and living a life of balanced fulfillment. Living your passion is not the impossible dream; however, it will always require focused commitment and the desire to be the best you can be.

Concentrate on what you do well. Everyone has been given specific and unique gifts. Determine what yours are and maximize them. Do not try to be somebody else-work on being the best YOU! Listen to others, learn from others, but follow your unique direction.

Pour a solid foundation of hard work. Nothing worthwhile is ever easy. Hard work is essential for a successful business. Hard work is required for success in personal relationships. Hard work is required for any kind of worthwhile goal accomplishment, however, some of the hardest work I have had to do, I enjoyed the most.

So which of the eleven principles did you make a written note to address as it relates to improving your business, your life, and your current level of accomplishment? One of them, half of them, all of them ... the number you selected is irrelevant. The commitment to take action is the most important step of all. Success in life is a continuous and evolutionary process. There really is no destination; there are only self-imposed limitations. Every day provides new challenges and if you are looking in the right places, life also provides the necessary solutions.

Tammy A.S. Kohl is President of Resource Associates Corporation.

Determining and Improving Performance Gaps

Human capital is a top priority in today's organizations.



In fact many organizations are faced with the reality that they need to get more results through smaller and perhaps more fragmented teams. As your employees have added and shifted roles, positions, and responsibilities, how do you know you have the right people in the right positions in order to maximize

your organization's efforts and outcomes?

The reality is, in some cases you do have the right team members in right places, and in some cases you probably guessed wrong, as we all have. Companies forced to reorganize made quick decisions resulting in people landing in the wrong roles. Likewise, companies that have experienced intense growth have ended up with similar results. Diagnostic assessments can help you to determine performance gaps and help your company to effectively understand and align the talents, behaviors, and motivators of every employee. Having the right employee in the right position is as critical to the individual's success as it is to the success of the company.

The first step in bridging performance gaps is for management to be committed to a people development process for employees. It should be based on the skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to do their jobs successfully. If the size of the organization is large enough it can be HR implemented, but the objectives and strategies of developing employees and how those employees are going to help drive results needs to be driven by management.

After the commitment is in place and the objectives have been identified, diagnostic assessments can help specifically and individually determine performance gaps, as developmental issues will be employee specific. Assessments can also be the secret tool for creating skill development as well attitudinal and behavioral improvement while eliminating resistance to change.

When working with clients, we focus diagnostically on the whole person as defined by these three key areas:

- WHAT natural talents do your employees possess? How do they make decisions and interact with the world around them, as well as how do they perceive themselves?
- WHY are your employees motivated to use their natural talents, based on their personal motivators and drivers? Everyone has their own unique mix of personal drivers and motivators that help guide them toward success. Understanding what really drives a person is a crucial part of success.
- HOW do your employees prefer to use their natural talents, based on their preferred behavioral style? Since each individual has their own unique preferences and habits for how they like to behave, this understanding is crucial when working with team members, as a leader or manager, or in an environment that requires conflict resolution.

Establishing new behaviors requires the employee feel able to adopt the behavior and feel comfortable doing so. A well-designed people development process focused on objectives using diagnostic assessments drives long-term change. We consistently see 80-100% in adaptable change after the completion of a development process with sustainable results that remain a year later.

Creating A New Normal

Is Your Business Stuck?

Many businesses of many sizes have spent the last year dealing with the challenging times. Some businesses have failed, many are still floundering, and many businesses are just stuck. Often when we are defensively forced to deal with outside forces we get so ingrained in our defensive mechanics that we get stuck in that mind set. Defensive mechanics will not lead to positive growth and/or results. There is no question the business world is in the process of creating a *new normal*. The question becomes how is your business creating and defining its *new normal*? What will positive growth and future success look like for your company?

It has been our experience that creating a new normal requires going back to basics. Here are some thoughts to consider that have helped our clients get unstuck:

- What is the basic foundation and business philosophy of your company?
- Why are you in business?

The answer to these two questions will reconfirm or reestablish the reasons your business exists and provide a much needed guidepost. After you reconfirm or reestablish the reasons your business exists take the time to review your vision and values.

Tom Peters said, "A clear vision of the desired future state of the organization is an essential component of high performance." Creating a *new normal* requires reevaluating your vision of the desired state. Based on the changes in the current business climate, what will your organization look like in the future? The vision statement provides focus for everyone in the organization. An understanding of the vision provides the foundation for day-to-day decisions. A vision energizes action, toward a future that is better than today. How does your company's vision need to change? There is one universal rule in success: you will never be greater than the vision that guides you. Perhaps for your organization, getting unstuck requires revitalizing your company's vision.

In addition to a clear vision a successful company needs to communicate values and principles by which they do business. Values represent your philosophy for achieving success and they serve as important guidelines for everyday behaviors and decisions. How have recent changes in the business world impacted your values and principles? What does your organization believe to be true and non-negotiable today? As Peter Drucker said, "The

purpose of an organization is to attract and maintain customers in order to generate profits and viability." Issues such as current customer's expectations, product quality, and service should be taken into consideration in your values statement. Your values should take into account how you feel about and the value you place upon your customers, your employees, your suppliers and vendors, stockholders, the community and all others with whom you interact and do business.

Re-evaluating your vision and values are the first two steps to revisiting your strategic direction. We have found in these ever-changing times that strategic planning is no longer a discretionary decision, and it provides the impetus to getting unstuck. Create your business's *new normal* by re-evaluating your strategic plan and implementing the critical success factors that will propel your business forward. There is a very high likelihood that what you are doing today and what you did yesterday will not produce the results you want to see tomorrow.

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

"Whenever you see a successful business, someone once made a courageous decision."

- Peter Drucker

"The leader's unending responsibility must be to remove every detour; every barrier to ensure that vision is first clear, then real."

- Jack Welch

"Don't count the days, make the days count."

- Muhammad Ali

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