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Welcome to 2007 and to new beginnings and new opportunities! The beginning of a new year is so exciting and invigorating. It is absolutely a perfect time to glance back at 2006 to see what we accomplished and what we learned; to commit to take the lessons learned and start applying them and taking whatever actions are needed TODAY; and to strategically think and plan ahead to achieve your most ambitious, creative, fulfilling goals to reach your business and personal visions. I can tell you that we are committed to follow this advice. Be sure to look for some new beginnings with our newsletter next month and some exciting changes to our website also over the next couple months to serve our clients, subscribers and friends even better than before.



Click To Articles on Our Web Below.

In This Issue:
Got Business Challenges, Issues & Opportunities? Then Get Strategic Thinking Business Coaching!

We are here to help you and we encourage you to contact Glenn Ebersole via [email](#) so we can listen and hear what you have to say and also talk about your business or organization and how we can work with you to ensure that you reach your vision and goals.

Ten Major Causes of Powerless Presentations, According To Your Strategic Thinking Business Coach

We have some exceptional and insightful articles for you in this newsletter issue regarding: strategic thinking business coaching for business challenges, issues and opportunities; major causes of powerless presentations; examining your business vision; basic sales skills for small business owners; and dangerous trends that are destroying your business. For additional great information for you and your business, please visit our web site by clicking on the right.

How Clear Is Your Vision For Your Business? Is It Time For A Business Vision Examination?

And now on with this issue of our newsletter.

The Importance of Basic Sales Skills for the Small Business Owner

"This is our 20th year in business. And what a ride it was! Glenn started it all for our company-- motivating to get us in business in the first place. Then, we became a member of his Renaissance Group and our business expanded. Glenn is expert at opening doors for all his clients. He is a true mentor, motivator, facilitator, a true Strate-GEM! And I can call him my friend, as well!"

*Barbara Kauffman
Founder & President, Kauffman Creative Services*

Beyond the Five Most Dangerous Trends that are Destroying Your Business

Glenn's Golden Grains To Grasp

Recommended Reading:

"TEAMWORK, The Team Member Handbook, 16 Steps to Building a High-Performance Team"

By: Price Pritchett

In the next Issue -

ISBN: 978-0-944002-11-7

Available by calling (800) 992-5922 or visiting www.pritchett.net

If you want to learn the magic that moves your team beyond mediocrity and into the winner's circle, then you will want to read this book. Price Pritchett's best-selling handbook coaches, inspires, and deputizes every employee to personally help produce a high performance unit. This handbook can be used to coordinate team efforts for productivity gains; safeguard unit pride in product quality and boost individual and team spirit to achieve key objectives.

I highly recommend that you read this handbook if you want a proven guide to develop high-performance teams in your business.

Words to the Wise for Work:

"I am always doing things I can't do, that's how I get to do them."

– Pablo Picasso

If you would like to have some of your thoughts, comments or web sites included in the next issue, let us know by [clicking here](#) and entering your items in the comments section.

Look For:

The Dangerous Consequences of Micromanaging Your Business, According To Your Strategic Thinking Business Coach

Dysfunctional Planning of Goals Facilitates Failure, According To Your Strategic Thinking Business Coach

Business Ethics Guidelines: An Ethical Action Test From Your Strategic Thinking Business Coach

and more...

Business Coaching

Got Business Challenges, Issues & Opportunities? Then Get Strategic Thinking Business Coaching!

By J. Glenn Ebersole, Jr., Founder & Chief Executive of J. G. Ebersole Associates and The Renaissance Group™

Looking at today's businesses, the business owner and their management team, I see many challenges, issues and opportunities they face every day. In fact, I help the owners and their management teams deal with business challenges, issues and opportunities, as a strategic thinking business coach. Let's see if you are dealing with any of these challenges, issues or opportunities by answering the following questions:

Are you dealing with any of these business challenges, issues or opportunities?

1. Would you like to work "ON" your business, instead of only working YOU'RE YOUR business so that you can run your business on a "hands free" approach and gaining more personal time?
2. Do you need help getting organized?
3. Do you need assistance in creating systems and processes for your business?
4. Do you need assistance in establishing a succession plan for your business?
5. Do you need more capital to operate your business?
6. Do you need assistance in developing a strategic plan, a strategic action plan and goals and objectives to reach your vision?
7. Do you need assistance in developing strategic marketing plans?

8. Do you need assistance in reviewing and recommending changes to your business model to become more profitable?
9. Do you need assistance in grooming a successor and an exit strategy so you can realize a monetary reward for your risks in business?
10. Do you need assistance in actually seeking venture capital or other forms of financing growth of your business?
11. Do you need assistance to improve your personal performance in your business?
12. Do you need a confidante and trusted independent voice to turn to for counsel when you face challenges issues and opportunities?

My professional experience tells me that you most likely answered, “YES” to a few or to many of the above questions. Okay, you have admitted to being faced with business challenges, issues and opportunities. So at? Well, there is very good news for you. Strategic thinking business coaching can and does help entrepreneurs, and business owner and their management teams meet challenges, resolve issues and take advantage of opportunities.

Strategic thinking business coaching is a very powerful tool that will help you:

- + Expand your vision and give you insights into the operation of your business
- + Create a Strategic Plan, along with a Strategic Action Plan and related business plans
- + Lead & develop your team through improved communication, leadership and management skills to higher performance levels
- + Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats through a SWPT analysis
- + Develop the plans, tools and systems to deal with the SWOT results and to achieve the defined vision and goals and objectives.

If you want to learn more about a strategic thinking business coaching approach to meet challenges, resolve issues and take advantage of opportunities, please contact Glenn Ebersole today through his website at www.businesscoach4u.com or email Glenn.

Business Help

Ten Major Causes of Powerless Presentations, According To Your Strategic Thinking Business Coach

By J. Glenn Ebersole, Jr., Founder & Chief Executive of J. G. Ebersole Associates and The Renaissance Group™

Every day in the business world there are millions of presentations made. Unfortunately too many of those presentations are “powerless.” In fact, we may even be so bold as to say a majority of those presentations are “powerless” due to one or more of ten major causes. In the opinion of Your Strategic Thinking Business Coach, the major causes of “powerless” ineffective and non-persuasive presentations are:

1. The presentation has no clear focused point. The point of the presentation is obviously “missing in action.”
2. The presentation lacks a logical and clear flow of ideas and the audience becomes lost, confused and unable to follow what is being presented.
3. The presentation is so detailed, fact filled and so overcrowded with technical terms that the meaning of the presentation is lost in what has become known as a “data dump,” which is an excessive and meaningless recital of data without a purpose or a plan.
4. The presentation is too long and not sensitive to the audience’s span of attention.
5. The presentation totally fails to indicate and convince the audience of some benefit from what is being presented. It fails to tell the audience what is in it for each of them and how they will benefit from what is presented.
6. The presentation is void of enthusiasm and persuasion. There is no call to action for the audience.
7. The technology with all the bells and whistles used in the presentation overshadows and overwhelms the content of the presentation.
8. The presentation totally ignores the needs of the audience. There is no consideration for what are the interests of the audience, what do they care about, what problems do they have, what frustrations they have, etc.
9. The presentation focuses on features rather than benefits.
10. The presentation environment has serious flaws related to the technical equipment, sound system, projection screen, lighting, timing, and the attire of the presenter.

In today’s competitive business environment, clear concise and high-impact communications are critical to success! If you already know that you and your company can relate to the causes of “powerless” presentations, then it is time to take action to correct, enhance and maximize your communication and presentation efforts. If you want to discuss what it takes to turn “powerless” presentations into “powerful” presentations, please contact Glenn Ebersole today through his website at www.businesscoach4u.com or email Glenn.

Business Building

How Clear Is Your Vision For Your Business? Is It Time For A Business Vision Examination?

By J. Glenn Ebersole, Jr., Founder & Chief Executive of J. G. Ebersole Associates and The Renaissance Group™

When was the last time you really examined your vision for your business? As the calendar year or the fiscal year draws to a close, this could present perfect timing for an examination of your vision for your business. A vision is dynamic and it requires periodic examination in order to retain your strategic focus in business. Here are ten (10) questions from your strategic thinking business coach to use to perform an annual examination of your business vision.

Question #1: Is your vision for your business still clearly defining the strategic focus of your business? Or is it time to rethink your vision statement?

Question #2: Is your vision statement followed by a clear mission statement that clearly defines how you are planning to reach your vision?

Question #3: Do you have an effective client contact management system in place and are you keeping your database current?

Question #4: Do you have a strategic referral system and are you asking for referrals?

Question #5: Are you tracking your leads and determining the conversion rates of leads and prospects into clients?

Question #6: What is the level of customer satisfaction among your clients? Are you surveying your clients to find out how satisfied they are with your products and/or services and your level of customer service to them?

Question #7: Are you constantly networking to discover new opportunities to grow your business?

Question #8: Do you have a cash flow challenge? Are clients paying their bills on time? Do you have a follow-up plan to collect past due receivables?

Question #9: Have you updated your strategic action plan for the next year and for the following 3 to 5 years?

Question #10: Do you have a succession plan or exit strategy in place?

If you would like to learn more about how to examine your business vision, please contact Glenn Ebersole today through his website at www.businesscoach4u.com or email Glenn.

Small Business Help

The Importance of Basic Sales Skills for the Small Business Owner

By Susan Adams

I attended a meeting recently where the attendees were female small business owners. As soon as they heard I had spent 21 years in professional sales, I was bombarded with questions. There are unlimited products for the new business owner that show them how to effectively market their business, but who is teaching you how to sell? What I heard at the meeting was a concern about selling. How do you do it? I told them what I tell all new sales people, "It's all about having conversations".

The success of your business not only depends on good marketing, but also the ability to close sales. Marketing brings people to your door. It's sales skills that makes them customers.

I find myself wondering how anyone expects to succeed in a sales position without any sales training. I spent 21 years in sales, and during that time the companies I worked for spent over \$100,000 in sales training. They knew the value of understanding how to sell.

It's not just about face-to face selling. How about approaching someone with a joint venture opportunity, or trying to recruit affiliates for your product or service. It all requires basic sales skills. It's sales skills that allow you to create value for yourself and the service you provide.

There are a few skills that will be a must for your future success:

1. Create value for your services.
2. Understand how to effectively prospect in your territory.
3. Know how to sell features and benefits.
4. Learn how to qualify prospects the first time you talk to them.
5. Know how to recognize the 'tire kickers'.

It's 'knowing what you don't know' that will help you succeed. The sales process is a big mystery to many people. If you can position yourself with a potential prospect as someone who is interested in their business, you'll have a good chance of success. Very few people want to be 'SOLD' a product. They want 'SOLUTIONS' for their most pressing problems. Once you're able to have effective conversations with your prospects, you'll find many prospects closing with very little effort. I don't even talk about closing, I talk about Gaining Agreement. Isn't that really what you're doing? Gaining agreement for someone to hire you or purchase your service?

Most of the people I speak with just want to have some confidence when they meet with someone. Once you understand the basics of the sales process, you'll know why you're asking the questions you're asking. It's the answers to those questions that lead you down the path of the sales call.

It's been my experience, that if you have some basic skills, a good product/service that's priced fairly, you'll gain agreement without cutting your price. That's how your business will grow. By learning a few sales skills, you can get the maximum price. Isn't that what you need to do for your business to succeed?

Business Plan Resources

Beyond the Five Most Dangerous Trends that are Destroying Your Business

By Laura Johnson

Many years ago, I worked for a small insurance company. Just like many other businesses, we shut down operations for the Christmas holiday. As it happens, this one eventful year Christmas fell on a Monday. The company gave their employees the preceding Friday off as well, thereby granting a fourday holiday.

The weather that Christmas season was bitterly cold, as is normal for that part of Virginia. The building maintenance staff turned off the heat in our 7-story building to save costs. Unfortunately, they neglected to turn off the water. I received a call Sunday afternoon informing me there was a serious problem. Apparently, a major water pipe had ruptured on the upper floor.

When I arrived at the building there were literally large sheets of ice emanating from all the windows and cascading down the sides of the building. Upon entering, I could see just how disastrous this ruptured pipe, unattended for several days, was going to be. The ceiling tiles on every floor had broken away and fallen into the work areas. All the desks, file cabinets, computer equipment, furniture and so on were covered in debris,

ice and water.

We obviously had no choice but to turn the heat back on in order to melt the ice. As the ice melted it just further compounded the water problem. Most floors in the building had a foot or more of standing water. The water damage to file folders and documents, electronic equipment, furniture and everything else in the building was devastating.

It took many months to completely recover from what we later referred to simply as "the incident". Many important insurance documents were permanently lost. Much of the computer equipment and other electronics were damaged beyond repair.

Unfortunately, the company had made no plans for such a disaster. There was no way to quickly move data processing requirements to a backup location. There was no offsite storage for the microfilm records used to back up the paper documents. Most of the microfilm, stored in metal canisters, survived. However, the majority of microfilm readers didn't since electronics and water just don't mix.

The company ultimately survived, but just by a thread. We were unable to process premium payments for weeks, and many people who were expecting insurance payments did not receive them in a timely manner. It was, to put it bluntly, a complete and total mess.

Business Continuity is one of those topics that just doesn't receive the level of discussion it requires. Too many business owners completely ignore it altogether. That can be a fatal mistake, as it nearly was for the company I once worked for.

Business Continuity is all about planning for the unforeseen events that can occur. Many people also call it disaster planning or contingency planning. No one likes to think about such eventualities, but as the saying goes, "stuff happens".

Developing a business continuity plan involves making a thorough review of your overall business structure and identifying potential weak links in that structure. Some of these weak links are internal to your business, while others are external. A good business continuity plan will examine the entire range of "what if" scenarios that could adversely affect your business, and then identify possible contingencies.

Every aspect of your business needs to be considered: ownership, product or raw material sources, sales mechanisms (web site, storefront, et cetera), distribution chains, customer support, accounting, financial reporting, and so on.

Of course, these "what if" scenarios will be different for every business. It would be impossible for me to account for every possible manifestation in this article. Instead, I will discuss some of the more commonly overlooked things that can happen. It will be up to you to extrapolate from that discussion in order to identify potential fatal links within your own business environment, and develop appropriate contingency plans. I can only ask the questions.

INTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

Is your business dependent on a single key person? Such a person could be the owner, product developer, web site manager and so on. In such a case, that person represents a single point of failure. What happens to your business if something happens to that person? For instance, if your product derives from the efforts of one person, do you have a way to

mitigate the effect of that person no longer being available? Can you overcome such a fatal flaw?

Do you keep all your accounting, customer and financial records in a one place? Do you have backup records in an offsite location? What would happen to your business if there were a fire, flood, earthquake, or other circumstance that destroyed those records? Do you have a plan in place to recover from such an event? It amazes me the number of people who don't back up their computer or paper records. If the hard drive on your computer failed, could you continue your operations?

Do you keep your inventory of products in a single location? What would happen if you experienced a fire or flood in that location? Would you have a way to quickly replenish your stock? Would you be able to continue to fulfill orders in a timely fashion? If the answer is no, you have yet another single point of failure.

In U.S. Gulf Coast area where my wife and I live, we are at the mercy of hurricanes each year. In the case of Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Katrina, we lost our power and phone service for nearly a week. If something like that happened to you, do your customers have a secondary way to contact you, or you to contact them? Do you provide your customers with a cell phone number where they can reach you? Is there some local facility (e.g., library, Internet café) where you could go to check your email?

EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

If you purchase your product or raw materials from a wholesaler, is that company your one and only source? What happens to your business if that company has a fire, flood, or folds its tent? Do you have a secondary source you can quickly switch to? With the company I ran many years ago, I primarily used three distributors as the source for most of my products. But I also had arrangements with several others I could utilize if necessary. These companies had my Tax ID, reseller, and other information already on file. If I had to make a switch, that switch would have been virtually seamless from the perspective of my customers.

Are you dependent on a single carrier for your product delivery? What happens to your ability to deliver your product if members of that carrier go on strike? It happens. Just as with your suppliers, do you have a contingency plan for moving to a backup carrier if needed?

What about the company that hosts your web site? This is a critical consideration if your primary sales vehicle is via online means. What happens to your business if that hosting company has a fire or flood? Do they have a contingency plan in place to move operations to an offsite location? If they don't, do you have a way to quickly move to another hosting service? What happens if they go out of business? Do you have backups of your own web site (including your shopping cart/order database) that you could move? Can you quickly move your site to another hosting service?

DUE DILEGENCE

As I said, this list is not meant to be all-inclusive. Much depends on your particular business operations. But you do need to consider the possibilities, and their potential adverse impact. Consider all the possibilities.

My recommendation would be to develop a document to define your plans and courses of action for business continuity. It doesn't have to be complicated; three columns is all you need:

- 1) Potential disaster scenarios (internal and external),
- 2) Potential impact on your business (you can use a 1-5 rating system for this – 1 being low impact, 5 being catastrophic)
- 3) Contingency Plan

Obviously, the higher the impact rating, the more important it is to define a contingency plan. But don't just ignore it. Your business can survive many disaster situations, but only if you plan ahead.

Virus Or Not - Hoaxes and Warnings

Listed below are the virus that were "coming out" this month and what the real outcome of the situation was. Use this information to find out if you need to update your protection or let it fly.

Virus Name	Out There Or Not Out There
Wobbler	Not Out There
Yaha	Out There
Win a Holiday	Not Out There
WTC Survivor	Not Out There

If you want to check out other hoaxes and warnings visit -
www.truthorfiction.com

*Until Next Time, keep striving to
reach your goals and vision!*
Glenn Ebersole
"Your Strategic Thinking Coach"

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