

Nothing Personal...It's Business

Excelleron Business Consulting, LLC

Business Development, Consulting, Executive Coaching

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A Five Year Plan Gone Wrong

Out of business school, one of my clients took two years and created a five year business plan for a business that he hoped to open. Financing was arranged and suppliers were secured, in a large part because the plan was so well thought out and researched. The five year plan was right on the mark, amazingly the projected numbers and financial results were almost identical. I wish I could say that they all lived happily ever after.

What went wrong were years six, seven and eight. There was a feeling that having been successful in years one through five somehow guaranteed future successes, the business was operating on auto pilot, just keep repeating what had been done. Autopilot assumes that there is a course or route mapped out and by making small course corrections periodically the destination will be reached in the end. But what if the destination is not planned? It is like planning a trip from New York to Chicago, every turn, eatery, hotel defined and reserved. Upon arriving, remembering that the true destination is Los Angeles, then setting out without map, GPS or

plan.

The five year plan was a great start, **best that I have seen** as a professional business consultant and coach. The plan would have been complete had it been a living plan. A living plan is one that has no expiration date, as one year is lived another is added on the far end keeping the ultimate destination in view. In this case, when year number one was close to completion a year six would have been planned. Each year as the results are reviewed, adjustments to the five year plan are made, always keeping a five year perspective. Adjustments can take into consideration changes in the market, competition, technology, pricing, economy, but ultimately adding a new last year to the plan.

Make planning a part of your routine, and compare results with the plan, by doing so you can objectively critique both the planning and the actions that produced the results. Most important, make sure your five year plan still has at least five future years.



Brendan J. Cunningham, Pres.
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Keeping Your Focus



The Value of Role Playing

There seems to be a very large disassociation in our society in the transition from youth to adult. As a youth we spend a great percentage of our time practicing, whether for sports, music or the arts when compared to the time we spend performing. As an adult we spend all our time performing and little or no time practicing.

In my coaching business I ask clients to consider the time they spent practicing to play a sport or a musical instrument to the time they actually spent performing. They are always in agreement that the time practicing is ten times (10x) more than performing. Yet when crossing the line from youth to adult, fun to business (work), the performance is everything and there is little or no practice.

Some may say, "That's the way it is." I say that businesses would be more successful if they spent at least some time practicing (role playing). Sometimes I find there is resistance to this *Painful Process* so I get my clients involved in what I call "*interaction*." It's the same thing, but if I can get them to buy into the game, it's OK by me.

Two examples to consider: (cont p.2)

Coaches Corner: The “90%” Theory



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“As a former professional athlete, “I know the value of coaching! Brendan has helped me focus in on what I must do to set myself apart in business...I am confident Brendan's professional experience and knowledge can help you as well!”

Adam Lingner, accomplished business leader, and 2 Time Super Bowl Player

Before I begin today’s sermonette let me tell you about a client of mine. He is a PGA golf pro and one of the coolest guys I know because his special skill-set goes well beyond just teaching about golf. His approach is so unique and special, I just had to have him as a guest on my blogtalkradio show “Getting the Edge in Your Business.”

His name is Gary Occhino and you can find out more about what he does at garyocchinogolf.com He shared a bit of philosophy about the game that really carries through to life and business. Here’s what he had to say, “If you want to make immediate improvement in your game *without* making any technique changes, learn to follow my **90% theory**. I would love to tell you this concept is going to rival Einstein or NASA, but, it is simple and easy to follow.

Anytime you are confronted with a major decision, are playing from the trees or face a difficult tee shot, play the shot you know you can play 90% effectively. Literally stand there and ask yourself, "what can I do 9 out of 10 times here?"

The benefits of this **90% theory** are numerous. You will make less double, triple and quadruple bogeys, you will relax more due to confidence, and you will hit more great shots by accident. Golf does not reward the hero on every hole; the odds are well against you. Learn to aim for the center of the green, punch out from the trees wisely and to lay-up safely.”

So the next time you have a major decision to make in your business, remember the 90% rule and thank Gary Occhino for getting you back in the swing of things..



(Cont from page 1) The Value of Role Playing

Presented with a lease increase by his landlord my client was enraged by the timing (poor economy) and the amount of the increase. It was clear that any negotiation would have to be practiced and scripted in order for the client to keep his composure and avoid an assault charge. By employing a want vs. need worksheet and role playing the meeting with the landlord, the client was prepared for the meeting. The meeting went as scripted, the landlord was receptive to the approach, the well thought out presentation and the client remained calm and in control. The client was successful in getting what he needed.

An opportunity to be the supplier for one of the larger businesses in the state left my client and his salesperson feeling a little overwhelmed. The true win was just being considered and having the opportunity to present to the decision maker. The salesperson was just young and inexperienced enough not to take “no” as an answer. The meeting was set and the feelings of being overwhelmed turned to panic. The salesperson requested that I spend additional time with her role playing the presentation, bring up as many situations as possible. After we had completed our role playing she spent additional time with the owner doing role playing, since he would be accompanying her on the sales call. He was clearly out of his comfort zone, still not sure about this “role playing”. As it turns out the preparation gave the perspective client the impression that they were well prepared to handle such a large account and confidence that she made the right selection.

If training is a key element of success in your business and role playing is not being used to the extent that it could be, make the commitment and take the chance. Role playing adds power to training, builds confidence and makes true professionals. Professional business coaches can assist you in training and becoming comfortable with role playing.



Remember to
“sharpen you saw!”