

Nothing Personal...It's Business

Excelleron Business Consulting, LLC
Business Development, Consulting, Coaching,

April 2009

Special points of interest:

- Market to Market?
- Keeping Your Focus
- What is Leadership? (continued)
- Coaches Corner: It's About Time...

Market to Market...

To buy a fat pig, home again, home again...well you know the rest? In many respects, in business, some say, it's all about a marketing. I remember years ago the pork producers of America launched a campaign to "market" pork as "the other white meat." The premise was they wanted to expand their consuming audience to include people that were shying away from red meats in favor of healthier, leaner white meats.

Now let's think about this for a minute? Pork, lean, it's from a PIG, an animal not only synonymous with FAT but often preceded by the word. Are you kidding me here, or what? Despite the absurdity of the concept, it was an extremely successful promotion. It got people's attention and those that were previously less inclined to think of this cholesterol laden dinner as a suitable choice, began giving it a try and started to think of it as a lean meat.

Many of the things I do in my consulting/coaching business have to do with strategic growth consulting (I have a strong marketing and sales background) and I have found that marketing is generally both the least understood and appreciated function of a business. It is also, the number one challenge of most businesses. Part of this has to

do with the innate truth that Jack Welch pointed out, "Without the sale, nothing happens." And if you want to get your ducks in a row, the precursor of the sale is what, you guessed it: marketing.

Add to this the lack of patience, as most programs can take 6 months to a year or longer to have an impact on sales. Often times, CEOs want more immediate results because they wait too long to try and fix the problem. So I try to look for something to implement that can have a short, term quick hit while determining what the company needs to do to improve growth overall. This strategy tends to buy me some time to get the "real" growth program in place. But the truth of the matter is, sound marketing campaigns take time and thought and a clear vision that is consistent with the company's overall vision. One has to also understand what marketing is: **everything that is said and done in an effort to make the phone ring of the customer to buy.** After that, presuming what you have done works: you get the sale.



Brendan J. Cunningham, Pres.
Excelleron Business Consulting, LLC

Keeping Your Focus



What is Leadership?

Looking at the root word of Lead, doesn't that mean to be ahead? In racing they count the number of laps a car leads the race, therefore all the

other cars are following. I believe that one of the greatest attributes of a great leader is being a visionary; developing a clear, understandable, and shareable vision is the first step. When we are leading we always have to know, to where? Establishing this vision is the destination. There are two vital parts to any trip: where we are now and where we are going.

As a leader in your organization or family you must set a vision. We want our people and family members to understand where we are going and, more importantly, why. When sharing the why of the journey, good leaders have to be unselfish. The vision has to benefit everyone in order to have others in the organization share the desire to accomplish the goal.

The vision is the BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal), as defined in Jim Collin's best selling book "Good to Great". Having this vision will direct all goals with the simple question: does this take us closer to, or divert us from, our vision?

Providing a clear and mutually beneficial Vision will:

- Unleash innovation in your people.
- Make decisions simpler..

(continued next page)

Coaches Corner: It's About Time...

Most small entrepreneurs have problems controlling their time. It therefore becomes fundamental to organize your tasks and schedule. Ever wonder why there are so many articles, and books available that can help you in this area. Let's begin like Stephen Covey "with the end in mind." With more time available you will be able to exercise innovation, develop "out-of-the-box" thinking to see what is wrong and what can be improved. You will be able to be more connected to your SWOT analyses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). You will be able to have a more balanced life with leisure and with your family.



Excelleron Business Consulting, LLC

Excelleron Business Consulting, LLC
Business Development, Consulting,
Coaching,
33 Sawgrass Ct.
Hamburg, New York 14075
Office: 716-818-2526
Fax: 716-648-6215
E-mail:
brendan@excelleronconsulting.com
www.excelleronconsulting.com

"The benefits of coaching appear to win over even the most cynical clients within just a few weeks." **Industry Week**

So, what should you do, first? Well certainly there is no magic solution. But the best approaches to the worst problems seem to be the simplest.

Start with writing the daily tasks that you need to do every day. Examples: read the news, read and reply to e-mails, pay bills, verify bank accounts, verify stock, call suppliers, check with the staff if everything is ok, and so on. Determine how much time do you need to accomplish those tasks. Verify where you can optimize your time, and organize the schedule to get it done. Start with only controlling the time spent. It is already a great step. Resolve first the easiest and shortest tasks. If some tasks exceed your time limit, stop and go to the next one. Return to that one only after finishing the current "round" and you will be maximizing your "spare time" by so doing.

Lastly and most importantly, try to reserve, at least one or two hours for creative thinking, to research new products, new approaches, and new markets, depending on what your core business is and always with your focus on strengths. Also, don't ever lose site of the "big picture" regarding your market or your competitors. If you get stuck in a particular situation and don't find a solution, go for a walk, take a coffee break, do something else that makes you disconnect quickly and completely from the problem at hand. You can always return to it later. Don't try to memorize every thing that happens or that you will need to do. Write on your notepad, outlook, palm, smart phone, or even a piece of paper. When you are involved with a complex problem, that needs immediate resolution, and you need to concentrate, don't let anyone interrupt your thoughts. Simply close the door, don't answer the phone, and finish your task first. You will economize time; and become twice as effective .



Leadership (continued)

- Improve teamwork and breakdown departmental walls.

Creating a vision is an important first step, but there are many other steps a great leader has to implement along the way.

The amazing thing about leadership , and oddly enough, is that it actually is linguistically a relatively new word; only having been generated as a noun around 1200 AD.

Before that there was no word for leader or for the very act of leadership. There were words to describe the person doing the leading but they were only the *titles*. Those words might have included: king, queen, prince, chieftain, emperor, prophet, general, etc. These words referred to the "guy in charge" but they did not describe what or how they **actually leaded** which is why history reveals so many different approaches to the job. These range from the very inclusive and participative round table

of King Arthur to the "excuse me for living" methods of Transylvania's Vlad the Impaler (the basis of the Dracula legend) and Russia's lovable Czar, Ivan the Terrible.

I recently read a book entitled "*Lead Like Jesus*" written by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges. I enjoyed the material so much and clearly we see one of the finest examples of what has become known as **servant leadership** available. In their work they go on to define leaders as **anyone that desires to influence the thinking, behavior, or development of people**. Working from that definition, are we not all leaders? I think we are or certainly can be. But it must follow that frankly some of us just have a greater desire to achieve this end and are better equipped to handle the challenges of those that are to be led. My personal definition of leadership is not getting people to do what you want; it is getting them to do their best.



**Without the client...
we're out of
business!!**