

# Nothing Personal...It's Business

## Excelleron Business Consulting, LLC

### Business Development, Consulting, Coaching,

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## Change Your Vision?

Have you ever heard the axiom, "no matter where you go, there you are"? That's right; we are where we are, based on the decisions we have made, the people we have chosen to associate with and the sum total of our five closest friends. Interesting formula isn't it? Is it time to make some new friends? In the wise words of Ricky Ricardo, "you got some splainin' to do Lucy"! It's time to stop the blamin' and complainin' and accept the fact that the buck stops here, right now, with you. It's not what happens to you that matters, it's what you do about it. Stuff will happen. **Success in Business equals: accountability, responsibility and ownership. If you don't have a Mentor or a Coach, find one.** Preferably someone that has owned a Business has faced and conquered your challenges: someone that you admire and respect. When I am faced with a challenge or a difficult situation I like to ask, "What would my mentor do or how would they handle this"? It's time to start thinking like a "glass half full" person rather than a "glass half empty" one. Misery has enough company and it doesn't need to live in yours. **So what's this got to do with your vision? I'm glad you asked.** I have had clients say they struggle with their vision and the future of their Business. They say Business is complicated, attracting clients is difficult, marketing is confusing, keeping customers is happy is a mystery, making a good profit is doubtful, in general they are not having any fun. If any of this

resonates for you, it's a good time to stop and grab a pen and answer a few questions. At the top of your list answer this: **Why did I get into Business in the first place? In other words, what void in the marketplace did I hope to fill with my product or service?** How was I going to do it better, faster, more reliably than anyone else? What pain was I going to alleviate from my customers life that would have them choose me? What pleasure was I going to provide better than anyone else? What don't people like about buying in my industry in general and how could I demonstrate that I am different from the rest? **You see, your Business status right now is the vision you hold.** The skills you possess, the level of knowledge you have, the competencies you have developed, all are part of the picture called our vision. Unless you learn new skills, acquire more knowledge and practice and learn to become more competent, your Business will look very much the same in the future. Business does not remain static, why should you? Take some time right now and describe your Business five years from now. Write as if it is in the present and you have accomplished your goals and dreams. Now take stock of what you know and what you don't know or understand. What skills, knowledge and competencies do you have to master to fulfill this vision you have now written about? **"Aspire to inspire before you expire".**



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

## Keeping Your Focus



## Should You Hire a Business Coach?

There are several reasons why one might consider hiring a Business Coach. Lenora Chu, CNNMoney.com contributor suggested that a business coach can be helpful when your company is in transition, you're in financial trouble, or you're facing a critical decision such as whether to add employees. Additionally Rick Lugash, Southern California regional owner of the small business growth services company [OneCoach](#) went on to say that finding the right coach is important, especially since the marketplace is saturated with people advertising business coaching services. Some things to consider include how many current clients a coach has, any association membership or certifications, and verifiable success stories.

Start by interviewing the top candidates

(continued)

# Coaches Corner: On Customer Loyalty



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

If your customers are not really satisfied and loyal, they definitely will take the easy way to becoming a satisfied and loyal customer... **some place else.** Nothing says it for the success and longevity of a business like "Established in 1950" or "Owned and Operated for Fifty Years." If you are an absentee business owner you may never get to put up one of those signs unless you plan and build your business to run properly with the results being "*Happy & Satisfied Customers*" For the business owner who is not on site all of the time, but pays attention to the customers comments or experience at their business, they may very well have a wonderful business with a great personality. They have planned, structured, and focused their business to satisfy your customers even while they are absent!

What are some simple ways to determine your Customers Level of Satisfaction?

- Call them or email them after they have done business with you. (You should be gathering this basic customer data on a regular basis for future marketing projects)
- Have one of your senior personnel ask them how their product, service, or visit was today. (make sure the comments are recorded and you get to see them – a great way to generate Positive Testimonials)
- Provide a simple Customer Service Survey for them with a reasonable incentive such as a discount coupon for responding. Use a pre-stamped mailer to an off site address where you will have the opportunity to review them. ( An easy way to increase repeat business)
- Talk to the customers yourself whenever you have an opportunity. Even if you are not always there make it a priority to check on your Customer Service Satisfaction Levels every chance you get. Nothing is more impressive to customers then to have the owner introduce themselves and ask how their visit is going, or how their products are working. Be genuine, remember, you want to be told if things aren't right. ( A positive way to correct for negative drift before it becomes obvious to all your customers)
- Have a predetermined way to make things right for the customer if they are not happy. (You have a very real opportunity to build a great deal of loyalty!)

If you genuinely care about satisfying your customers .... It will show in the things you do to determine how satisfied they are even if you are not always there. If you do all the right things you very well may be putting up your own sign that says, "**Owned and Operated for Fifty Years.**"



**Remember to "sharpen you saw!"**

## Should you hire a coach (continued...)

on your list. Be sure to get the names of past clients, and contact them as references." You want to go through the same process to hire your business coach as you would use to hire a pediatrician. And find someone who's good at training and teaching. Most coaches will charge from \$150 to \$500 an hour, and a good one will grant you a complimentary initial consultation. Don't choose a coach based on price alone. Sometimes the inexpensive coaches are people who are "in between jobs."

"They're not going to help you."

"Treat your coach as part of the startup investment," Lugash recommends.

And although chemistry is important, don't automatically eliminate a prospect because their style doesn't match yours. Think about why you're clashing.

**"A good coach will take you out of your comfort zone into uncomfortable**

**waters,"** says Lugash. "That resistance might be the place you need to go." When you're finally ready to sign on the dotted line, establish clear milestones by which to measure progress, such as "how many, and by when?" Lugash says. "Put them into the agreement." Like a business owner, a coach has to deliver a clear payoff if they want their clients to keep coming back.