

Professional Performance ³⁶⁰ Magazine

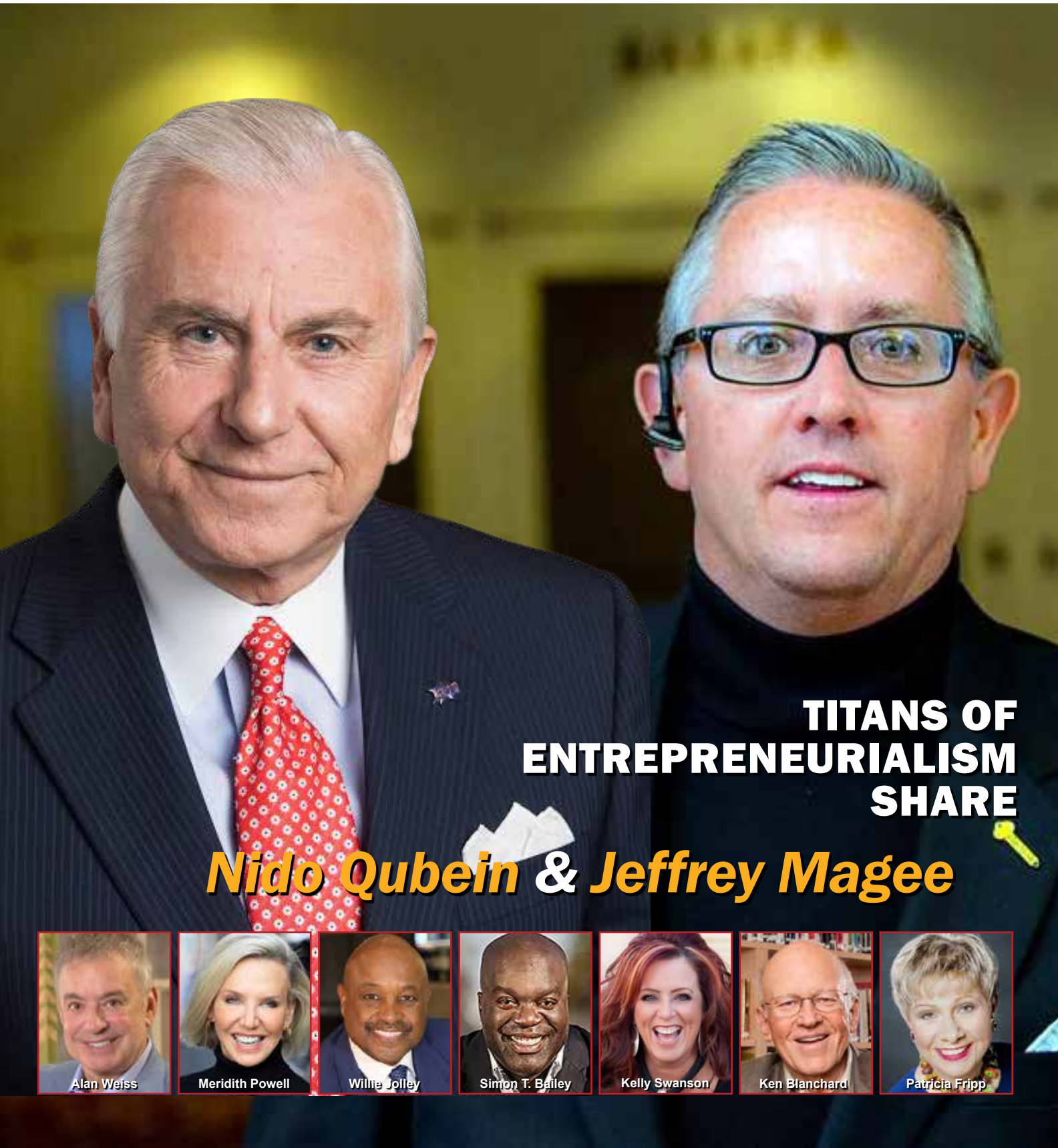
WHAT YOU NEED TO SUCCEED!

Vol. 33 No. 4
\$12.95

Building a Resilient & Sustainable Organization 1-2-3

Reducing Workplace Conflict

Change + Transformation = Changeformational™



TITANS OF ENTREPRENEURIALISM SHARE

Nido Qubein & Jeffrey Magee



Alan Weiss



Meredith Powell



Willie Jolley



Simon T. Bailey



Kelly Swanson



Ken Blanchard



Patricia Fripp

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From the Publisher...

per-form-ance(n): 1. The act, process, or manner of performing; 2. An accomplishment: deed;
3. To begin, carry out, fulfill; 4. To function in a certain way: act

Change, Stay, Adapt, Adopt, Resist, Innovate, Transform ... **What Do You DO?**

Performance Reality Check ... It continuously amazes me at the number of people in the global marketplace seeking to be relevant and playing with an outdated mindset, toolset, skillset.

Take a second and evaluate the optics you see your dashboard of life through:

1. What have you done or are you doing in the past twelve-months to academically level-up to that of the sharpest person in your sphere or beyond?
2. What have you done or are you doing in the past twelve-months to professionally level-up to that of the sharpest person in your sphere or beyond?
3. What have you done or are you doing in the past twelve-months to read and listen to in order to level-up to that of the sharpest person in your sphere or beyond?
4. What have you done or are you doing in the past twelve-months within your trade industry/association to level-up to that of the sharpest person in your sphere or beyond?
5. What have you done or are you doing in the past thirty-days to benchmark off of and ensure you are Better, Faster, Different and Cost-Effective when positioned among your competition?

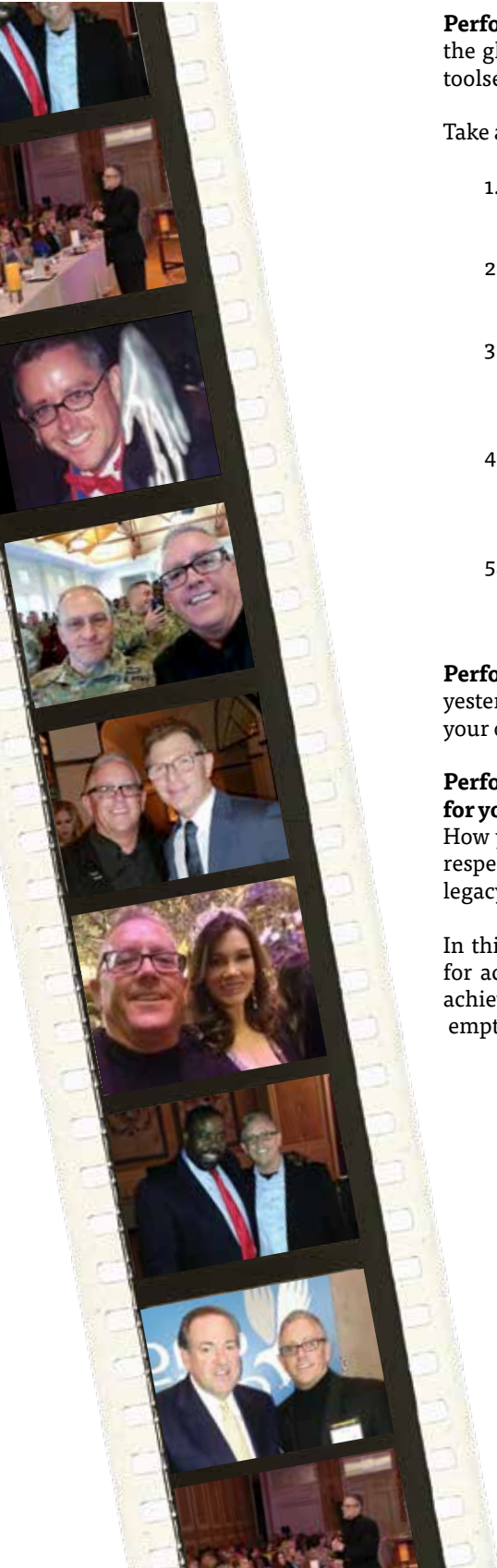
Performance Reality Check ... If you are looking at performance through a lens of yesterday as you live in your today, good luck in your tomorrow. You must be challenging your optics and always be looking at today through tomorrow's lens.

Performance NOW, is all about the NOISE BUSTING ... **The number of experts vying for your attention and wallet today, that can't keep a job themselves is deafening ...** How you manage your performance expectations, recognize performance capabilities, respect the opportunities before you and leverage those for significance will be your legacy of greatness!

In this edition of **Professional Performance Magazine** are powerful real-time insights for accelerating and elevating your success and that of those around you, from true achievers and not just great self-marketers with the ability to distract away from their empty heads, it is all about **What You Need to Succeed!**



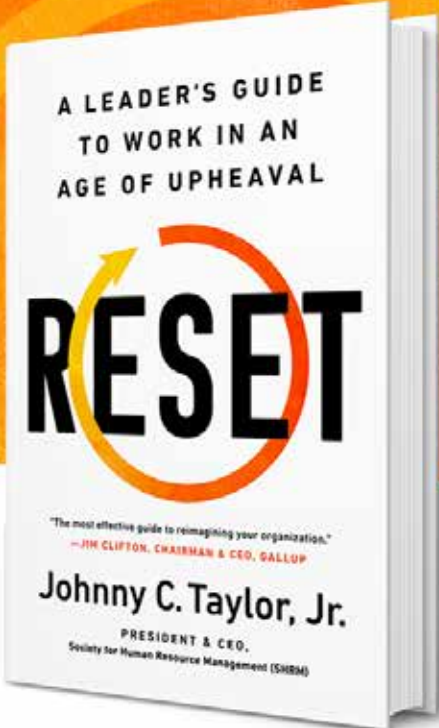
Dr. Jeffrey Magee, CMC/CBE/PDM/C...
People Optimization - I GROW
PEOPLE → ChangeFormation...



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RESET YOUR APPROACH TO INCLUSIVITY

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SIMON T. BAILEY

How AI can Elevate Your Personal Brand

O Brilliant One, as you tread on the path of building a unique, impactful personal brand, every tool and strategy you embrace becomes a reflection of your vision, ethos, and brilliance. In today's digital age, the symbiotic relationship between technology and personal branding cannot be overstated. And amongst the myriad of tech wonders, ChatGPT stands out as a beacon that can amplify and refine your personal brand. Let's dive deep into how this AI marvel can be your ally.

Understanding YOUR Personal Brand

Before we delve into the role of ChatGPT, it's crucial to grasp the essence of personal branding. Your personal brand is not just an image; it's an experience, a story, a promise. It's the sum total of every interaction, every touchpoint, and every impression you leave behind. In the vast digital ocean, where attention is fleeting, a robust personal brand can be your anchor, ensuring you resonate and stand out.

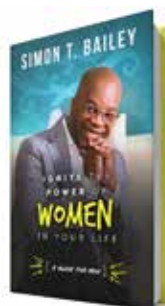
The Magic of ChatGPT in Personal Branding

Consistency in Communication

One of the cornerstones of effective personal branding is consistent communication. Whether you're responding to queries, sending out newsletters, or engaging with your audience on social media, consistency in tone, style, and content reinforces your brand identity. ChatGPT, with its learning algorithms, ensures that every digital interaction aligns seamlessly with your brand voice.

Engagement Beyond Boundaries

O Brilliant One, envision a world where you can engage with your audience round the clock, across time zones, without missing a beat. ChatGPT can serve as your virtual avatar, always ready to converse, share insights, and offer value, ensuring that your audience always feels connected and valued.



Content Creation with a Personal Touch

Crafting content that resonates, informs, and engages is an art. With ChatGPT, you can generate content ideas, draft posts, or even create full-length articles that mirror your unique style and voice. It's like having a digital muse, always ready to inspire and assist.

Feedback and Insights

Building a personal brand is an ongoing journey. Feedback is the compass that guides your path. ChatGPT can help you glean insights from interactions, understand audience sentiments, and gather feedback, ensuring that your brand evolution is data-driven and resonates with your audience's needs and aspirations.

Scaling Personalized Interactions

In the realm of personal branding, personalization is paramount. However, as your audience grows, offering tailored interactions becomes a challenge. ChatGPT comes to the rescue by offering personalized recommendations, solutions, and interactions, ensuring every audience member feels special and understood.

Harnessing ChatGPT for Your Brand: Action Steps

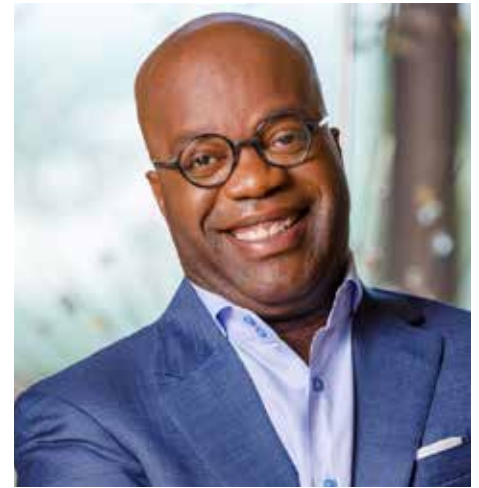
Step 1: Define Your Brand Voice: Deploy ChatGPT, introspect and define your brand voice. Are you inspirational, witty, formal, or friendly? Who are you? A budding professional or a seasoned manager? This will output guide ChatGPT's interactions:

In the Custom Instructions menu of ChatGPT, there is a textbox with the question,

What would you like ChatGPT to know about you to provide better responses?

In this text box, write key characteristics about yourself, your professional background, learning preferences, interests, and even some personal tastes, which can be used to tailor responses more effectively. For example,

"I am an entrepreneur with a strong background in sustainable technologies. I value concise and straightforward answers, especially when it comes to business strategy and innovations in green tech. I've traveled extensively, particularly in Southeast Asia, so I have a keen interest in global markets and cultural insights from that region. I often read articles from Harvard Business Review and TechCrunch, so referencing similar high-



quality sources would be appreciated. I am also a visual learner, so whenever possible, summarizing complex topics with analogies or visual imagery would be beneficial. Lastly, I have a penchant for classical literature, so feel free to sprinkle in relevant quotes or references."

In the text box with the question,

How would you like ChatGPT to respond?

"In interactions, I would like ChatGPT to adopt a professional yet friendly tone. It should provide concise and factual answers while ensuring clarity. When unsure about a query, it should ask for clarification rather than making assumptions. Additionally, while I appreciate a touch of humor, it should be used sparingly and appropriately. I prefer responses that reference reliable sources when providing information, and I appreciate when the AI offers multiple perspectives on a topic to provide a well-rounded understanding. Lastly, avoid using any slang or colloquial language."

Step 2: Train and Iterate: Engage with ChatGPT regularly, refining its responses to ensure they align perfectly with your brand essence.

Step 3: Integrate Across Platforms: Deploy ChatGPT across your digital touchpoints, be it websites, blogs, or social media, ensuring a seamless brand experience.

Step 4: Analyze and Evolve: Regularly review the insights from ChatGPT interactions to refine your branding strategy and stay in tune with your audience's needs.

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KEN BLANCHARD

Leading When Mistakes are Made



Workplaces are filled with human beings, and no human being is perfect. Mistakes are inevitable, and dealing with those mistakes is a part of every leader's job description. How you handle the mistakes of your direct reports will have a significant impact on people's morale and productivity—and therefore on the success of your business.

Suppose you've set goals with your direct report and so far, they've been brilliantly executing their duties. You've given them lots of praise and everything seems to be running smoothly. One day, you discover that your direct report gave a customer a date for completing a project and failed to deliver it on time. How do you address this mistake?

Determine if it Is a "Can't Do" Problem or a "Won't Do" Problem

To address a mistake, the first step is to determine if it is a "can't do" problem stemming from a lack of experience or if it is a "won't do" problem related to a poor attitude. Ask yourself, "Should this person have known better?"

The answer to this question will give you two options: to redirect or to reprimand.

If the person did not know better, redirection is appropriate. These people are learners and therefore have not yet become proficient in what they are being asked to do.

If the person did know better, a reprimand may be required. These people know how to do what they are being asked to do, but for some reason they're not doing it.

Never Punish a Learner

Let's suppose that this was the first time your direct report had worked on a project like this. They had no idea so many steps would be involved and naively underestimated the hours that would be required to complete the project on time.

When someone is learning something new, they won't perform perfectly. Mistakes are part of the progression toward competence. WD-40 Company CEO Garry Ridge, my coauthor on *Helping People Win at Work*, calls mistakes "Learning Moments." When coupled with redirection, these mistakes provide the chance for the employee to learn, grow, and incorporate new knowledge and skills into their work.

Option One:

Give Learners a One Minute Re-Direct

In *The New One Minute Manager*®, Spencer Johnson and I discuss the One Minute Re-Direct, a tool for managing a direct report who has made a mistake due to lack of experience. To give a One Minute Re-Direct, take the following steps:

1. Address the problem as soon as possible after it occurs.
2. Confirm the facts and review with your direct report what went wrong and how to fix it.
3. Express how you feel about the mistake and its impact on results. It may be appropriate for you to accept some responsibility, especially if you did not provide enough direction on the task.
4. Remind your direct report that everyone makes mistakes and assure them that you think well of them.
5. Tell your direct report that you have confidence in them and that you don't expect them to repeat this mistake.

Option Two:

Reprimand with Caring Candor

If the answer to your question—"Should this person have known better?"—is yes, then a reprimand may be appropriate. Remember that leadership today is a side-by-side activity. Unlike the reprimands of decades past—when leadership was more of a top-down activity—today's reprimands should be delivered with what Garry Ridge calls "caring candor." In other words, the steps of the reprimand should be delivered in

a spirit of partnership, with goodwill and honesty.

6. Deliver the reprimand as soon as the poor performance is detected. Never withhold a reprimand until an annual performance review.
7. As in the redirect, confirm the facts and review what went wrong and its impact on you or others. Be specific: "You didn't deliver that project to our customer at the agreed-upon time, and we lost their business."
8. Share your feelings about the situation — frustration, disappointment, surprise, etc.
9. Finish by reaffirming the person's past performance and letting them know the reprimand is not about them, but about their behavior. "I'm surprised because I know how organized and dependable you can be." This last step is important because you want the person to walk away thinking about what they did wrong, not about how poorly you treated them.

A well-delivered reprimand can be a powerful motivator for a person whose recent goal achievement, for some reason, is not up to its normal high standards.

Handled properly, mistakes at work can become learning opportunities that help people develop and improve. So, the next time a mistake is made, take time with your direct report to review the situation, redirect or reprimand, and look for any learning that might come from it.

Ken Blanchard, one of the most influential leadership experts in the world, is coauthor of more than 65 books including the iconic best-seller *The New One Minute Manager*® with combined sales of over 23 million copies in 47 languages. In 2005, Ken was inducted into Amazon's Hall of Fame as one of the top 25 bestselling authors of all time. Ken is cofounder of The Ken Blanchard Companies®, a globally recognized leadership training and consulting firm in San Diego, California. Connect with Ken on LinkedIn and Facebook.



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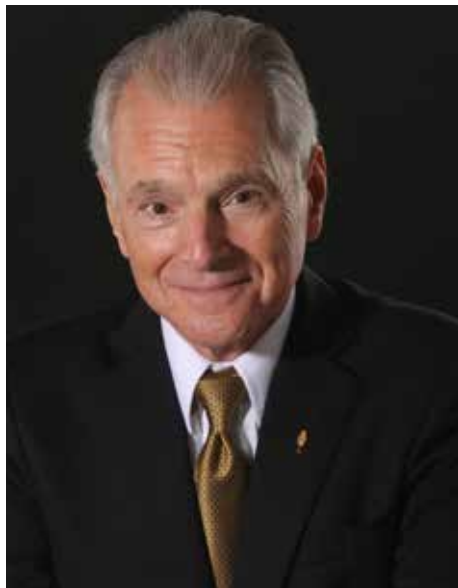
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JIM CATHCART

The Dark Side of Giving Presentations

What to do when You're the Speaker



You were all set to deliver one of your best-ever presentations and then...

- The meeting ran over time, and you had to cut 80% of your content
- Your introducer offended the entire audience, now you're on!
- The meeting room is way too hot or too cold or too noisy or too dark or too bright
- The lights went out in the middle of your talk and the A/V stopped working
- You can't use the wonderful visuals you had prepared, microphone only
- The mic isn't working, and your computer just froze
- Your upset stomach has become a full illness and it's time to go speak
- Your handouts are stuck in transit and won't be there in time
- The opening story you used has confused the group and fallen flat
- Your scratchy throat is now full laryngitis and you only "squeak"
- The group changed their program, and now you will be on hours later
- A man in the audience just had a seizure and needs medical help.

In 45 years of full-time professional speaking, I've encountered all of these issues and more.

One time, with a banquet audience of hundreds in Michigan, a drunk stumbled into the room and challenged, the speaker on stage, me to a fight!

Yes I've almost seen it all. Sooner or later, so will you. That is why I wrote my latest book.

People train us to organize our thoughts, structure our message, illustrate our points and deliver our speech but what about the "dark side" issues?

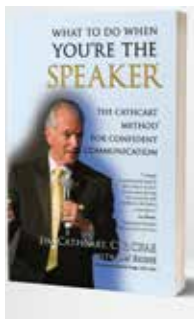
Here are some quick tips to help you think more strategically about these wild card issues that surely will someday greet you.

1. Remember that the only reason for the presentation is to get the value of your message into the minds and hearts of your audience. It's not about the speech content, it's about the value of them knowing and using it.
2. There is no fear of public speaking. Really, the thing people fear isn't the speaking. It is the judgment of others. All audiences want you to

do well. So be the kind of presenter that they are hoping you will be.

3. When surprises come, don't focus on your presentation. Focus on connecting with your audience. If the room is too hot, open a window, turn on a fan, give them something to fan themselves with and shorten your presentation. If a drunk stumbles into the room and challenges you, ask the largest men in the audience to stand and help him find the exit. (It worked!)
4. If you are ill or have laryngitis then arrange for a backup or drastically shorten your presentation or reach out to the meeting chair for a new plan.
5. The presentation is only partly on you. You can ask questions of the listeners, give them an issue to discuss briefly, take a poll of their opinions (show of hands), etc. Don't put all the pressure on yourself. You're just the vehicle to help them get the message.
6. If there's an emergency, you're the one in charge at first. You are the only one with a microphone and the audience's attention, so do the right thing. Give them guidance with confidence and find the solutions that are needed.
7. When a problem occurs tell the truth. If it's funny, laugh. If it is scary, say so and then deal with it. If you don't know what to do, ask who does. If you don't know the answer, admit it and get back to them with an answer later.
8. Be the audience's advocate, protector, guide, and friend. They will trust you because you're in charge and they will like you if you really care about serving them.

Public speaking is any speaking that involves more than one listener. We all do it, all the time. Be the most helpful person in the room. That's the only way to defeat "the dark side." Use the force of good.



Jim Cathcart, CSP, CPAE is among the Top 1% of professional speakers in the world. With 3,500 paid speeches and 25 books he has reached millions of eager achievers. Reach him at jimcathcart.com. This article was inspired by Jim's latest book: *What To Do When You're The Speaker*, available everywhere books are sold.

BARRY COHEN

Five Ways to Bulletproof Your Business

Whether you are an early-stage business or a well-established company, the same rules apply for creating ongoing success and sustainability. While it starts with a crystal-clear vision of exactly whom you serve, how you serve them and why you serve them, consider that all of the above may have to change from time to time. The pressures of today's rapidly advancing technology, highly regulated industries, litigious society and sensitivity to extreme transparency dictate the need to plan, execute, constantly monitor and repeat the process.

1. Start by bulletproofing your business concept.

First, pull back and decide whether your industry will weather the oncoming headwinds. Do the trends portend an upturn or a downturn? You don't want to become the next Blockbuster video when you see Netflix rising. Next, secure as much intel on your current and potential customer base as possible. No amount of market research—both primary and secondary, is too much. Has demand peaked for your current product mix? When every household has multiple wireless phones, you may find yourself competing on price if you remain in that space. Do you need to innovate new products and services that have higher demand potential? Can you super-serve an unserved or an undeserved niche? If you can, you may well become the dominant player. As a case in point, New Jersey residents traditionally lived in the shadow of both New York and Philadelphia's powerful media outlets. Broadcast consultant Walter Sabo crafted an identity for WKXW-FM, branding it "NJ101.5" with the tagline, "Not New York Not Philadelphia, New Jersey's Own." The station's meteoric growth resulted in audience size, revenue and ratings that rivaled its New York and Philadelphia competitors.

2. Bulletproof your business plan.

Begin by justifying each and every assumption you make. Invariably, nearly every business will need to attract some amount of outside capital somewhere along its journey. If you have carefully researched and backed up the claims in your business concept, lenders and investors will be

hard pressed to shoot holes in it. The days of the "napkin plan" are long past. Conversely, the more vague you are about how you will succeed, the weaker your case. It's not only about the funding. If you have no differentiated product or service, if you lack a clear competitive edge, if you are a one product company at risk of becoming eclipsed by the next shiny object—you are headed for disaster. Once again, drawing upon my 40+ years in and around the media business, you can only listen to one radio station or watch one television station at a time. If everyone plays the same song and airs the same talk show, they will blend into the woodwork. The syndication and consolidation of ownership in the media industry has resulted in fewer voices and a homogenized, bland, me-too product—not a winning plan.

3. Bulletproof Your Product Line by Augmenting It.

Your core product may or not be a commodity to begin with. However, augmenting it can make the difference between success and failure. Consider the automobile business. You can buy the same vehicle at any dealership. For years, auto dealers struggled with this. They often failed to understand why they saw their former customers drive by with a new car purchased down the road from their competitor. When the proverbial light went on over their heads, they began to wisely augment their offerings—with free service loaner cars, with extended warranties, with free scheduled maintenance. The real payoff: by encouraging them to service with them, they kept the customer in their camp until the time they needed a new vehicle. If your product or service qualifies for intellectual property protection (copyright, trademark or patent) invest in it. If you feel your product or service may have potential for franchising, protecting your intellectual property will enhance its value.

4. Bulletproof Your Marketing Strategy.

View the totality of your marketing efforts—from the market research to the advertising creative and media, to the merchandising to the customer relationship management. Is your ad campaign grounded in what the



research has revealed about customer preferences and attitudes? We helped to launch the first eco-friendly household pest control product. The client wanted to use "scare tactics" to play on the fear factor about hazardous chemicals. The ad agency, on the other hand, recommended a "warm and fuzzy" approach to appeal to moms with kids and pets. We tested a continuum of ads from one end of the spectrum to the other to an online panel of 700 respondents. The result? Warm and fuzzy won. The relatively small investment in the research bulletproofed the campaign and protected the larger investment in the ad spend.

5. Bulletproof Your Sales Strategy.

While the old adage states that there is "more than one way to skin a cat", there is often one right way to succeed in selling your product or service. Today, in an environment where so many sales have become transactional, you need to create opportunities to sidestep this. Building relationships that can lead to sales begins with rapport. Today's savviest sales professionals give first, before asking for money. Whether it involves joining your customer's favorite cause celebre, providing useful educational information up front or offering a free, no obligation assessment, it will often lead to a

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— Leadership Academy —

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JERRY CREIGHTON

Agile as a Strategy



Agile business practices can prevent the effects of COMMODIFICATION (loss of distinguishing / unique features) that can shorten product / services lifecycles, which in turn impacts competitive advantages

“Agile” as a Strategic Approach

Following “agile” business practices are a necessity for a business to have relevant, resilient, durable lifecycle longevity. One reason is the natural pressures exerted on your business from the ecosystem in which you operate such as competitive pricing challenges, introduction of alternate solutions, and loss of product feature uniqueness causing loss of differentiation and your business’s competitive advantage. This is called “COMMODIFICATION”...meaning your product / service is viewed simply as a commodity by your buying audience. It impedes performance, achievement of growth trajectory goals and valuation... requiring continual monitoring and timely corrective actions.

In some industries where “COMMODIFICATION” is a given (retail, automobile sales and restaurants) “agile” marketplace solutions are needed in the form of pricing discounts, free shipping options or gifts with orders.

More about being “Agile”

Just what exactly does “agile” mean in the context of your business process? Let’s start with a definition. A business that is agile from a strategic perspective means a business with a shared purpose and vision that follows Perpetual Planning and Continuous Improvement practices that are flexible, adaptive, relevant, and timely and resilient as needed to build and maintain a predictable business with DURABLE year-over-year lifecycle capabilities. An Agile approach will encourage continual business model evolution producing transitional action plans to fit ever-changing industry and customer preferences.

In order to accomplish this, a business needs to be in a constant mode of continuous delivery of transitional ideas and actions. I call this operating in a Continuous Commercialization Mode (CCM).

In a business that follows Agile Strategic Planning practices, every day is a day producing pivotal opportunities

that lead to durability. The following are conditions your business can create to stimulate transformative innovation.

- Focused purpose on both short-term and longer-term customer problem solving
- Continuous thinking, strategizing, testing, validation and communication
- Collaborative development of transitional strategies and tactics of execution
- Participation from all operational functions (internal and external)
- Shared critical insight, knowledge and understanding
- Willingness to embrace business and marketplace shifting priorities
- Culture aligned on business values, purpose, vision, mission and goals

Agility is in the DNA in every fast-growing business. It is a business-wide operating mode of action that keeps a business creative and viable. From a strategic perspective, Agile (collaborative) thinking defines strategic development and execution practices, which should be part of your business’s Strategic Playbook.

This Agile Strategic Playbook should combine strategy development and tactical execution determined from the Agile decision-making process. Agile business development practices are a catalyst for new business and year-over-year durability. To quote the late Chairman and CEO of General Electric, Jack Welch, “When the rate of change inside an institution becomes slower than the rate of change outside, the end is in sight; the question is when.”

Adding Agile practices to your strategic decision-making practices opens the gateway to your business’s future.

Agile governance practices will increase chances to achieve sustainable success. The focus is timely decision-making utilizing all resources available to the business in a collaborative manner. An Agile organization is one that defines roles, priorities, and points of accountability and includes a measurement capability all leading to more effective Decision-Making and Risk Mitigation. An Agile mindset, operating within a collaborative organizational alignment is a best practice for facilitating an innovative culture as needed to perpetually reinvent

and transform your business. It is the foundation for sustainable growth.

To further define it, An Agile Management Philosophy is a principle of innovation and a mindset that is focused on dealing with real-time business issues needing flexible, fast decision-making actions. It operates in an environment of continual innovation, reinventing business processes as necessary, moving into new business space and introducing expanded and new customer solutions. This requires an organizational structure that can efficiently reshuffle priorities and activities when markets change, challenges arise and/or opportunities appear to perpetuate CONTINUITY.

As an example, one of the most impactful examples was The COVID - 19 global pandemic in 2020, which exemplified how quickly the marketplace can change. Nobody could have anticipated the global impact. Resiliency was disrupted. It was necessary to revise businesses models, rethink operations, reprioritize strategies and tactics and rearrange employee activities, partners in a purpose driven culture.

Pfizer, and other companies in the COVID - 19 vaccine development business could not have achieved vaccine development success without a focused agile development process. Pfizer created the first COVID - 19 vaccine in nine months. They created, tested and manufactured an end product so needed through the world. Clearly a business development success story to be applauded!

Pfizer set aside their standard development process for an agile business development methodology to expedite the creation and time-to-market delivery of

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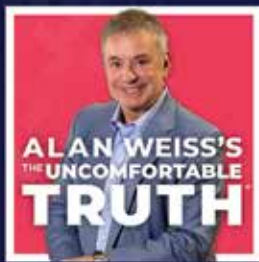


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Alan has written over 60 books appearing in 15 languages, travelled to 63 countries, and is the only non-journalist in history to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Press Institute. His podcast is rated in the top 2.5% globally according to ListenNotes.com.



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AMY FRANKO

Mastering Sales Growth

During Mergers & Acquisitions



If your company is growing through a merger, acquisition, or investment event, you're not alone. I'm observing it across several clients in diverse industries, and according to market and consumer data research firm Statista, nearly 50,000 merger and acquisition (M&A) deals were completed worldwide in 2022.

In any of these scenarios, there are new stakeholders in the mix. As a CEO or sales leader, how do you determine where to focus time, energy, and finances related to sales results? By referring to sales metrics.

There are short-term and long-term milestones to consider, and much of this depends on the parameters established as part of the ownership change or investment being made in your organization. In *The Modern Seller*, I cite a concept called strategic speed, based on research conducted by Forum Corporation (now part of Korn Ferry). Strategic speed is the ability to balance both short-term and long-term initiatives. Leaders need to maintain momentum for the long term (and not lose focus), while also keeping short-term performance goals intact (often required with any merger, acquisition, or investment).

What are Sales Growth Metrics to Consider with M&A or Investment Events?

Client retention

The first metric is maintaining your highest-value clients through any type of event. I teach a concept called the value spectrum, whereby sellers can assess the different types of value a customer might be seeking and how to deliver that value. Reputational value is near top end of the value spectrum. Every time a client decides

to do business with us, they use their social and reputational capital to do so. When there's any type of event changing company structure or strategy, our best clients will have concern. They might not voice that concern, but it's there. Our role is ensuring relationship continuity and reputation. This becomes a foundation while also allowing the company to pursue new clients.

Deal revenue and profit for the next two quarters

One client of mine used a method to categorize critical priorities during a merger: now, next, future. Using that framework, consider these questions:

- What do the next two quarters bring in terms of deal revenue and profit (now)?
- What does the upcoming 12-24 months bring (next)?
- What is our future strategy in the new environment (future)?
- Where are our greatest opportunities and risks?

For the purposes of critical metrics, focus on the now to ensure immediate opportunities remain intact, and at the necessary revenue and profit levels. You can then turn your focus to the next 12 months and repeat the exercise for future strategy.

Include prospecting metrics such as the number of first meetings set and the number of follow-up meetings set, and the number and value of qualified leads in the pipeline.

Engagement of High Performers

When there's the potential for significant uncertainty in the organization, your high performers are the greatest flight risk; maintaining their engagement becomes critical. These are the individuals whose absence would be a tangible loss for the organization. These are often the individuals who bring others along and become informal leaders in the process.

While there's a cloak of confidentiality around events leading up to a merger, acquisition, or outside investment, an early-stage plan for keeping high performers is a strategy worth having in place. Ideas include financial or ownership elements, an elevated role, a voice in planning new sales structures, a task force or mentoring role, or a bridge plan to ensure they will maintain levels of compensation during the transition.

There's no crystal ball on the acceleration or deceleration of mergers, acquisitions, or investment events in the economy. I can say with certainty that growth-oriented organizations will continue to consider these options as part of their strategy. Using the above sales growth metrics in the due diligence process and after will ensure that the sales team, clients, and opportunities most critical to success will be positioned to thrive.

Amy Franko is the leader in modern sales strategies. She helps mid-market organizations to grow sales results, through sales strategy, advisory, and skill development programs. Her book, *The Modern Seller*, is an Amazon best seller, and she is recognized by LinkedIn as a Top Sales Voice.

AmyFranko.com

ANDREW FRAZIER

The Making of a Masterpreneur

5 Leadership Skills Necessary for Scaling Your Organization



Your organization can only go as far as you are prepared to take it. As a result, many leaders get stuck at a certain point and are unable to move their organization forward and achieve the goals that they have set. Running an organization is one of the most challenging roles one can have. There are so many things you need to know that it is impossible for you to know them all. That's why you must continually learn and develop current and new skills to remain effective. Especially your leadership skills!

There are 5 critical leadership skills necessary for traversing your journey to successfully scale your organization. They are as follows:

- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Analysis
- Coaching
- Inspiring

Not only do you need to master all 5, but you must also implement them in the *right sequence* to scale your organization. Your organization will not be able to move to the next level if you do not have the skills to take it there. Mastering all 5 and employing them in the right way at the right time can be extremely difficult. That's why it's important to seek appropriate guidance from others who are knowledgeable. You must be a student before you can become a master.

The journey always begins with a problem based on a need, want, or desire that you need to solve. First, you'll need to identify the problem and understand it before you can develop a solution. You'll also need to collaborate with others to

confirm the objective and develop your solution. Viable solutions seldom occur in a vacuum. For example, the leader of a gaming computer manufacturer identified the additional cooling challenges encountered with high performance processors and developed a unique water cooling system that was more effective than anything else on the market. Initially, he spent time gaining a thorough understanding of the problem through his personal experiences as a gamer and by soliciting feedback from other gamers. He then compared current solutions in the computer marketplace. From there he explored many different cooling strategies for products in other industries. As an auto enthusiast, he identified a potential solution to the problem by borrowing practices from automobile cooling systems. Then working with others, he tested his theory, created several designs, and successfully developed the first water cooled computer.

Solving the problem is just the first step. What good is having a solution if nobody knows about it? That's why good communication skills are so important! Leaders must become excellent communicators to influence others to rally around their initiatives, both internally and external to their organization. Internally, they need to define and explain their vision and mission to those tasked with executing it to ensure everyone is aligned. For example, the founder of a Montessori School developed a strategic growth plan that she shared with her staff. The plan helped them know where they were, where they were going, and their role in making it happen, which got them fired up and made her even more fired up, leading to breakthrough results during the next year. Externally, leaders must communicate their solution to the right people, in the right way to market and sell more effectively. For example, Steve Jobs, Co-Founder and CEO of Apple®, was able to change an industry by boldly communicating his vision and mission in such a compelling way. Apple's "1984" themed Superbowl ad exemplifies how he tapped into the zeitgeist of his target market.

Successful implementation of a solution, especially on a larger scale, requires thorough analysis. Leaders must set up systems to gather data, but

data is only as good as the interpretation. The key to being a great leader is making good decisions; good decisions require the analysis of accurate and timely information, even when it's not "Rocket Science." Especially, if it is "Rocket Science." For example, the late Jack Welch, Chairman and CEO of General Electric® (GE) used analysis to assess performance since he only purchased or retained businesses that were #1 or #2 in their industry. He also received daily financial information from every GE division across the world which helped him make faster, better-informed decisions than the competition.

One of the defining characteristics of the best leaders is their ability to coach others. Leaders must develop their team to its fullest, which is critical to the overall vitality of the organization. It is also important for succession planning which is critical for successfully growing an organization. For example, Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Steelers Coach Chuck Noll created leaders both on and off the field. He set high standards, was very disciplined, and held people accountable. He believed in keeping things simple so everyone could understand, and most importantly he led by example. Although the Steelers teams he coached didn't necessarily have the best individual players, they were almost always the better team.

The most elite leaders don't just influence people, they *inspire* them. It takes inspiration to scale an organization, overcome significant challenges, and make a lasting impact. Many leaders who inspire others seem larger than life and are driven by a cause much greater than themselves. For example, former President Barack Obama inspired people across the country to focus on common interests and overcome several crises. His "Yes We Can" mantra inspired many to take increased action and believe they can create a better future together.

Although there are many different leadership skills and abilities, Problem Solving, Communication, Analysis, Coaching, and Inspiring are critical for scaling an organization successfully. Each one is necessary for moving an organization to the next level, but in the order outlined. Everyone leads in their own way, and it is extremely difficult for a

continued on page 48



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PATRICIA FRIPP

Want Your Audience to Remember What You Say

The Importance of Clear Structure and Emotional Connection

Your message, no matter how important, will not be remembered if you don't recognize the importance of STRUCTURE and EMOTIONAL CONNECTION. Here are some practical ideas that can immediately make you more effective.

Your Structure

Can you write the premise or objective of your talk in one sentence? If not, the chances are that your thinking isn't clear enough for the audience to understand your purpose. And if you don't organize your material so the audience can remember it easily, they'll have a hard time grasping your message. They may be dazzled by your pizzazz and laugh at your stories, but little will stay with them afterwards.

Your next structural imperative is to use statements that make your audience ask "How?" or "Why?" For example, during a talk on "Selling Yourself and Your Ideas to Upper Management," I say, "Everyone in your position can sell themselves and their ideas to upper management." Immediately, my audience is asking themselves, "How can I do that?" Or at another speech, I might say, "Every manager needs to develop employees who can think entrepreneurially." And the managers are all asking themselves, "WHY on earth do I need to do that?"

Your answers to their mental questions, your How's or Why's, become your "Points of Wisdom." These are the rationales for your premise or objective. Figure three points for a thirty-minute

speech. Illustrate each Point with stories, examples, suggestions, practical advice, or recommendations.

Finally, frame your premise and your Points of Wisdom with an attention-getting opening and a memorable closing. For example, I helped a scientist neighbor, Mike Powell, with a speech he was delivering to a general audience. I suggested that since most of us don't know what it is like to be a scientist, he should tell the audience. Mike captured everyone's attention by saying:

"Being a scientist is like doing a jigsaw puzzle in a snowstorm at night...you don't have all the pieces...and you don't have the picture to work from."

Mike's speech was about DNA research. To help a lay audience understand the complexities, he used another analogy. "Imagine you have a store," he said, "and a thief runs in and grabs something off the shelf. He gets away from you, but he's drops his wallet, leaving his identification behind. The DNA in someone's blood and sweat and skin particles is also identification--"

Your last thirty seconds must send people out energized and fulfilled. Ask for questions before you close so you don't diffuse the effect of your ending. Then finish with something inspirational that supports your theme and creates a "circle" with your opening.

My scientist friend Mike closed by saying, "At the beginning of my talk, I told you of the frustration of being a scientist. Many people ask, 'So why do you do it?'" Then Mike told them about the final speaker at a medical conference he attended. She walked to the lectern and said, "I am a thirty-two-year-old wife and mother of two. I have AIDS. Please work fast." Mike received a standing ovation for his speech. Even more important, several years later the audience still remembers what he said and can actually quote him!

Your Emotional Connection

How you deliver your material has a lot to do with the enjoyment level of your audience. And if they're having a good time, they're more likely to like you and your ideas. The "like factor" can be crucial, especially if your "speech" is a sales presentation. When you're more

likable than other vendors, you've got an edge. Of course, you want your audience to like you, but if they don't or are unsure of you, how can you win them over?

- Make eye contact. For a small audience, look at individuals for five seconds or the length of a complete sentence. For large groups, divide your attention equally between those you can see clearly in the front rows and the people in the back.
- Develop your ability to tell memorable stories -- dramatic or funny. Fledgling speakers often bring me sheets of statistics: "Here's what I want to say." Why should the audience care about all those facts and figures?" I ask, "Where is that currency of human contact, the STORY?" Then we set about turning the numbing data into vivid descriptions of what the numbers MEAN. Remember, few can resist a good story, well told, a story they can "see." Make your supports vivid and memorable. People won't remember what you say, but they'll remember the images your words create.
- Increase your I-You ratio. Whenever you're talking about yourself, try to include the audience. An "I" sentence would be: "When I was growing up, my father gave me this advice." An "I-You" sentence would be: "I don't know what advice your father gave YOU growing up, but mine always said --" As with Mike's talk, imagine is a good word to involve your audience.

Audiences are more likely to act on what they remember. To make your message memorable, connect with them both intellectually with clear content and emotionally by using good eye-contact, memorable stories, and a high I-You ratio.



Patricia Fripp, CSP, CPAE is a San Francisco based executive speech coach and professional speaker Customer Service, Promoting Business, and Communication Skills. She is the author of *Get What You Want!, Make It, So You Don't Have to Fake It!*, and is past President of the National Speakers Association.

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DAVID GORDON

Passion Powers and Empowers Leaders



The U.S. economy is undergoing generational change. I'm not talking about the workforce or Generation X, Z or something else. I'm talking about ownership and management change.

I'm talking about a mentality.

There are two things that differentiate managers from management. They are passion and vision.

Managers focus on implementation, process improvement and "moving the ball forward."

Management, on the other hand, is invested in the business. They lead the business. They have a passion for it and a vision of how they feel the business, or their sphere of influence, can affect people's lives. They are believers.

And, here's the difference.

Generational Change ... in Ownership

Many of my clients are in the electrical distribution industry. Over the past 2 ½ years the U.S. electrical distribution industry, which comprises over 2,000 electrical distributors, has seen over 80 independently-owned distributors sold. These companies were sold to either a national chain, a larger independent distributor, or to a private equity firm.

Why did they sell? Some say it is because of the need / cost of investing in technology to remain competitive. I say differently as each of them, if they chose, could make the financial investment. The reason they sold is the lack of a passionate

"next generation" that was involved in the business. Without that "someone" who wants to run the business, a business becomes a disposable asset.

Generational Change ... in Management Talent

The same is occurring within companies. If you hire people, how many resumes have you seen where an individual has had many "short" tenures? We've all seen more of these nowadays than ever before. It begs the question, "are these individuals viable managers or are they management material?" Did they invest enough time to understand the culture, to gain an appreciation of the business, or generate a desire for the business to succeed? Did they understand the offering? The industry? The people? Did they conduct research and develop a vision to help take the company, or their department, to "the next level"? And yes, there are times where it isn't the right fit.

If people consider their roles transactional and are focused on today's payday, then, while important to the success of the business, they become transactional. Will the business miss them?

What's missing? Passion and vision.

What creates passion?

As a manager, you can build passion for your leadership and with your staff by being a strong communicator, connecting with associates and helping them deliver for customers and the company, however...

Becoming passionate about the business involves understanding the product offering, the industry, the customers and understanding multiple aspects of the business. It is about immersing yourself into the essence of the business so, when you're driving home, you see something not tied to the business and think of an idea for the business. It becomes part of your subconscious and you're intuitively thinking about opportunities and how to improve the business / your sphere within the business.

And, at the same time, you have "bought in" to the culture and actively strive to strengthen it.

To a degree, passion is inherent. The question to ask is "what are you passionate about?"

As an owner, you embrace it. If you are not an owner and the culture "turns", your passion dissipates.

Vision?

Vision is different than strategy. Strategy is more systemic-based and is built upon market research, data analytics, market trends, and goal setting. It's a process.

Vision, on the other hand, is more intuitive but integrates observational elements from the market, customers, competitors, business performance and more but it also integrates a leap of faith that can spring an organization, or department, forward to take significant steps forward.

It's the ability to observe, envision, espouse, and then "sell" the message to attract others and get them to "buy-in."

Some of it involves risk taking. Some is based upon experience and a broad frame of reference. Some is confidence.

Passion + Vision = Leadership

The key to being a leader is being passionate about your role within your company or for a cause. This enables you to motivate others.

Your ability to craft, and communicate, a vision provides something that others can rally around and then execute upon.

Combining passion and vision enables individuals to be leaders. This leadership quality is what powers companies to achieve goals and make a difference. More importantly, people rally around leaders and want to work for them.

When there is no passion, no vision, there is no leadership and work becomes... a job.

Find your passion. Infuse it with vision. And lead.

David Gordon is president of Channel Marketing Group, www.channelmkt.com, a strategy and marketing consulting firm specializing in helping manufacturers and distributors in the construction trades optimize their channel performance.



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SHERYL GREEN

The Power of No

Whether you are running your own business or rising through the ranks of someone else's, there is no shortage of opportunities to be "busy."

Everywhere you look, someone is making a demand on your time. Unfortunately, we've been trained to believe that saying yes opens doors, empowers you, and moves your career forward. In fact, in a 2019 article in Forbes, the author stated that "Saying 'Yes' is the best decision for your career."

I call BS.

There's power in the word No.

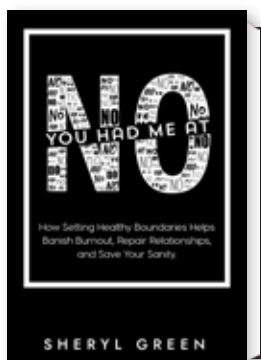
Many of the "opportunities" presented to us in our professional and our personal lives are nothing more than time sucks in sheep's clothing. They are other people's priorities disguised as our own, and they are extremely dangerous.

Why? Because they use up resources allotted for the pursuit of our own goals.

Consider this: You have a finite amount of time. Even if you were to dedicate every moment of your life to work (which you totally should NOT do), you would still only have a certain number of hours to get things done. More importantly, any hours you use toward the pursuit of some outcome will mean you have less hours for something else.

The problem is that we often agree to things out of a false sense of obligation rather than a true desire to do the thing or to help someone. This leads to anger, resentment, and burnout. It can also lead to subpar performance and results below what you are capable of and expected to produce.

Luckily, there's a way to determine whether doing the thing is in your best interest. I call it the Clash Question, and if you're a fan of Punk music, you'll be singing in a moment.



The Clash Question asks, "Should I Yay or Should I No?"

When posed with an opportunity or request, ask yourself this:

1. Do I want to/have to do this?
2. Do I have the resources available to take it on?
3. What am I willing to give up in order to do this?

In order for you to say Yay to the demand on your time, your answer to ALL of these questions must be Yes.

Let's take a closer look.

Do I Want To/Have To?

You would want to do something because it aligns with your goals and will help you get closer to reaching them. It might also be fun! Or, you truly want to help someone.

You would have to do something because not doing so would cause you to lose your job or your client or flub a big project. You may also be a caretaker and tasked with caring for children or elderly parents.

Do I Have the Resources Available?

Like it or not, you will always need time, money, or emotional or financial bandwidth to make something happen. If you don't have the resources necessary to carry something out, it's irresponsible to agree to it in the first place, and you are bound to let someone down.

What Am I Willing to Give Up?

As you just learned, doing anything requires resources. When you agree to do something, you are reallocating those resources from another task. Saying yes to another project at work may sound good in terms of advancing your career, but it may mean less time with family and friends or your workout routine.

The next time you're offered an opportunity or asked to do something, use the Clash Question to determine your best course of action. Ask yourself if you want to or have to do it. Do you have the resources, and are you willing to give up something else? If you'd like a free cheat sheet to help you say No, visit YouHadMeAtNo.com. And remember, there's power in the word No.



Sheryl Green is a Mental Health Keynote Speaker and Author. Her latest book, *You Had Me at No: How Setting Healthy Boundaries Helps Banish Burnout, Repair Relationships, and Save Your Sanity*, is available on Amazon and at other retailers.

SherylGreenSpeaks.com



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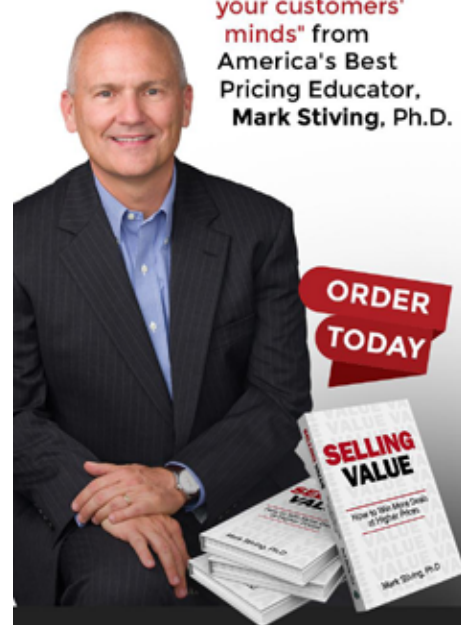


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JEFFREY HAYZLETT

Five Strategies to Master the Art of Running a Hero Business

What is a Hero leader? What does it take to be a Hero leader? By definition, a hero is admired and idealized for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities. The concept of 'heroism' has transcended the pages of comic books and movies to become a real-life aspiration for many. As society continues to evolve and face new crises, the demand for those Heroes to rise above and make a positive impact is greater than ever.

I wrote my fourth best-selling book, "The Hero Factor," as a challenge to business leaders to shift their vision and dedicate their lives to providing solutions, helping others, and using their expertise to make the world a better place. Let's face it, the world has changed, and business right alongside with it.

According to a recent PwC survey, there's a 15-percentage point gap with employees, and a 57-percentage-point gap with consumers when it comes to trust. It's about darn time that businesses (and leaders) joined the 21st century and stepped up their game to create, and maintain, that trust.

It's time to celebrate real people and businesses that make real jobs and positively influence real communities as a byproduct of what they produce and manufacture. So, what does it take to be a Hero leader?

Purpose and passion

Behind every successful Hero business is a deep-seated purpose and unyielding passion. A genuine desire to make a difference and be a servant leader is what fuels Hero leaders to build a strong foundation for a lasting Hero business. Hero leaders need to emotionally connect with the problems and challenges facing society is crucial. Why? Because it fuels the determination to overcome obstacles and consistently deliver results that truly matter.

With so many changes happening, true Hero leaders put their stake on the ground, and they remain firm. They don't waver. One clear example of this is the founder of Chik-Fil-A, Truett Cathy. This successful restaurant chain is closed on Sundays to allow his employees to worship. In fact, he was notorious for living his life centered on biblical principles which have been criticized by many. Throughout his life



he stood firm on his beliefs and never wavered. I may not agree with him on some things, but I respect his need to take a firm stand.

Team collaboration

Hero leaders truly understand that relying on their teams is a sure way to success. That doesn't mean everything will work. It means that the team they put in place can solve the complex problems that constantly arise in today's business landscape. As Hero leaders it's our responsibility to assemble a team with a diverse skillset that complement each other. Effective collaboration allows Heroes to combine strengths, mitigate weaknesses, and tackle multi-faceted problems with a united front.

Adaptability and innovation

Business moves fast, so Hero businesses must stay ahead of the curve. Adaptability is key to the survival and success of the business. In fact, one of the oldest axioms for me is "adapt, change or die" which I included in one of my previous books. It's true in everything we do in life. If we're not adapting to new technologies, new approaches and new ways of doing things, we won't be in business for long.

Hero leaders must be open to new ideas, innovative approaches, and technological advances that can revolutionize operations and amplify impact. Anything that helps move the needle forward and achieve bigger outcomes with less time – that is something you should explore and implement. Remember, always work smarter, not harder.

Ethical framework

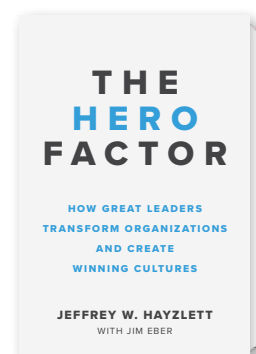
Hero leaders are not just defined by their abilities, skill sets, and contributions. They also live by a strict ethical code. Hero businesses operate with a strong sense of ethics and integrity. Making morally sound decisions, respecting the rights of all individuals, and adhering to legal and social norms are crucial for maintaining credibility and trust. Long gone are the days of leading from the top and barking orders down the bottom of the pyramid, expecting everyone to fall in line and follow blindly.

The best example I can give here is the actual origin story of The Hero Club's founder, Rob Ryan. When he sold his company, Ascend Communications, he made the most millionaires in one day. How? He gave EACH employee a portion of that sale – not because he had to, but because he wanted to. Afterwards, many of those employees came to him and personally thanked him for helping them pay for their kid's college, medical bills, or even take the vacation they could never afford to take before. Showing appreciation for your team creates loyalty and increases their desire to work as hard as possible. Doing what's right when no one is looking is what defines a Hero leader.

Community engagement

No one achieves complete success alone. Heroism is not a solitary endeavor. You must engage with your community, build strong, purposeful relationships, and understand the unique needs of the people you serve. Those are vital for long-term success. Being an active and empathetic part of the community fosters trust and encourages collaboration.

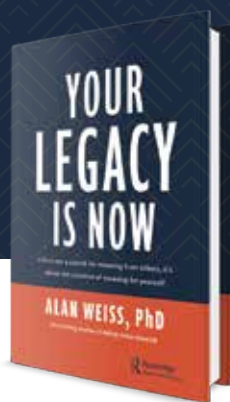
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ALAN WEISS, PhD

YOUR LEGACY IS NOW

Life is not a search for meaning from others, it's about the creation of meaning for yourself.



Your **legacy** is the most powerful contribution you create in your life.

It's time to write the new page in your book every day, and not allow it to be blank, or a repeat of yesterday, or written by someone else.

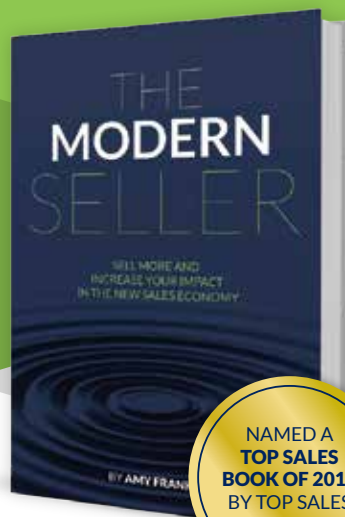
Written by Alan Weiss, author of *Million Dollar Consulting* which is in its sixth edition, *Your Legacy is Now* will empower you with the skills, behaviors, and motivation to create meaning in your life—while you're still enjoying life and able to improve it.

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Jill Konrath
Author of *More Sales Less Time* and *SNAP Selling*



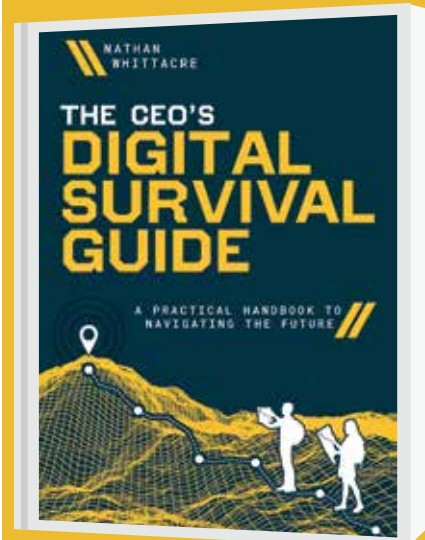
AMY FRANKO

Sales Strategist,
Consultant &
Keynote Speaker

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DAVID HORSAGER

Trust

The 8 Pillars of Individual and Organizational Success

In the realm of leadership, there is a single, powerful force that propels organizations towards high performance and unprecedented success. That force is trust. At Trust Edge Leadership Institute, we have spent over two decades researching and applying the profound impact of trust on organizations. Our mission is to develop trusted leaders and organizations, and our findings have consistently affirmed that trust is not just a soft skill or a nice-to-have. It is the bedrock of high-performing organizations.

Trust is the currency of business and life. It is the foundation upon which all relationships are built, and it is the glue that holds organizations together. When trust is present, teams work more effectively, communication improves, and productivity soars. Conversely, a lack of trust can be your biggest expense, leading to low morale, high turnover, and contagious stagnation.

To foster trust within your organization, we have developed the 8 Pillar Framework. These pillars are not just theoretical constructs; they are practical, actionable tenets that can be implemented in any organization, regardless of size or industry.



8 Pillar Framework

Clarity

People trust the clear and distrust the ambiguous. Clarity unifies, motivates, and inspires trust. Clear communication leads to trusted colleagues, happy employees, and satisfied customers.

Compassion

People put faith in those who care beyond themselves. Genuine care for others fosters trust and strengthens relationships. It's about putting people before things and showing empathy in all interactions.

Character

People notice those who do what is right over what is easy. Integrity and authenticity are key to building trust. Leaders who demonstrate strong character earn the respect and trust of their teams.

Competency

People have confidence in those who stay fresh, relevant, and capable. Leaders who continually learn, grow, and demonstrate their competence earn the trust of their teams.

Commitment

People believe in those who stand through adversity. Leaders who are committed, who stick with their teams through thick and thin, earn a deep level of trust.

Connection

People want to follow, buy from, and be around friends. Building strong, genuine connections with your team members fosters a deep level of trust.

Contribution

People immediately respond to results. Delivering consistent, high-quality results builds trust and shows your team that you are reliable and dependable.

Consistency

People love to see the little things done consistently. Consistency in actions, decisions, and behavior is key to building and maintaining trust.



Each of these pillars is integral to building and maintaining trust within your organization. They are not standalone items but interwoven aspects that collectively create a culture of trust. When all eight pillars are strong, trust thrives, leading to increased engagement, higher productivity, and ultimately, greater success.

Trust is not a static state but a dynamic and ongoing process. It requires constant nurturing and attention. It's about the little things done consistently, not the big things done occasionally. It's about being authentic, transparent, and genuine in all interactions. It's about showing up, day in and day out, and proving through your actions that you are trustworthy.

Trust is the unseen force that drives high performance and success. It is the competitive advantage gained when others confidently believe in you. As leaders, it is our responsibility to recognize the importance of fostering a culture of trust within our organization and taking steps to do so. By focusing on the 8 Pillars of Trust, we can build high-trust organizations that drive high performance and higher levels of success.

David Horsager, MA, CSP, CPAE is CEO of Trust Edge Leadership Institute and a global authority on helping leaders and organizations become the most trusted in their industry. He is inventor of The Enterprise Trust Index™, director of the annual study—The Trust Outlook™, and national bestselling author of The Trust Edge. With clients ranging from Fortune 100 companies to professional sports teams and global governments, David has taken the platform across the United States and on 6 continents.

DavidHorsager.com

WILLIE JOLLEY

How to Get Past Your Next Pandemic and Turn Setbacks into Incredible Comebacks

We have been through a series of setbacks over the last few years....a global pandemic, economic downturn, massive job losses, racial strife and social upheaval. One setback after another, after another. Yet, I am here to proclaim that it is now Comeback Time!

If you're an entrepreneur, you must keep in mind that setbacks happen to all of us – even the most successful entrepreneurs. The major determining factor in the final outcome will be how you handle it. If you sit back and let your problems bury you and leave it at that, then you might as well put up the tombstone and let your dreams rest in peace. But if you change your perspective, don't get flustered and start to see your setbacks as setups for comebacks, you can change course and go on to win.

When it comes to overcoming setbacks in business, here are six things to remember:

You must decide if you see this as a setback “Period “or a setback, “Comma!” In elementary school, we learned two important punctuations that impacted how we comprehended situations - a period and a comma. A period means the end of the story; but a comma means - pause, transition, or more to come! Decide if this setback is the end of your story or is it a bend in the road, or a transition to a new direction.

Don't wait for your ship to come in...Swim Out To It. One of the core values of your work ethic should be to go out and make your own opportunities. Don't wait for them to fall from the sky, neatly gift-wrapped in your lap. You need to be relentless and constantly find new ways to expand and refine your business. If you feel as though you're struggling, re-assess what the weakest points of your business are, then think about how you can fix them. You'll have to look at yourself objectively and honestly and determine what needs improvement.

Be professional yet aggressive, and reach out towards any opportunity that can help your business grow. You must build your own ship, or swim out to the one that's already in the harbor. If you wait for one to dock, you'll simply be stuck treading water and may eventually sink!

Never stop learning: You know all of those professional development courses and self-improvement seminars and books are there for a reason. They serve a very important purpose: if you keep doing things the same way, you are going to keep getting the same results. Being successful in anything, but especially business, means to never stop learning and dedicating yourself to being open to new ways of thinking. This is especially important when facing a setback. Instead of falling victim, you'll be filled with strategies to change your victim status to victor!

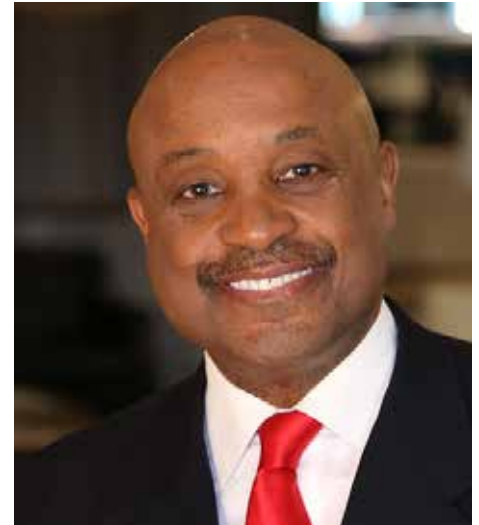
You haven't tried this. Many times I'll speak to someone who is going through a setback in their business. They'll tell me they have tried everything. But when I ask them if they've tried this or that, they usually say, “I never thought of that.” So, you must accept that you haven't tried everything. You must keep thinking!

So, here's an exercise to help. First, get out a pen and paper and list all the ways you can turn your setback around. Try to write at least twenty five things. Once you have exhausted your own list, ask those in your network for their ideas. You'll be amazed at what you come up with. There is always another way that you didn't think about to take on your current problem. So, keep thinking!

Speak positivity into your business. Even when things have hit a rough spot or business is slow, you must speak positivity into your business and your life, because your language has a direct impact on your mindset and on the way life will respond to your situation.

In the midst of a setback, it's easy to beat yourself up and become negative. If you find your thoughts along the lines of, “Maybe I should hang up the towel.” Change it to, “I am an expert and very good at what I do. I do occasionally have challenges, but so does everyone and they are always temporary. I'm going to bounce back.” Remember, what you speak is what you attract.

Never give up. This is the golden rule of entrepreneurship. Any success that you've ever heard of, whether it be the great captains of industry, multi-national



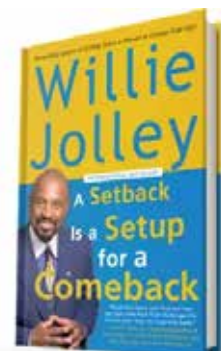
corporations, or even entire nations, have all faced setbacks, some that appeared insurmountable. Most took what was given to them, learned from it and went on to a greater success than they had initially hoped for. You can do the same. You may feel like everything is lost and you've reached the end. That's usually far from the truth. Never, ever give up.

When you encounter a setback, you need to move forward. Being disappointed after something goes wrong is natural, but letting that feeling overcome you will accomplish nothing but failure.

In the end, it's up to you. Remember, your setback is nothing but a setup for an incredible comeback!

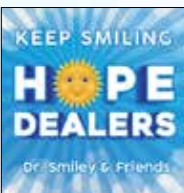
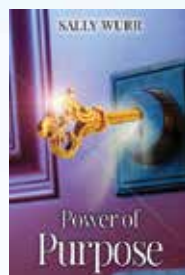
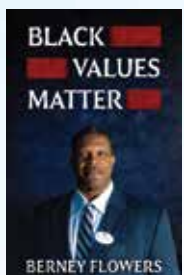
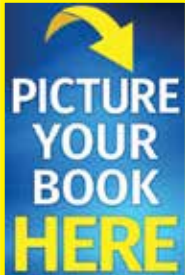
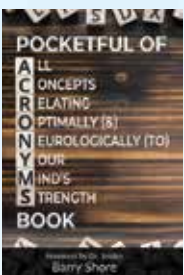
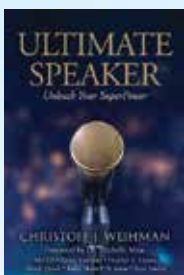
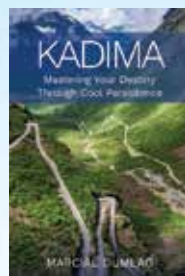
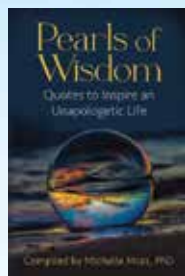
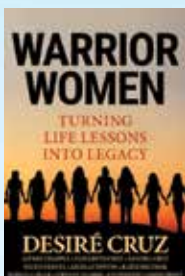
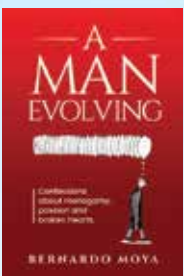
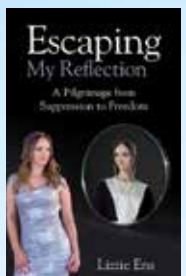
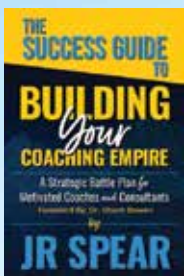
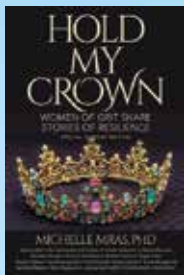
Dr. Willie Jolley is the author of the best-selling book *A Setback is a Setup for a Comeback*.

WillieJolley.com

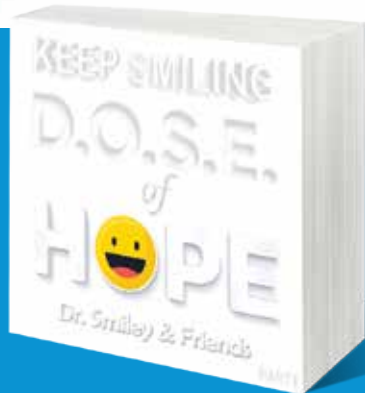




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JEFFREY MAGEE

If You're not Changeformational, You're about to be Irrelevant



What the heck is **Changeformational**?

I'll get to that, but first... Maybe you've heard the line, "If you're not changing, you are dying." The real line should be, if you're not transforming, you are no longer relevant!

As an entrepreneur or business owner, the thought of no longer being relevant should terrify you. Irrelevance leads to plummeting sales, and plummeting sales lead to extinction. From there, it's just a matter of time before you end up in the history books as an example of *what not to do*; or worse, your organization is forgotten altogether.

Think about your own business. Do you feel like your competitors are running circles around you? Are they introducing new products or services before you've even identified a need for them? Are their sales skyrocketing while you are doing everything in your power just to keep your head above water?

Or perhaps, until recently, you've had no competition. Maybe you found that special niche where only you existed. Your sales were phenomenal. Your customers were happy, and your employees couldn't wait to come to work each day.

Then they arrived. A new company that does everything you do, only better. They serve the same customers you serve, only they make them happier. They hire the same employees you do, and your once-loyal team is now jumping ship. Now, you're clamoring to recapture your market share and return to the glory days.

If any of this sound familiar, you aren't alone. Thousands of companies have experienced similar upsets.

Look at the trajectory of global business leaders like Woolworth's, Montgomery Ward, Sears, Kmart, JCPenney, Blockbuster Video and many others. They changed and evolved for decades as markets demanded to remain relevant; yet, as each ultimately became complacent, each fizzled out and died. At this time, Amazon is the giant, delivering everything that each of those extinct businesses once owned – Amazon transformed the customer interaction experience and created new rules for everyone else to play by – new rules equal **Changeformational**.

The old rules were about being adaptable and nimble to deal with new rules being created by others that has created change, to **survive**. Then it was about re-writing the rules-of-engagement and taking "it" to a new level by transforming the rules to **thrive**. If you are subscribing to either of these philosophies or listening to someone extol their expertise, you are being hacked by parroting minds to merely be relevant for the day.

The reality is CHANGE is our reality and your ability to exact massive TRANSFORMATION every time an opportunity presents itself, you are CHANGEFORMATIONAL, and you will always **WIN!**

Whether I am on a main stage of a conference Keynoting, working in detail with clients in a talent development program or going deep in an advisory/consultative/coaching conversation, the process for ensuring one is Radically-Relevant™ today and beyond the horizon is a continual process, environment and culture. There is a strategic process, what I call the RE5 Model or five RE-words that cycle you continuously through ensue relevance at every level within an organization and with every individual.

The ability for critical thinking today leads to rational responses, that leads to desired outcomes, that can be replicated and sustained for ultimate advancement and healthy success for you and the enterprise you are a part of today – Changeformational is everywhere you live and look.

Here are four powerful Key Performance Indicators that you can

use to stimulate thought and continual conversation that I have learned can be used to stimulate Transformation from the ashes and dust-storms of Change. With these four KPI triggers, the implications and application are endless and your organization can always ensure you are being Changeformational.

Changeformational Rule-of-Four

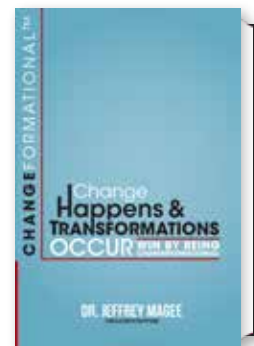
1. **Better** – No matter where you are or what your deliverable is, ask how can this be ...
2. **Faster** – No matter where you are or what your deliverable is, ask how can this be ...
3. **Different** – No matter where you are or what your deliverable is, ask how can this be ...
4. **Cost Effective** – No matter where you are or what your deliverable is, ask how can this be ...

These are the only variables you can use to be Changeformational. In fact re-read past editions of *Performance Magazine* (and this edition), read the articles and study the sponsoring advertisements and use this Rule of Four. You will have countless case studies presented before you to be Changeformational!

The sad reality is I observe daily globally individuals that have actually been conditioned to be complacent and mediocre and that is celebrated – survival mode to sustain change is where these people reside!

The work I do with business owners, C-Level executives and military leaders is Changeformational when they allow themselves to stop subscribing to

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ZAC MASON

Simple Steps to Stay

Fit, Toned, and Healthy on Busy Work Days

Have you ever felt that if you had more time... it would be easier to be fitter, stronger, leaner and healthier? If so... you're not alone. Most successful men and women prioritize their work because they love it, so expecting workouts and diet to be their 'number one' priority isn't realistic (unless they're a pro athlete). Many high performers also travel regularly and attend conferences, team lunches and client dinners frequently - maintaining peak shape and health is often an ongoing challenge.

Nevertheless, health and fitness doesn't need to be the number one priority to get results and maintain them. You'll see how in a minute. And don't worry, I won't be telling you to hit the gym every day or eat like a domesticated rabbit. Even the busiest CEO can do the steps I'm about to share with you.

Now, if you're already in great shape but want to maintain it, or you want to shed a few kg's/lbs and keep it off for good... there's one thing that must be in check most of the time - your 'energy balance'.

Put simply, each day we naturally burn energy (calories)... and we also consume energy by eating food (calories). But the imbalance usually begins when we get busy and stressed, because we move less and exercise less. As a result, the energy (calories) we burn each day drops, and fast! Choosing the wrong foods now can easily turn into more body-fat.

But what do most people do when they want to get healthier, fitter or shed some lbs/kg's?

They join a gym, classes, F45 or buy a Peloton for home. Which are all great. But, if you don't have hours spare every day for consistent workouts or cardio, you may not burn as much energy (calories) as you think. I'll show you why...

Here's the approximate calorie burn for 30 minutes of each exercise below.

- Gym workout = 120-200 calorie burn
- Brisk walking = 150-300 calorie burn
- Moderate pace cycling = 250-350 calorie burn

Now compare that to food - it's easy to eat 200-300 calories without even blinking. Like eating 2 palms of nuts or a small bag of crisps.

With that said, any extra burn is good! Though my point is, the majority of your



energy burn won't come from a short workout. That's because we burn more energy from the 'total movement' we do across the day. This is where the secret lies. I'll reveal that in a second.

It's easy to find 5-10 minutes a few times every day to increase your total movement. It doesn't sound like much, but it certainly adds up. For example, 1 minute of brisk-walking is roughly 100 steps. Now, 1000 steps is roughly 30-40 extra calories burned. How many extra minutes of walking could you find in your day?

If you use a fitness tracker like a Garmin, Fitbit or Oura Ring, these will count all your steps between waking up and going to sleep. For most, that's thousands of steps. So the key to staying in shape even on busy work days is maximizing your daily step count to burn more energy (calories) without sacrificing meetings, deadlines, family or relaxation time...

Here's a list of simple ways to do that:

- Park further away from the office or locations you travel to
- Use ear/headphones on calls to stand up and move around
- Keep a small cup of water to drink on your desk, so you need to get up to refill often
- Eat lunch outside or at another spot a short walk away
- Use a bathroom that is further away

- Set an alarm every 30-45 mins to stand up and walk around for 2-3 minutes.
- Have 'walk-and-talk' meetings
- Avoid getting food delivered - walk to get something local
- Go talk to the person instead of emailing or calling them
- Try a compact treadmill that fits under your desk (a bit extreme, but it works)
- Take the stairs
- Walk the dog
- Take the kids to the park or out in the yard
- Try a standing desk for a few hours a day
- Give a presentation or talk standing up
- Any excuse to move more, is a good excuse!

The secret is to make a habit of moving more and avoid sitting still like a statue all day. Because, an extra 2000 steps per day is an extra 14,000 steps per week! This small tweak could be just enough to stop some from gaining more weight, and help them kickstart losing it. Extra steps also helps maintain overall fitness, bone density, mental clarity, energy and muscle mass.

With that said, you've probably heard the saying "you can't out-run a bad diet"... well, it's true. The second best thing you can do after maximizing your daily movement is to optimize your nutrition and metabolism.

To get more simple tips on nutrition, metabolism, training and performance - connect with me on LinkedIn @zacmason.

Zac Mason is the founder of the Metabolic-Recomp-Method. He offers online coaching specializing in nutrition, training and reversing metabolic-age. Zac's method takes a contrarian approach to long-term transformation and habits, by focusing on the Minimum-Effective-Dose, that yields results that people can maintain for life. Using biofeedback and metabolic data, backed by science, Zac tailors his method to fit each clients goals and lifestyles. Zac is committed to serving high performing people all around the globe to unlock their untapped potential and make a bigger impact in their lives and businesses.



Your **biggest expense** isn't what you think it is.

You don't have a *leadership* issue.

The only reason people follow a leader (or not) is because of TRUST.

You don't have an *innovation* issue.

The only place individuals will share their ideas is in an environment of TRUST.

You don't have an *engagement* issue.

The only way to increase engagement is to increase TRUST.

It's always a TRUST issue.



Start solving with TRUST.

We understand the challenge of creating a high-performing workplace. Driven by decades of research and real-world application, our proven 8-Pillar Framework™ will ensure you measure, grow, and solve with trust to achieve the **results that matter.**

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DELATORRO McNEAL

Cultivating Your Lean into Excellence

Every single day, I'm asked about the vitality of simply being excellent. Most people hear that word and run, fearing that it equates to perfection or having made no mistakes. However, you should allow this frequency to resound in your ears daily: excellence doesn't equate an appearance of perfection. It resonates with maturity, growth, and forward movement. It has more to do with your focus and intent than it does getting everything 100% right, 100% of the time. It is the sum of our daily actions that lead us towards divorcing excuses and walking in execution. Excellence, my friend, is how we put our weight into what matters most in life. Regardless of our industries, career titles, or positions, we all desire excellence because excellence is ultimately in our DNA.

If you ask most corporations or organizations what their top 10 core values are, over 90% would mention "excellence" in their top five. If you ask someone what's a top characteristic in their potential mate, they will usually have "maturity" in their top five. This equates to operating in excellence, because you have to be mature in order to exemplify this quality. But how do we get to excellence? Is it a one-time achievement or a perpetual on-going quest? The truth is that it's a skill, which can be learned. Please consider these seven keys to help you cultivate your lean into excellence, both personally and professionally. Remember the ultimate goal is always to shift yourself into a higher gear.



1. **Desire Excellence.** To be excellent, you must desire it, avoiding shortcuts and cheap solutions. Pursue fullness, never settle for half-hearted efforts.
2. **Get an Example of Excellence.** To cultivate excellence, seek a model of such. What does excellence look like in your field? Observe, learn, and follow its clues.
3. **Gain Access to Excellence.** Once you find excellence, gain behind-the-scenes access. Excellence is usually 80% back end and 20% what you actually see. Invest in events, coaching, mentoring, and more for valuable insights.

4. **Serve Excellence.** When granted access to excellence, give back! Volunteer, contribute your time without expecting payment. The knowledge gained is priceless, and it showcases your humble, giving spirit.
5. **Study the Details of Excellence.** Consider this: What elevates a dining, vacation, car-buying, entertainment, or event experience? The answer is in the details! To excel, prioritize and exceed in every detail.
6. **Demonstrate Excellence at Your Level.** A common error is comparing your excellence to someone with 30+ years of experience and feeling discouraged. Avoid this self-torment. They've had more time to excel. Focus on your level of excellence, and your tribe will love and support you.
7. **Tweak Excellence.** Commit to perpetual advancement in the pursuit of excellence. Excellence's root is 'excel,' signifying going beyond. Keep the journey alive, always reaching higher, growing, and maturing.

By applying these seven keys, you'll continually make daily changes, improvements, modifications, and adjustments to enhance your excellence. The aim is always to shift your life and career into a higher gear.

Dr. Delatorro McNeal, II, MS, CSP, CPAE, an acclaimed Peak Performance Expert and bestselling author, is highly sought after by global Fortune 50 firms. His book, "Shift Into A Higher Gear," soared to the top of bestseller lists including USA Today and The Wall Street Journal. With 20+ years of expertise as an international keynote speaker and accolades from the Biden & Harris Administration, he serves as a United Nations Ambassador and is the founder of Platinum Performance Global, LLC. Notably presenting at the Million Dollar Round Table on four occasions and having been featured on The Today Show 5 times, he comes highly recommended by his peers and audiences across vast genres. He is the founder and host of The Full Throttle Experience and spearheads the Healing With Integrity movement. In July 2023, he was awarded the National Speakers Association Speaker Hall of Fame designation (CPAE) and balances his career by placing a priority on fatherhood.

www.Delatorro.com

IVAN MISNER

Networking is About Stamina Not Speed

In the world of professional relationships and business growth, networking plays a pivotal role. As the founder of BNI, an organization built on the foundation of referrals and networking, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power it holds. So, let's take a look at what this marathon should look like – with a little humor added in.

Building Authentic Relationships: It's Not Like Speed Dating!

Networking is about building authentic relationships, not just accumulating contacts. It's not a speed dating event where you collect as many business cards as possible and hope for the best. Nope, that won't cut it. It's essential to invest time and effort in getting to know others on a deeper level. Remember, it's not about exchanging pleasantries and pretending to be interested while secretly plotting to make a sale. Building rapport, trust, and a genuine connection requires a commitment to building long-term relationships. Treat it like a slow-cooked meal; let the flavors develop over time!

Establishing Credibility and Trust: Actions Speak Louder Than Words, and Bad Puns

A successful networker understands the significance of establishing credibility and trust within the business community. And what better way to establish credibility than through consistent effort and delivering on your promises? Show up, be reliable, and provide value to others. But wait, there's more! How about sprinkling in some humor to lighten the mood? Just make sure your networking humor doesn't fall flat like a pancake. Remember, a good joke can break the ice, but a bad joke might just make people feel as cold as an iceberg!

Imagine that you're at a networking event, and you strike up a conversation with a potential client. You are both discussing your businesses when you drop a perfectly timed pun. They chuckle, and suddenly the tension eases. You've established a connection beyond the ordinary small talk. So go ahead, let your sense of humor shine through. Just be careful not to overdo it.

The Power of Referrals: Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Referrals are the lifeblood of successful networking. However, they're not something that magically appears with the snap of your fingers. Oh no, referrals are more like that delicious meal you wait hours for at a fantastic restaurant. They take time to cook. As connections grow stronger and trust deepens, individuals become more willing to recommend your services or products. So, don't rush it. Patience is key, just like waiting for that dessert you've been eyeing on the menu. Trust me, the referral soufflé will rise beautifully when the time is right!

Now, let's imagine a scenario. You meet someone at a networking event who expresses interest in your business. Instead of bombarding them with sales pitches, take a different approach. Build a genuine connection, show interest in their business, and find ways to support them. Remember, networking is a two-way street. If you provide value and support to others, they'll be more inclined to refer you to potential clients or partners. And when those referrals come flowing in, it'll feel like winning a delicious food-eating competition—except without the stomach ache and gained weight!

The Depth of Connection: Skip the Small Talk and Embrace the Quirkiness

While a sprint may be a quick burst of energy, networking thrives on the depth of connections you develop. It's not about how many people you can engage within a short period, but rather the quality and depth of those relationships. So, minimize the small talk and embrace the quirkiness! Find common interests, share your passions, and let your authentic self shine when you network with people. After all, it's the quirks and unique qualities that make us memorable. Just be careful not to overshare; we're aiming for memorable, not creepy!

Imagine attending a networking event where everyone is wearing the same professional mask. The conversations revolve around the weather, the latest industry trends, and the most boring aspects of business. Sounds dreadful, right? Break free from the mundane! Instead of blending in, embrace your



quirkiness. Talk about your love for comic books, your passion for knitting tiny hats for your pet turtle, or your secret talent for juggling oranges (for me, it's catching and releasing venomous snakes back into the wild – that's always a conversation starter). Be memorable, be authentic, and watch as those connections deepen like a well-developed plotline in a gripping novel.

Patience and Long-Term Vision: Marathon Training with Snacks and Dance Breaks

Networking is a journey that requires patience and a long-term vision. It's like training for a marathon, but with more snacks and dance breaks. Sure, there will be times when progress seems slow, and the finish line feels distant. That's when you break out the snacks and groove to your favorite tunes. Keep that networking stamina high! Embrace the ups and downs, celebrate the small victories, and keep your eye on the prize. Remember, it's not just about reaching the finish line; it's about enjoying the process and the connections you make along the way.

Let's envision a networking event as a vibrant dance floor. You're wearing your networking shoes, grooving to the beat, and mingling with other professionals. You may stumble a few times, but you pick yourself up and keep going. As you dance, you share stories, exchange ideas, and forge connections. And when the DJ plays your favorite song, you let loose and celebrate the joy of networking. So, don't forget to pack your favorite snacks, keep those dance moves handy, and embrace the marathon with a smile on your face.

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TIM MURPHY

Practice, Perseverance & Progress



Anyone interested in self-improvement has no doubt read a variety of business, self-help and motivational books such as *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* or *Atomic Habits* - the options are many, and much of the information is useful in providing a framework for improvement. Change is challenging and it can be difficult to take the first step, especially when you don't feel particularly accomplished at whatever it is you hope to improve or change. But that first step, and the next step, and the one after that, even if they are stumbles or baby steps, are what drives change and makes things happen. Maybe it's because I'm a runner that I see things in steps, and bring a marathon mindset to running a business.

Simply put, running a marathon is a series of steps, one after the other. Generally, an individual takes about 1,500 to 2,500 steps per mile, meaning running a marathon (26.2 miles) requires approximately 39,300 to 65,000 steps. On its face, that's a daunting number, until you break it down. By breaking a large goal down into a series of manageable steps, enacting change becomes palatable, accomplishable, routine and ultimately a part of your standard operating procedure. It's exceptionally hot in Florida right now, and while my practice is to try to run a 10K (6.21 miles) every day, right now I'm walking - either way, the same mileage is being covered, and my practice reinforces the stamina, muscle memory and skill required to complete a marathon. Bottom line, I'm practicing regardless of the climate conditions, and the same holds true in business.

You can't control the environment, but you can control how you approach challenges and opportunities. Create a routine and a practice that establishes how you address issues and how you navigate through your career. My personal routine begins with a 6 to 7 am wake-up call - by my three pugs if at home, or my alarm while on the road. I check email, social media, news highlights, and the weather (weather impacts the safe and profitable operation of Family Entertainment Centers) - this morning routine gives me the daily information I need, and whether in my neighborhood or half way around the world, allows me to head out on my run with plenty of food for thought. My morning run exercises both mind and body.

As a reader as well as a consumer of audio books which I often listen to while running, I particularly enjoy biographies. They allow me to understand what notable people felt, thought about and how they addressed challenges of all kinds. Ronald Reagan's **Speaking My Mind**, a collection of the speeches that express his concerns, political philosophy, triumphs, and challenges during his eight years in office, inspired me to visit the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum on a recent trip, and propelled me to persevere in the face of some personal challenges.

Practice and perseverance - together they lead to progress. By establishing a routine, setting goals, breaking large tasks down into incremental steps and always moving forward, change will happen. When in doubt, seek inspiration and learn from leaders (and losers) about how they

approach problems, deal with issues and stay motivated. Keep moving, and don't underestimate the power of physical exercise. You need not be a runner to win the race...you just need to keep moving, one foot after the other.

Practice and persevere.

Tim Murphy is CEO of APX Operating Company, dba Boomers Parks, under the ownership of Cerberus private equity (\$60B assets). Boomers Parks owns six family entertainment centers and two water parks with locations in California, Florida, and New Jersey.

As CEO of Boomers Parks since 2020, Tim took these eight parks from bankruptcy to profitability in just a year - in the middle of a global pandemic. When Boomers acquired these parks, they were operating at a \$10 million loss. Tim transformed the customer experience and added new revenue streams to generate a 180% increase in revenue in just one year.

Tim launched his 35+ year career at Walt Disney World and has since served more than 150 entertainment, restaurant, and food & beverage brands across more than 10,000 locations in C-Suite and senior positions.

Additionally, Tim is a Board Director with Coney Park & Happy City - Family Entertainment & Amusement Parks, part of The Carlyle Group (\$276B assets), a private equity firm that operates 150+ family entertainment centers and amusement parks in Latin America.

Tim has worked with top-tier entertainment and restaurant brands including Disney, Rebounderz Trampoline Parks, Darden Restaurants (Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze, etc.), Red Lobster, Jimmy John's, Applebee's, Sonny's Bar-B-Q, Denny's, El Pollo Loco, Hardee's, Golden Corral, and Firehouse Subs.

Tim has successfully served as CEO, president, COO, CFO, consulting advisor, and Advisory and Board Members to more than 150 brands with more than 10,000 locations. His specialties include improving the performance of entertainment, food and beverages, restaurants, hospitality, retail, and other industries for public, private, startups and private equity firms.

MERIDITH ELLIOTT POWELL

4 Strategies to Stop Margin Erosion

Have you been watching the news lately? The challenges are out there – inflation, increasing energy prices and rising interest rates, employee strikes and the list goes on.

A recent study said 93% of CEOs believe we are headed for recession, and most sales professionals I work with say they see their clients starting to tighten their belts. So while it is still unknown whether recession will actually come, for most of us, for all practical purposes the recession is already here. Once customers start to worry about recession, and start to plan for recession, you start to feel their shifts in your business.

How Will Recession Impact Your Customers

Why? Because the moment that customers “think” that the economy is shifting, they start to get ready and start to do business differently. While they are still spending money and still growing their businesses, where and how they spend money starts to change. Understanding this, can give you the information you need to both protect your margins and continue to grow your business no matter what this economy does.

Here are five ways the recession impacts customer thinking and actions:

1. **Cash Flow Review** – first, they start watching the flow of cash so much more closely than in a healthy economy. They pay attention to not only the money going in, but also pay far closer attention to the money going out.
2. **Review Everything** – second, they start looking at the contracts, vendors and projects they have in place, reviewing pricing, competitors and asking for better options and terms.
3. **Now vs. Later** – third, they start to ask what projects and expenses need to stay on the calendar and what if any need to be or could be postponed. Asking and questioning if expenses really need to be incurred and what is the return on investment lost or gained if they decide to hold off.
4. **Extend Decision Making** – fourth, the decision making process gets more complicated. More people get involved, and leaders at higher levels have to approve what just last year your contact at the ability to sign off on.

5. **Cut Costs** – and lastly, they do what you all knew they were going to do- they cut costs whether they need to or not. Whether they are in an industry that is feeling the pinch of a shifting economy or one that is not.

Once the word recession is out there floating in the marketplace, your customers thinking and buying patterns change, and all of that puts pressure on your growth plans and your margins.

So, what are you supposed to do as a business owner or sales professional? If you're like most you start to cut costs, looking for your own ways to make your price more attractive than your competitors, and doing what it takes to hold on to the business.

But if you want to thrive in uncertainty, putting heavy pressure on and shrinking your margins is not your best option. Because once you lower your price, guess what your customers are going to want next? That's right – another price cut. So how do you compete, how do you hold margin health when your customers are feeling the pain and making spending shifts in their businesses?

4 Strategies to Stop Margin Erosion

Redefine Your Value Proposition

The place you need to start is with your value proposition. To protect margins, and get your price you need to update and enhance your value proposition. It is a myth in a shifting economy that customers will not spend money, in fact I think they will spend more, but they will only invest in what helps them solve their biggest challenges. Once the mindset of your customers shifts, so do their priorities. What they worry about, what they need to protect, where their opportunities are all begin to change, and they are looking for the business and sales professional who can help them navigate these obstacles. Check out my article on how to ensure your value proposition is relevant to make sure yours is up-to-date.

Reevaluate Your Pricing Conversation

If prospects and customers are putting a lot of pressure on you to lower your prices then the chances are price is all they think you are offering. You need to

sell the risk and value – you need to show customers and prospects what “else” they get for your price whether they ask you for that or not. I have a client who sells software and he was getting crushed by competition looking to price him out of the market. He came to me when because his sales team was putting pressure on him to lower the price. But with so much pressure on his margins, he had no press reductions left. We simply went out and talked to his existing customers and found all types of reasons they chose him over the competition. His customers actually understood they were paying more for his software, but they felt they were getting the deal of a lifetime. Why? Because of the value – the extras – they gained with his software that his competitors did not offer.

Refocus on Existing Customers

No one understands the value you bring to the table better than your existing customers. If you want to protect your margins, focus on those customers that already do business with you, have seen first-hand the value you bring to the table, and are far more open to buying more. By going back to your existing customers, you not only stand a better chance of less price resistance, but you will get great insight for redesigning your value proposition, and increasing your opportunities of referrals.

Reexamine Your Revenue Streams

And last but not least, review your revenue streams. Are their products and services your customers are asking for that have evolved from the shifting marketplace. Think of the automobile

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VS



**WEAK
COMMUNICATION**

**EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION**

**LISTENING
TO REPLY**

**LISTENING
TO UNDERSTAND**

**POOR BODY
LANGUAGE**

**NODDING TO
INDICATE YOU
ARE LISTENING**

**NOT GIVING
CONTEXT**

**EXPLAINING
WHY IT
MATTERS**

**INTERRUPTING
THE SPEAKER**

**LISTENING
TILL THE END**

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., SHRM-SCP
SHRM President and Chief Executive Officer



CHANGE IS EVERYONE'S **NEW** REALITY!

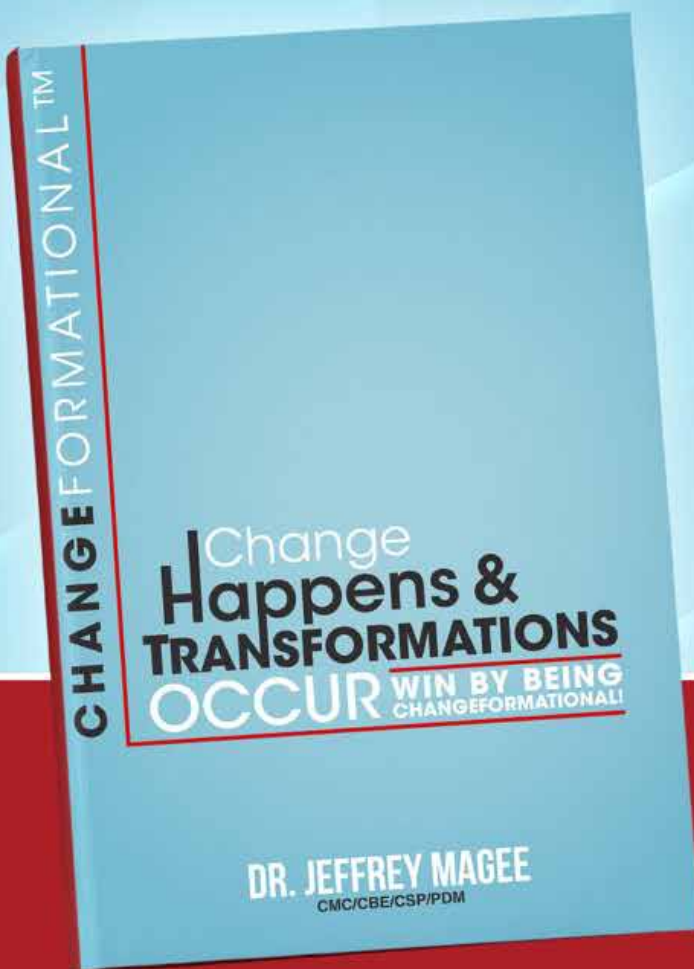
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NIDO QUBEIN

Insights on Performance with Dr. Nido Qubein

Recently I had the opportunity to visit with one of my Mentors. As a business entrepreneur, immigrant, Chairman-of-the-Board of the billion-dollar Great Harvest Bread Company, President of High Point University, lecturer, author and guiding light to thousands I am excited to share the reflective insights from Dr. Nido Qubein.

What qualities have you found make star performers really tick today and for tomorrow? And, "What qualities detract from the general workforce performance?"

The star performers are always committed not merely interested in their work. They are not easily 'imitatable' and they are highly focused on outcomes.

You are a proven achiever, with wins and losses, you never seem to give-up, some would call you a "Catalyst-Thought-Leader" as you push others to THINK, what are some of the top points you would advise a manager/leader/entrepreneur/business-owner to know or do, to reap the best performance out of their team and organization in this post COVID global market reboot?

Thank you. Well, my observation from coaching and working with hundreds of successful leaders over the years is that the top performers understand the difference between growth (quantitative), progress (constant improvement), and success (achieving the desired outcomes). They learn to develop sound judgment, create a sense of situational awareness, and ensure that they bring relevance to every area of their work and life.

Inspiration – If you could identify one person that has inspired you and shaped who you are today, that you have not given the 'Shout-

Out" to as much as you would have liked to, who would that be? And, why?

My mother. She had a fourth-grade education but a post graduate degree in common sense. I learned the best lessons from her: Who you spend time with is who you become (your circle of influence defines who you are); What you choose is what you get (your present circumstances do not determine where you end up--they only define where you start); and how you change is how you succeed (change is necessary for meaningful transformation). Somehow my mother was a genius at effective leadership.

Hiring – If someone were to apply for a job with you (or your organization) today, what should they know and do to get noticed and considered?

They must demonstrate an understanding about the power of positioning. How people perceive you. What people believe you can do for their organization. How you present yourself physically, intellectually, and relationally. Obviously, knowledge and skill and experience play a major factor too but those are prerequisites.

What is the single most important mindset that people must possess over the next 3-to-5 years for them to be more competitive?

Differentiate between "value" and "appreciated value". Everyone provides value, somehow in one form or another. The key is to ensure that what you offer will be appreciated by recipients and that it helps them to overcome their fear, fulfill their needs, achieve their aspirations, and accomplish their goals. It's called "enlightened self-interest". Your client must see a big benefit in working specifically with you.

Who is responsible for the competency/knowledge development of an employee/individual? Why?

The most unfair thing is to be over someone and have them to do something you have not trained them to do. Best outcomes come from cohesive and collaborative team effort. The leader must inform, involve, inspire, inspect, improve, and increase the capacity of their team.

With a recent Gallup Study indicating that upwards of 56% of workers surveyed

indicated that they are dis-engaged in today's workplace, why does it appear that so many are so complacent today and how do you engage them to levels of proactive accountability?

Well, societal matters do tend to influence our perspectives and frames of reference. We are living in different, not necessarily, better times. Leaders today are highly challenged to educate (explain the why) not just train (show the how). Often, employees are more interested in the now than the future view of their career. Obviously, there are indeed extraordinary people in the workplace, but we have to accept the fact that we must continually work hard at having the right people in the right places and focus on the context of our work, not merely the content.

If you had two minutes to mentor a high potential individual, what would you share with them from your professional vantage point of experience, training and responsibility to be effective or successful?

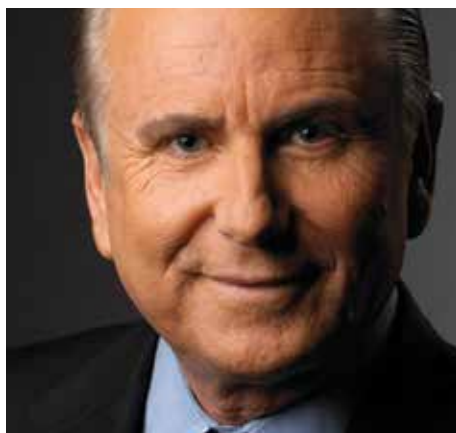
I'd say focus is more important than intelligence. Know the difference between time management and energy management. Focus more often on elephants (big opportunities) not rabbits (commonplace goals). Be microscopic where you must but telescopic to get ahead.

Many talk about PASSION as a core element to sustained success within individuals, what is our view?

Passion means different things to different people. It's wonderful to believe in the vision, mission, and values of what you do. But passion must be partnered with strategic planning, intentional congruence, and hard work to truly get to the top. Clearly, work is more pleasurable and fulfilling when it is akin to who you are and what you love. But solid leaders understand that relational capital is about working with all types of people in all kinds of environments.

What makes for an effective and dependable Follower?

A good listener. A discerning person. A team player. An all-vectorial human being. A vector is a mathematical direction with force. Some folks are auto-vectorial (it's all about me and my wishes and needs).



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When you are interacting with other business leaders/owners and celebrities today, what tends to be the burning issues that keep you all up at night, that others should be aware of?

Commit to the “and then some” principle. Do all you need to do ... and then some. Shoot for the optimal in all your engagements, not the minimum. You can't have uphill goals and downhill patterns.

What are your thoughts about VALUES, how they shape the individual and organization? Why do you Believe we have such a Values disconnect or collision in our Society today?

Wow! No values no principles. No foundational direction for life. No guideposts to follow. We must stand for something or fall for anything. To believe in ourselves must first mean we “define” who we are and who we seek to become. Our values must be consistent with our beliefs and always be respectful of others too. We can all celebrate our similarities and appreciate our differences.

With what you know and have experienced in your life, what would the today you share with the 23 year old you, if you could talk to YOU then?

Who among us can predict the future with impeccable accuracy? The world is moving so fast. Technology is created so innovative and swiftly that's it's hard to be fully prepared. So, the best leaders I know create within themselves a healthy dose of faithful courage and inquiring expectancy. Sometimes, it isn't about knowing the answers as it is knowing what questions to ask. Therein lies the transformative journey towards attaining wisdom.

What are your thoughts on professionals having Mentors or Sponsors in their career journeys? What advice would you share for how to maximize that relationship?

We all need heroes, models, and mentors in our lives. School is never out for the pro. A star performer understands the value of lifelong learning. They choose to live in a zone where they can access people they want to model and they seek coach-

es and teachers who can enable them to nourish their minds and nurture their personhood.

We live in a world today where VALUES are tossed around as the catalyst and baseline to how people think and behave. Talk to us a little on VALUES and their value?

I am a person anchored on my faith in God, my love for family, and my patriotism to my country. I see the good in others and seek to build bridges of understanding with everyone. I am privileged and blessed to lead High Point University in North Carolina where we are referred to nationally as the premier life skills university, preparing our graduates for the world as it is going to be (not as it is or as it was). We are anchored on our campus by our values of learning, serving, believing, and growing in sustainably healthy and purposeful ways. After all, what is leadership if it isn't lighting the pathways for all those who cross your path in life. Joyful living is the byproduct of one's impact in the lives of others. Leadership is noble and needed today more than ever before.

KHALLID SHABAZZ

Inspiration is an Organizational Strategic Imperative

Inspire Until I Expire

Inspiration can sometimes seem nontangible or unreachable on an everyday-level. Feeling inspired in life and in the workplace is an important part of sustaining purpose, and motivation. However, while inspiration might seem elusive at times there must be environment that can employ strategies where it can be harnessed frequently. Inspiration is a leading indicator of discretionary effort which drives productivity. Work environments that inspire productivity, and an innovative culture are proven components that help shape, foster, and inspire a shared ownership in organizations.

"Culture does not change because we desire to change it. Culture changes when the organization is transformed; the culture reflects the realities of people working together every day." - Frances Hesselbein

The definition of inspiration comes from the Latin (*Inspiarare*), meaning "to breathe into," it's an animating force, a great idea or a profound truth revealed to a person. But inspiration in the case of a strategic environment means new ideas, creativity, and a culture of learning that organizations can tap into by creating an innovative solution. The benefits of inspiration are immeasurable, I often quote Helen Keller on optimism. "She says "optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."

Having hope and confidence can play a key role in unlocking creativity, self-esteem, and self-worth. People who regularly feel inspired are more engaged at work and feel more confident to solve problems and create new things. Inspiration in organizations provide feelings hope, anticipation, and confidence in people.

Inspiration requires tenacity!

"Be Courageous Challenge Orthodoxy. Stand up for what you believe in. Be sure when you are talking to your grandchildren years from now you will have a good story to tell." - Amal Clooney

When we are inspired, we feel motivated, empowered, and capable of achieving anything we set our minds to.

It's a force that can not only unlock our potential but also help others achieve dreams that seemed unattainable. Inspiration is a tap on the shoulder, a gnawing powerful force that can drive us to greatness and impact the world in a powerful way.

Our uninspired shortcomings as leaders are usually the unfinished business of a failed project, a missed opportunity, or being risk adverse and not wanting to fail. We must look into our leadership souls, and summon the courage to put inspiration over ego, work on the daily healing of our old wounds of uninspired trauma, forging the confidence to bring forth our true authentic selves as opposed to a cloned repetition of our former leadership models of zero defect.

As a leader I wanted to develop a plan of action, a personal mission statement, something to guide me to inspire people to be innovative in thought and action as a daily leader guide. I came up with the four (I's) of Inspiration. They are my guide and plan of action as I come into any organization!

The Four I's (Eyes) of Inspiration

Interdict Mediocrity

A positive leader relationship fosters and environment where Soldiers & Leaders feel comfortable exploring new opportunities, asking questions, and growing while exploring innovation. When Soldiers have the freedom to create things that align with organizational goals their interest in learning becomes more meaningful because it produces relevancy in their lives and therefore fosters shared ownership in the organization ideals.

Intercept Ignorance

Relying on a tried-and-true approach is often a harmless, a natural course of action in the chaotic, day-to-day craziness of an organization. However, when's the last time you heard someone say, "We've always done it this way"?

It was probably said with good intention, because it's generally synonymous with "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." This is not to say that you shouldn't learn from past success (and failure). However, resting on your activities is often subterfuge and simply relying on your past can lead to stagnation.



Infuse Excellence

The best Soldiers and most inspiring leaders know their unique passions, and because they are in touch with their best selves, they are better able to connect to and elevate others. They don't operate from a place of fear of what they won't get. Inspired Soldiers focus on what they can give because they have found a way to feel whole within the team concept.

Influenced by many but defined by none

Inspiration is a state of mind, which is a direct result of knowing that (*Inspiarare*), you are seeking to breathe an animating force, into the strategic environment! New ideas, creativity, and a culture of learning in organizations not only inspire people it also saves lives! I sincerely believe there must be a level of inspirational authenticity and unconventional creativity from the leader of organizations for it to raise its level of competencies and competitiveness for the future.

Chaplain (COL) Khallid M. Shabazz, Ph.D., DMIN

Khallid Shabazz holds two Doctorate Degrees: a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration and a Doctor of Ministry. He holds four Master's degrees. He is a recipient of the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, (8) Meritorious Service Medal Joint Army Commendation. He was also awarded the humanitarian award for outstanding volunteerism, The Saint Michael's Medal for service to Army Aviation, Saint Barbara's Award for service to the Field Artillery Corps.

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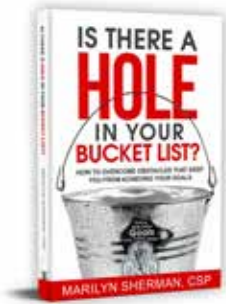
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MARILYN SHERMAN

Reducing Workplace Conflict

Starts with a Mindset Shift



When conflicts arise among team members in the workplace, it can create a toxic environment that hinders productivity and fosters negativity. One key to reducing conflict lies in shifting the mindset of the team members involved. Too many people fear conflict, so they avoid it. The results can be catastrophic if the conflict escalates to level where someone loses their temper. One way to change your mindset around conflict is to give people the tools necessary to work through issues. With the proper tools, people can feel more comfortable in uncomfortable conversations. Here are some practical ways to reduce conflict in the workplace and increase a positive culture.

Practice Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. Encouraging team members to practice empathy can significantly reduce conflict. When we understand the perspectives and emotions of others, we are more likely to be patient, supportive, and open to compromise. How can you practice empathy? Ask more questions. Learn to be curious and not defensive.

Communicate Openly and Effectively

Unnecessary conflict happens all the time due to misunderstandings and unclear communication. Encourage team members to express their thoughts, feelings, and needs in a clear and respectful manner, then get clarity that the message was heard and understood. Use phrases like, "I want to make sure we're on the same page."

Set Clear Expectations

Conflicts often arise when expectations of roles are not clear. Ensure that team members have a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and what is

expected of them. This can help to prevent misunderstandings and conflicts.

Lead by Example

Leaders play a crucial role in setting the tone for the team. If leaders model a positive mindset and effective conflict resolution strategies, team members are more likely to follow suit. When leaders take an active role to make sure each team member is seen and heard, it goes a long way in creating a culture of respect. When people feel seen, heard, and respected, they can be more comfortable having courageous conversations around conflict without feeling threatened.

Seek Feedback

Encourage team members to seek feedback from each other regularly. This can help to foster open communication and identify potential areas of conflict before they escalate. Even leaders can ask for feedback to make sure their intention of harmony is being represented by how they lead. The best time to have feedback conversations is when you are not in the middle of a conflict!

By adopting these practical strategies, team members can shift their mindset and create a more harmonious and productive work environment. It's important to remember that changing a mindset takes time and consistent effort, but the benefits of a positive and collaborative team are well worth it.

Hall of Fame business speaker Marilyn Sherman helps organizations increase their results through her workshops, books, and keynote presentations.

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doesn't
have to
mean
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Mastering Accountability



We can only inspire accountability. We can never bring it into existence by demanding it. This is the Principle of Accountability. The only way to master accountability is to change the way we think.

Accountability is not a way of doing. It is a way of thinking. Plenty of leaders talk about “holding people accountable” for certain narrowly defined outcomes: getting a report done on time, hitting a performance target, taking out the trash, whatever. What they do not grasp is that these are transactional commitments. They are items people can put onto their to-do lists and then check off. When we focus on the to-do list items, we overlook the relationship. This really is not accountability. It is manipulating people to do more for us. And it is not great leadership.

The real challenge for all of us is to begin approaching accountability as a way of thinking, and specifically, a way of thinking about the people in our lives. Accountability is all about keeping commitments to people—and the commitments that matter most are not tactical but relational. These commitments are not even necessary to speak about. They are taken on by leaders, and people know a leader has taken them on by the actions of the leader.

Tactical commitments are transactional. They are important. They lead to productivity. Increased productivity is good, but increased productivity does not equate to an increase in accountability.

We do need to get things done. We need to accomplish the things we say we are going to accomplish. We need to fulfill

the tasks in our job description. But these are baseline activities. If we are not doing what we are supposed to do and what we say we are going to do, we shouldn't still be employed. I see too many leaders who let underperforming people stay around and bring down the entire team. Everyone in your organization, not just the leaders, is either negatively or positively impacting the performance of everyone else.

Relational commitments are all about people. They are taken on by leaders who understand that they are both accountable to and accountable for their people. When leadership takes on and models accountability, they create a place, a culture, where people want to be their best. Relational commitments lead to accountability, and accountability will also lead to increased productivity.

There are ten specific relational commitments that define accountability. They are:

- I commit to helping individuals reach their potential and be their best.
- I commit to the truth.
- I commit to living the values.
- I commit to “It’s all of us.”
- I commit to embracing faults and failures as well as opportunities and successes.
- I commit to sound financial principles.
- I commit to a safe space.
- I commit to “My word is my bond.”
- I commit to stand with you when all hell breaks loose.
- I commit to a good reputation.

How do you master accountability? By fixating less on the to-do list and thinking more about the long-term relational commitments you make to people. When you see people differently, commit to them differently, and treat them differently, you get a different result.

How committed are you to the people you lead? How do these commitments drive the decisions you make? It is following through these relational commitments, day after day after day, that builds powerful bonds, creates enduring loyalty, and inspires people to want to be accountable to you, the team, and the organization.

Sam Silverstein, CSP, CPAE is the founder of The Accountability Institute and the Certified Accountability Advisor™ program. He is the author of 12 books on accountability, workplace culture, and leadership. With more than 30 years of experience, he works with companies and government organizations worldwide to help them design and build sustainable, high-performance cultures to build stronger businesses, communities, and people.

SamSilverstein.com
TheAccountabilityInstitute.com



KELLY SWANSON

New Leaders

Do You have a “Trust Me” Story



As leaders, we quickly learn that there is a difference in telling people what to do, and making them want to do it. There is a difference in the leader they follow because they have to, and the leader they follow because they trust. Trust is the critical ingredient for connection and engagement. And story is one of the shortest paths to create trust and connection for a new leader who hasn't had the time to earn the trust of his team.

I was hired to work with a team of scientists to help them improve their storytelling skills so that they could be stronger ambassadors for the projects they were creating. The first step of our process together was to get the team excited about learning a new skill, and to get their buy-in on this new skill set that the CEO wanted them to master. We had to convince them that this was important, and worth adding another project to their already packed schedules.

This also happened to be the CEO's first month on the job and this meeting was going to be his first chance to address the team as a whole and get their buy in on this storytelling project. He asked me to help him with his presentation. He knew he would be standing in front of a room full of crossed arms and hesitancy. This makes sense, as most people distrust someone new before they trust them. Trust is earned

through words and actions. My job was to help him get there faster. And story was going to be our secret weapon.

He told me all the reasons they needed to become stronger in their storytelling skills. And how important it was that they were passionate about how they described the work that they do. He had a few other things he needed to tell them, but I asked him to put all of that to the side, and focus on something else first. "Tell me why this work matters so much to you personally," I said. "Tell me about the moment that you knew this would be your career path. Is there a face you see when you think about the work that you do?"

He got a far away look in his eye, and told me about the time he was fifteen years old and was sent on a missionary trip to Africa. He told me about the hunger and the poverty. He told me about the malnutrition and the haunted looks in their eyes. And how on every corner, they were offered sugared up soft drinks. And how so many years later, the scene is still the same. And how it haunts him. That's when I knew, he said, that I wanted to help feed the world. Not crap food. But good food. Over there, and over here. The foods we eat are killing us. That's why I am proud to be CEO of this company. Because we work to make people healthy and strong. With the technology that we have at our

fingertips, and the brilliant scientists we have gathered from all over the globe, we can heal the world one plant at a time. But people won't know how much this matters, until we tell them. We must know how to tell our story.

"That's your presentation," I said.

The CEO didn't have to script out his story. He simply spoke from the heart. And as he spoke, I watched the team lock eyes with him. I watched arms lower. I saw heads nod. I watched them all step into a collective story. They trusted their new leader to guide them.

Stories humanize a brand. They humanize a sales person. They also humanize a leader.

Award-Winning Storyteller, Hall of Fame Motivational Speaker, Comedian, Author of *The Story Formula*, *Who Hijacked My Fairy Tale*, *The Affirmation Journal for Positive Thinking*, Creator of Story Impact Academy and The Persuasion Principle, celebrity mentor in The Fashion Hero TV show season 1, and now starring in her own one-woman-show *Who Hijacked My Fairy Tale?* appearing in theaters all over the country. And last but not least, editor of the *Prides Hollow Gazette* - her small town with the big heart, where the people stay but the gossip travels.

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ALAN WEISS

What will Leaders Need in the No Normal®

I coined and trademarked the phrase “No Normal” to remove us from the fantasy that there will be a “return to normal” or even a “new normal.” We are in an age of constant shift, change, ambiguity, volatility, and disruption.

So, we had better get good at dealing with it as leaders. Here are my candidates for the skills and behaviors that will serve us the best.

Managing the transient worker. We have to understand that there are jobs and occasions that permit (or require) remote work, those that require office work, and those that will vary. There will be full time employees and temporary employees. We have to manage and lead them all, accepting this diverse participation.

Metrics for true performance and not merely “presence.” Expectations must be created and agreed upon by leader and employees. Insisting that physical presence is important when it’s not really required is an exercise in bureaucracy and misplaced emphasis.

The 40-hour work week myth. No one IN offices “works” 40 hours a week, unless you’re desperately chasing a partner position in a law firm. People are naturally distracted and need down time. Thus, it’s pointless to try to remotely enforce a 40-hour work week for people located at home.

The environment for intrinsic motivation. You can’t motivate others because motivation is intrinsic. But you can establish an environment that is conducive to motivation, no matter where people are located. That’s the goal.

Voids of personal fulfillment. Leaders will be decreasingly surrounded by subordinates. There will be less traditional socialization. That needs to be accepted and replaced through other interactive dynamics.

The loss of travel. While staying out of the clutches of TSA might seem highly attractive, the opportunities to book a business trip and tack on some time for your family and vacation are less available than ever before. So is the ability to just “get away” and recharge the batteries. We need to feel free to indulge ourselves.

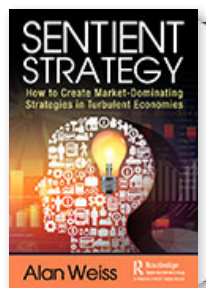
The need for volunteerism. Fulfillment can come from community work, service club membership, mentoring, and so forth. We need to rethink this, moving

from a favor only for others to a favor for ourselves, as well.

Abandoning the guilt for not meeting archaic work standards. Too many of us feel guilty for engaging in recreation or entertainment “during the work day.” We need to let that go. So long as we’re accomplishing expected results we’re doing just fine. You don’t have a business life and a personal life, you simply have your life.

Pushing accountability over and down. It hard to demand accountability and keep people on track when we don’t see them during the normal course of work. We have to hire and nurture people who can maintain their own accountability (and we need to make customers accountable, too).

Triaging customers. If you believe “the customer is always right” or “all customers are equal,” you’re living in the 50s. We owe it to our best customers to provide elite treatment, and we owe it to the investors in our business to provide standards to which customers must adhere.



Creating honest and authentic communications: Leaders need to hear from employees, customers, suppliers, and investors what their perceptions are of organizational decisions and behaviors.

Embracing true diversity and not merely virtue-signaling. Isn’t it ironic that many universities preach the importance of diversity but support the shouting down of speakers with opposing views? You can often take the true temperature of diversity by watching who sits with whom in the cafeteria.

Facing the true fallacies of retirement. The belief that one can leave work at 65 and support a decent lifestyle until 80 or so is facetious except for the inordinately wealthy. We have to provide continued opportunities for everyone to contribute in some fashion in return for equitable



compensation, and to show them this respect. Age does not mean irrelevancy.

Physical, psychological, and emotional health. When people don’t feel well, physically, mentally, or emotionally, they don’t perform well. We need to be as supportive as possible in the workplace and provide help where needed through expert third parties.

Embracing technology in proper proportion. AI will neither control the world nor be a panacea. We need to apply it correctly to improve productivity, not undermine it. (Those self-checkout lines in stores seem to require employees to help out!)

The speed imperative: Speed is as important as content. If Amazon Prime can get something to the buyer the next day, so can you. The age of “pay attention to our phone choices as the options have changed” is coming to a deserved end.

Thriving in ambiguity, disruption, and volatility. These are all part of the No Normal that will continue to evolve and challenge us. It shouldn’t be a defensive battle, but rather an offensive one. The best firms—Dyson, FedEx, Apple, Amazon, Uber, Jet Blue—have thrived on it.

Alleviation of excess stress. Building a health club for employees to work off stress at 5 pm and then dumping more stress on them at 9 am the next morning makes zero sense, unless you’re training hamsters.

Being an effective avatar. No one in organizations believes what they read or hear, they only believe what they see. What behaviors to emulate are they seeing in you?

Knowing how to create personal meaning. Life is not a search for meaning,

continued on page 49

NATHAN WHITTACRE

MGM Cyberattack

Lessons for Business Resilience



In a shocking turn of events, MGM Properties, the hospitality and gaming giant boasting ownership of 31 distinct properties, including the renowned Las Vegas MGM Grand, fell victim to a devastating cyberattack. The repercussions were nothing short of catastrophic, with their Las Vegas establishments forced to shut down, gambling operations halted, and guests unable to access their hotel rooms. This unfortunate incident, orchestrated by a group known as “Scattered Spider,” affiliated with the ransomware-as-a-service entity BlackCat, serves as a stark reminder of the ever-growing threats lurking in the digital realm. In this article, we delve into the details of the MGM cyberattack, the modus operandi of Scattered Spider, and the broader implications for businesses and their stakeholders.

The Anatomy of the Attack

Scattered Spider, or UNC3944, is a notorious group known for their audacious cyberattacks. Their malicious tactics involve compromising organizations, stealing valuable data, and wreaking havoc within the target’s virtual infrastructure. They employ a sinister combination of techniques, including virtual serial and administrative console attacks, as well as the deliberate injection of vulnerable signed drivers to escalate privileges and traverse through networks. The final blow is delivered through the deployment of the BlackCat ransomware, a creation of UNC3507, also known as ALPHV.

The Pervasive BlackCat Ransomware

BlackCat ransomware has gained notoriety in recent times, with its involvement in nearly 12% of all cybersecurity at-

tacks in 2022. High-profile victims, such as semiconductor manufacturer Seiko and the global auditing and accounting giant Mazars Group, fell prey to this insidious ransomware. Its widespread use underscores the urgency for organizations to fortify their cybersecurity measures.

Social Engineering as a Gateway

Scattered Spider relies heavily on social engineering to infiltrate their targets, manipulating their victims psychologically to gain illicit access. Operating within the United States provides them with a strategic advantage over foreign adversaries, enabling them to execute scams, such as persuading victims to click malicious links, accept multifactor authentication requests, or run harmful executables.

The Data Heist and Double Extortion

Once inside a targeted system, Scattered Spider exfiltrates sensitive data, including business documents, personal information such as social security numbers, and client and customer data. This stolen trove becomes the ammunition for double extortion. In the case of MGM Grand, the notorious BlackCat ransomware, developed by ALPHV, is deployed to extort a ransom from the victim organization. Should the target refuse to comply, Scattered Spider leverages its affiliate network to publicly release the stolen information, escalating the pressure.

The Vulnerable Entry Point

The MGM Grand cyberattack originated from an unexpected source: a phone call to the MGM helpdesk, where hackers cunningly manipulated employees into granting access. This scenario underscores the pressing need for a robust Security Operations (SecOps) framework, which includes comprehensive training and certifications. To learn how to safeguard against such social engineering exploits, check out our webinar on social engineering: *The Human Firewall: Empowering Businesses to Defend Against Social Engineering*

Key Takeaways for Businesses and Employees

While the full scope of the MGM situation is still unfolding, several critical lessons emerge from this cyberattack:

Defense In Depth: Implementing a layered cybersecurity approach is essential to prevent a minor breach from escalating into a business catastrophe.

Continuous Education: All employees must receive ongoing education on recognizing and resisting social engineering attempts via email, text messages, or phone calls.

Proactive Testing: Organizations should regularly assess their employees’ ability to resist social engineering tactics and provide retraining as needed.

Supplier and Partner Accountability: Wise executives should encourage their suppliers, contractors, and business partners to assess and enhance their security measures, reducing the overall exposure to risk.

Beyond Businesses: Protecting Visitors and Stakeholders

The impact of the MGM Grand cyberattack extends beyond the corporate realm. Anyone who has visited MGM properties, stayed at their hospitality establishments, or signed up for lines of credit may be at risk. While the extent of data theft remains unclear, vigilance is paramount. Stakeholders should monitor their bank accounts, credit/debit cards, and social security information for any suspicious activity.

The MGM Grand cyberattack serves as a stark reminder that cybersecurity threats are ever-present and evolving. Organizations must remain vigilant, invest in robust defense strategies, and educate their employees to safeguard against social engineering exploits. Furthermore, businesses should extend their security standards to suppliers and partners, fostering a network of accountability. As the investigation into the MGM Grand incident continues, stakeholders must stay alert and take proactive measures to protect their sensitive information. In an era of digital interconnectedness, the MGM Grand breach is a potent wake-up call for us all.

Nathan Whittacre is the founder and CEO of Stimulus Technologies, a national managed technology provider of IT, cybersecurity, VoIP, and Internet services. He is the author of *The CEO’s Digital Survival Guide*, hosts the podcast *Stimulus Tech Talk*, and helps businesses of all sizes use technology to improve their businesses. www.NathanWhittacre.com



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ZIG ZIGLAR

Making Good Decisions

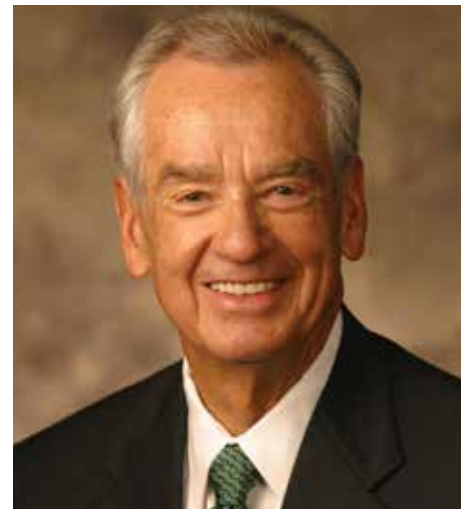
Here's How Zig does it

If you find it difficult to make decisions, or you worry that your decisions are not good decisions, or you lack the confidence to make decisions in a timely manner . . . you're not alone!

Many people express their concerns about their decision-making abilities. But if you ask them, "What's your routine for making decisions?" they often will tell you they don't have one. Truthfully, they do, but they don't recognize it, or they don't like it. Their decisions are based on SOMETHING, and if they stop and think about it they'll discover what it is. However, it's much better to purposefully and thoughtfully develop your decision-making system, and then follow it whenever you need to make decisions

If you ask Zig Ziglar how he makes decisions, he'll tell you that he follows some basic rules. Here they are, in his own words:

1. If I'm really tired, I don't make significant decisions (except in emergencies).
2. If someone is pressing me to decide something "right now," unless an immediate decision is critical, I say, "If I have to decide now, the answer is no. After I have had a chance to catch my breath and review the facts, there's the possibility it could be yes." Then I put the ball back in his or her court and ask, "Do you want my decision now, or should we wait?"
3. I like to determine the maximum benefit of a decision, assuming that everything goes my way. Then I ask, "Suppose nothing goes my way? Suppose this doesn't develop and materialize as I expect it to? What is my maximum exposure? What would I lose?"
4. For significant business-related decisions, I run them past my advisors. These people are successful in their businesses and professions and have a considerable amount of knowledge, experience, and wisdom, all of which are musts in the decision-making process. I get their advice and follow their recommendations, with good results in most cases. If the decision is too minor to involve my advisors but I still want input, I get my family together to look at the pros and cons.
5. I like to pray about my decisions. I ask God to help me see the truth of



my motives and to lead me in the way I should go. If I'm about to make an unwise decision, I simply don't have peace about that decision, and I consequently act on that feeling of unease. I ask myself, "How will this decision affect all the areas of my life—personal, family, career, financial, physical, mental and spiritual?"

Obviously, not all decisions affect all areas, but if the decision involves a financial reward but also carries considerable family sacrifice, for example, I think carefully as to whether what I give up is compensated for by what I gain.

Final note: Prioritize your decisions. Some are more urgent than others!

... Zig's decision making process can be found in his best-selling book, *Success For Dummies*.

Prioritize your decisions, and
I'LL SEE YOU AT THE TOP!

A World War II veteran, Zig Ziglar became a famous American motivational speaker, salesman, author, philanthropist, politician, trainer, and coach. With his Southern charm and lessons grounded in Christianity, he wrote over two dozen books and amassed a following of millions who were encouraged by his lessons for success.

Ziglar was an early supporter and mentor to Publisher Jeffrey Magee. He gifted a series of unpublished articles to **Performance Magazine**. Enjoy this timeless piece!

Ziglar.com

Bailey, continued from page 7

Step 5: Stay Authentic: Remember, while ChatGPT is a tool, your personal brand's heart lies in your authenticity. Use ChatGPT to amplify, not replace, your unique brilliance.

In conclusion, O Brilliant One, as you carve a niche for your personal brand in the digital realm, remember that tools like ChatGPT are not just technological marvels; they're extensions of your vision. Embrace them, harness their potential, and let your unique brilliance shine brighter in the vast digital cosmos.

Simon T. Bailey has the insight and inspiration to help you find your spark and unleash your brilliance to the world. With more than 30 years of experience, he worked with over 2,000 companies in 50 countries. He has helped countless people find their spark – he will help you find yours.

SimonTBailey.com

Cohen, continued from page 11

transaction. Most important, it should lead to a recurring revenue stream. Denny Sabatini is the vice-president of sales for CMS Mid-Atlantic. What does he sell? Cemetery plots. Denny advocates putting yourself in a service mode first and avoiding the temptation of the quick hit. It's all about providing solutions for the customer.

The above concepts come from the book *Startup Smarts*, authored by myself and the late Michael Rybarski, a pioneer in generational marketing. Success results from creating and managing companies that are purpose-driven, people-centric and socially altruistic. Witness the success of Tom's Shoes and Bombas socks, for example. Examine what your company stands for and ask yourself if you would find yourself attracted to a company that delivers on the promises you espouse.

Barry Cohen is the Managing Member of AdLab Media Communications, LLC. He is the author of the book *10 Ways to Screw Up an Ad Campaign*; co-author of *Startup Smarts* and the new book, *10 Ways to Get Sued by Anyone & Everyone*; *The Small Business Owner's Guide to Staying Out of Court*. Currently, he helps entrepreneurs and professionals become recognized as thought leaders.

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Creighton, continued from page 13

the COVID – 19 vaccine. As stated by Dr. Albert Bourla (Chairman and CEO, Pfizer in his book (Moonshot: Inside Pfizer's Nine-Month Race to Make the Impossible Possible), they abandoned standard product development practices in favor of a fast time to market Agile team approach. They operated as a highly integrated, end to end operation, from early research to late-stage trials and clinical trials. They communicated in a seating arrangement of chairs called "The Purpose Circle" instead of at a table. Dr. Bourla developed Pfizer's streamlined R&D process. Their mission statement - "Breakthroughs that change patient's lives".

To conclude, An Agile Management Philosophy influences actions, dialogue and practices stimulating innovation which create value by being relevant, resilient and durable.

Jerry Creighton, Sr, MBA, is an experienced entrepreneur, business executive, business owner, angel investor and author of the book *The Quest for Durability*. He served as the Executive Director of New Jersey Institute of Technology's (NJIT) iconic Enterprise Development Center, a 90 plus company business incubator and commercialization center.

www.JerryCreighton.com

Frazier, continued from page 16

single person to master all five skills. That's why organizations may need different leaders in different circumstances and at different times. It is important to look at your organization's current challenges and opportunities to determine what type of leadership is needed. Then get the help you need and put together the right team to get your organization to the next level. That's how you'll be able to scale your business!

Andrew Frazier, MBA, CFA, founder of Small Business Pro University, is an expert business coach, consultant, and trainer. He worked 1-on-1 with 1,000+ business owners and taught tens of thousands of people about business. He has written three business books, the most recent being *The Masterpreneur Playbook*. In addition, he hosts the "Leadership LIVE @ 8:05! Talking Small Business Livestream/Podcast." Andrew's broad range of diverse experiences includes serving as a Navy Officer, Corporate Executive, Non-Profit Leader, Real Estate Investor, Adjunct Professor, and Serial Entrepreneur. He is an MIT engineering grad and earned his MBA from NYU.

www.SBProU.com

Hayzlett, continued from page 24

How are you engaging with your community? Are you doing anything that makes them feel valued and special? As a content creator, I want to give our C-Suite Network members something of value all the time. Whether it's a member-only session, one-on-time time or making an introduction or two to your connections, that's what creates value and increases the size of the community.

In a world that often feels fragmented and in need of salvation, becoming a Hero business offers hope to many who are looking for a glimmer of hope. Being in business doesn't have to be cruel or cold-hearted. As leaders, we embody the idea that everyone can rise to the occasion, confront adversity, and make the world a better place. Embrace purpose, develop skills, foster collaboration, and uphold strong ethics. And encourage others to embrace the Hero within.

Jeffrey Hayzlett is a primetime television and podcast host, keynote speaker, Chairman & CEO of C-Suite Network, a best-selling author, and a global business celebrity.

Hayzlett.com

Magee, continued from page 29

little minds that have made a career of talking about and around change only. And, by sidestepping the influencer's discussing the what if's around being transformational one day, and recognized the endless leveraged opportunities "every day" to drive a semi-truck through the doors of opportunity before them and be Changeformational – But this means you are willing to ignore and blow up rules, and write a new story of excellence and success!

It is the Changeformationalst that possess the situational awareness to possess strategic effectiveness.

C-Suite Leaders & Military Generals come to Dr. Jeffrey Magee for Enterprise-wide Talent Development & Human Capital Succession Architecture.

Dr. Jeffrey Magee, PhD/CBE/CMC/CSP/PDM is the "Transformational Thought Leaders Leader." Jeffrey is publisher and editor-in-chief of **Professional Performance Magazine**, editor of the Leadership Mastery and Sales Mastery blogs, a former nationally syndicated Radio Talk Show Host, as well as a publisher author of 31 books, in 21 languages, including four best-sellers (*Your Trajectory Code*) and 4 graduate management text books (*The Managerial-Leadership Bible*).

He is a leadership columnist and highly sought global professional speaker on performance psychology. The recipient of the United States Junior Chamber's Ten Outstanding Young Americans (TOYA) Award, and President George Bush & the United States National GUARD's awarded Jeff with the Total Team Victory Medal for civilian contribution to the Armed Services.

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Networking truly is a marathon, not a sprint. It involves building authentic relationships, establishing credibility and trust, earning referrals, fostering deep connections, and embracing a long-term vision. By understanding and embracing the principles of networking, individuals can unlock its true power in creating opportunities, fostering collaborations, and achieving professional success. So, lace up those networking shoes, grab a handful of networking themed snacks, and let's embark on this marathon together. Embrace the journey, cultivate authentic relationships with a sprinkle of humor, and forge lasting connections that will

propel us forward on our path to success. And don't forget to laugh along the way because, let's face it, networking can be serious business, but a little humor makes the journey all the more enjoyable!

Called the "father of modern networking" by CNN, Dr. Ivan Misner is a New York Times bestselling author. He is also the Founder & Chief Visionary Officer of BNI, the world's largest business networking organization. His latest book, *Who's in Your Room 2nd Edition* is about the secret to creating your best life.

IvanMisner.com
 BNI.com

Powell, continued from page 35

industry who focuses more on service during economic downturn, and more on new cars during economic growth.

Just because the economy shifts, doesn't mean it can't be your best year on record. But you have to understand how these shifts are impacting your customers, how their challenges change, and then reposition your products and services to meet those needs. You do that, you will not

only protect your margins, you will turn all of this uncertainty to your competitive advantage.

Meridith Elliott Powell is an award-winning author, keynote speaker and business strategist. With a background in corporate sales and leadership, her career expands over several industries including banking, healthcare and finance. Meridith worked her way up from an entry-level position to earn her seat at the C-Suite table.

MeridithElliottPowell.com

Weiss, continued from page 45

there is no guru on the mountain top. Life is about creating meaning, and that requires a broad and profound sense of self and empathy for others.

Alan Weiss, PhD is our longest continuing contributor. He's the author of over 60 books appearing in 16 languages, is a Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants, and an inductee into the Speakers Hall of Fame®.

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Larnell Vickers ★★★★★
 CEO at Larnell Vickers Enterprises

"Kent has supported me in growing my client leads in a very genuine, authentic and thoughtful way. It is because of his leadership style, heart for people and strategic mind that he is able to clearly understand the market and how to best position organizations in connecting and serving their ideal clients powerfully. Alan Kent has been a great thought partner in this work. He has a strong ability to relate, adapt and serve as a key guide throughout the implementation and execution process. Thankful to have Kent as a partner in this work."



Briar Dougherty ★★★★★
 CEO & Founder at Career Organic

"Kent and his team are truly remarkable. They care about creating a support system that envelops their clients' pain points and produces results. As a coach, the biggest goal is to help as many people as possible, but reaching out to prospects with the over saturation of social media and ads, it is so difficult to nurture and start real conversations. Kent's approach captures the speed of the market while encouraging the human side of consultations, scheduling and increasing lead gen efforts from a holistic approach."



Bob Britz ★★★★★
 Founder at careerOOACH™

"Kent and Linda have been our main contacts at AlphaCoast. They have been stellar on all levels. Fast answers, good advice, and a product that produces. Last I checked we had over 1000 leads, about 70 meetings, and 20 clients as a result of their good work and program. There are a scant few companies like AlphaCoast and we researched almost all we could find. Besides it is working incredibly well, the best part is working with Kent and Linda - Win, Win, Win for us."



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Call Shani Coleman, Redevelopment Manager, at 702-229-6551 for information on Symphony Park and other development opportunities in downtown Las Vegas.



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