
“Gateways”to your true potential

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ABERFOYLE ASSOCIATES, LLC

“SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS OUTCOMES”

The Top 10 Things That Put You At Risk For Job Burnout

1. **Suffering on the job.** Source: Unaware of distinction: pain vs. suffering. Pain is inevitable; suffering is optional.
2. **Feeling pushed to produce, beyond your natural limit.** Source: Poor boundary-setting skills.
3. **Over promising and barely keeping up.** Source: Adrenaline addiction.
4. **Giving too much, not getting enough back.** Source: Unappreciative environment.
5. **People at work exhaust/drain you.** Source: Wrong environment for you.
6. **Not getting ahead when you expected to.** Source: Disappointment, high expectations.
7. **You lose interest in what you used to enjoy doing.** Source: You’ve probably outgrown it.
8. **Feelings of sadness, depression.** Source: Depression, Disappointment.
9. **Anger, withheld communications.** Source: Integrity is out, perpetrations.
10. **Personal Problems.** Source: Marital, Addictions, etc.

Submitted by Thomas J. Leonard, who can be reached on the web at <http://thomasleonard.com> Copyright 1997 - 2003, by Coach U, all rights reserved.

In order to succeed, you must know what you are doing, like what you are doing, and believe in what you are doing.

– Will Rogers



12 Tips To Polishing Your Business Plan

1. If you are using the plan to secure external financing, ensure that the market, management and product sections are strong. Most importantly, the market must be large enough to produce a strong three-five year growth rate in sales. Sales must be explosive (e.g. go from \$1 million to \$10 million in three-five years)
2. Be succinct and to the point if the plan has an external audience. A caveat here: this largely depends on your audience. Investors who evaluate many business plans over the course of a year will prefer short (15-20 page), concise plans. Private equity investors or lenders may prefer longer plans with which to evaluate the business.
3. Be positive whenever possible, but avoid unsubstantiated statements. Use action-oriented words. Do not weaken your plan by using qualifiers such as: may, might, probably, maybe, perhaps, should, could.
4. Proceed Slowly; Gain Momentum. Many of the problems encountered while collecting data and formulating the business plan can be avoided by carefully preparing yourself and your team for the task. Like any other project, designing an explicit task strategy, which includes contingencies, will save time and focus the quality of the work.
5. Clearly define areas of responsibilities between team members and make information sharing as easy as possible, in order to deal with inevitable overlap.
6. Have a clear definition of who the business plan “customers” are. You may want to adjust your strategy and orientation if the plan is intended for a group of predetermined investors or if it is to be used internally only.

Continued on page 2

Important Things Life Teaches You

Pick-up in the Rain

One night, at 11:30 PM, an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride.



Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her - generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab.

She seemed to be in a big hurry! She wrote down his address, thanked him and drove away.

Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read: Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others.

Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole

Valuable Management Skills

Here are the six skills people want most from new hires. These skills would also be beneficial for advancing in your present job.

- 1) Public speaking.
- 2) Financial management.
- 3) People management.
- 4) Interviewing skills.
- 5) Training skills.
- 6) Writing abilities.



Source: Andrew Sherwood in *HR Magazine*

Continued from page 1 – *Polishing Your Business Plan*

7. Sketch the plan first before concentrating on one section. This should include preparing a preliminary product - *market matrix* (graphs all products in the industry versus market segments), a *preliminary industry matrix* (graphs all competitors including substitutes in the industry versus the areas in which they compete), a *preliminary operations milestone sketch* and a brief *strategy analysis*. Preliminary work is vital to help focus your resources and anticipate problems.
8. Substantially complete the groundwork before preparing financial information. Trying to put pro-forma statements together without having all the necessary data is a frustrating and time consuming experience. As financial information is collected, deposit it in a central folder. This speeds up the process as marketing, strategy and operations information come together.
9. Talk to customers as early as possible. Talking to customers is the best way to get a real sense of the product, the need it is serving and the industry in which it is being delivered. Customers can often point out excellent sources of data.
10. Build Credibility; Don't Try to Whitewash. If a particular area of the business strategy contains a high degree of risk, make sure it is apparent that the risk has been identified and contingencies have been prepared to deal with it. One section that sounds fake or improperly optimistic creates skepticism for the entire plan.
11. Perform reality checks. The business plan is intended to logically present the overall strategy and viability of a firm. Because of the amount of speculation involved in formulating business strategy, it is useful to explicitly ask whether particular aspects of the business strategy (small and large) seem sufficiently "real".
12. First impressions are critical. Good organization, proper grammar, and correctly spelled words are all important.



For more information on 'Polishing Your Business Plan' contact:

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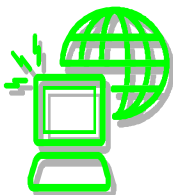
The Top 10 Signs That An Employee May Be In 'Active Addiction'

The cost to business of employee addiction is tremendous. Many addicts (which includes alcoholics) become extremely skilled at hiding or explaining away events related to their addictions. Encouragement from an employer can be a powerful prompt to the employee to get appropriate treatment and so return to full productivity. (Note: Automatic termination of actively addicted employees is neither humane nor advisable. First, addiction is a disease, not a moral choice. Second, many people who are addicted may be covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act.) Although some of the following may occur in employees who are not addicted, the more that apply, the more likely it is that the employee suffers from addiction in some form or other.

1. Frequent absences or lateness, especially on Mondays.
(However, because Mondays are well known as a danger signal for addiction, some people will force themselves to go to work Monday, but take other days off.)
2. Often leaves early on the day s/he receives paycheck.
3. Without any apparent explanation, the employee's performance varies greatly between periods of being appropriately effective and periods of extreme ineffectiveness.
4. Borrows money from colleagues, is tardy about paying it back, and often has financial problems.
5. Evasive or over-generalizes during conversations about weekend activities
6. Does not mix people from his/her personal life with business life. Does not include significant other or family members in employee activities where they would be welcome (e.g. picnics, Christmas parties, weddings).
7. The employee has grandiose and unrealistic ideas that do not relate to his/her real life.
8. Has more personal crises and difficulties than most people.
9. Has frequent mood swings and often appears 'below par' in early morning.
10. If after-work activities with colleagues include drinking, employee drinks more, faster, than others. May leave and return without explanation.



Submitted by Diana Robinson, Ph.D., CASAC, Copyright 1997 -2003, by Coach U, all rights reserved.



Site Of The Month

The conservation group *Trust for Public Land* highlights local "success stories" across the nation. Founded in 1972, the Trust for Public Land is the only national nonprofit working exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being.

Just click on your geographic region to learn about what's new and what's hot in preservation efforts. The internet address is: www.tpl.org

Why do we call a sure thing a "cinch"?

Racing fans love to find a sure thing, a horse that's a cinch to win. As sure as there is a saddle on that horse, the nag can't lose—or so they've been told. As a matter of fact, the origin of "cinch", meaning a sure thing, comes from saddling a horse.

It started with the Spanish word cincha, which was Americanized into cinch during the 1849 California Gold Rush. The cincha was the rope Mexicans used to secure their saddle to a horse. Prospectors in the Gold Rush were accustomed to buckled straps to perform that task. But the buckles needed refastening during the day, while the cincha, or cinch, held fast all day without adjustment. Once you fastened the cinch, it was a sure thing. And sure enough, that's what the word came to mean.

Source: *A Dictionary Of Americanisms*, Mitford M. Mathews, Ed.

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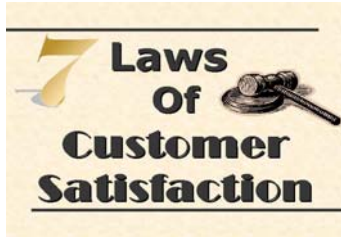
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These customer-satisfaction laws will keep you ahead of your competition, says Ken Makovsky of Makovsky and Co.:

1. **Treat** the customers you have as though they're prospects.
2. **View customers** as partners—members of your team.
3. **Consider recruitment** as serious business — and hire only the best.
4. **Give your** staff members the tools they need to build skills and develop professionally. And evaluate them on what they accomplish, not hours worked.
5. **Prepare for** the inevitable conflicts that arise in any customer relationship with this thought in mind: “It’s how you handle problems that sets one professional or organization apart”.
6. **Invite customer** complaints instead of just responding to what comes in.
7. **Foster exchanges** among your organization’s groups and individuals to get their ideas on how to better satisfy customers, and test what you assume is working—even your best programs.

Adapted from Communications Briefings - *The Public Relations Strategist*, cited in *Executive Report on Customer Satisfaction*, 215 Park Ave. S., Ste. 1301, New York, NY 10003.

“Strategies for significant and lasting Change”

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