

Expect More
from 2009



Strategies for Success from Leading Experts in Personal and Professional Development

With Compliments From
Gihan Perera

My contribution is on page 3. I hope you find it valuable.



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Sell Umbrellas When It's Raining – Gihan Perera

I visited Rome last year, and unfortunately it rained all four days I was there. But I did see smart marketers in action.

Rome is full of street vendors and hawkers. When the sun is shining, they sell handbags, jewellery and religious items. But as soon as it starts raining, out come the umbrellas. I was impressed by the way they switched products so quickly, depending on the weather.

Hmmm ... Selling umbrellas when it's raining, and not selling them when it stops raining. Not exactly a marketing breakthrough, right? In fact, it might seem obvious to you.



But wait – not so fast!

I wonder whether **you** are as smart as these hawkers? Nothing personal, but I see a lot of people who don't follow this simple marketing principle.

As business becomes more competitive, and we head into a possible ongoing economic downturn in 2009, it's more important than ever to focus on the *value* you offer to your market.

Let me point out five mistakes that many businesses make:

1. **Selling umbrellas when it's not raining:** Are you sure there's a real demand for your product/service? Or are you so in love with it that you haven't checked whether your clients actually need it?
2. **Selling handbags when it IS raining:** Are you really solving their most important problems? Or are there more important things on your client's mind than you, your products and your services? If so, they just don't have time to think about you.
3. **Selling umbrellas to people who already have them:** Are you reaching the specific niche market that most needs your services? Or are you just taking a scatter-gun approach, marketing to everybody and hoping the right people just happen to notice you?
4. **Hoping wet and bedraggled customers will find you:** Are you actively involved in marketing? Or are you just expecting customers to stumble across you?
5. **Thinking you're the only umbrella salesperson in town:** Are you watching your competition and continually staying ahead of them? Or are you hoping customers will just happen to pick you out of the crowd? Those street vendors in Rome are assertive! And they have to be, of course, because they're competing with five others on the same street corner.



Are you making any of these mistakes? If so, you're probably losing business – fast. Follow the example from a street vendor in Rome, and learn to sell umbrellas when it's raining!

Gihan Perera is passionate about helping you get more from the ideas in your head, the words that come out of your mouth, and the amazing potential at your fingertips. If you want to deliver your ideas to more people for more impact and more money, visit www.GihanPerera.com and download the complimentary special report "*Get Active*".

Diamonds in the Rough – Nikki Vescovi

It's often hard to see the opportunities in our lives as they sometimes show up in unexpected ways. They frequently appear as "diamonds in the rough".

What if the relationships in our lives are also "diamonds in the rough"? What if we were able to recognise the unique facets of someone else's personality and appreciate them for their beauty. Even more importantly, what if we were able to know just how to present and work with that facet to really get the most from it? What if it also reflected back to us more about ourselves?



Finding the Diamonds

When we meet people it is often valuable to understand the facet of the diamond that they are presenting to you. When we understand their facet of the diamond we can better interact with them and present information to them just the way they want it.

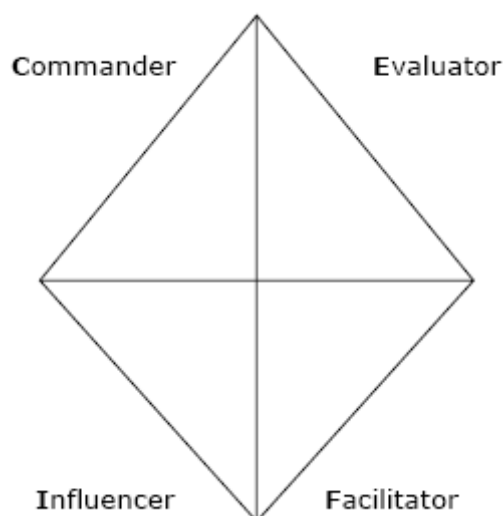
There are four facets to the diamond, and the trick is to *See If (CE-IF)* you can find them and know what to give them to polish that diamond in the rough and make it shine.

Commander: great to sell to! Make decisions quickly. Give them bottom-line results and Return on Investment. You only need to ask them 1-2 times to get the sale. Likes to have the choice between options.

Evaluator: needs time to make the decision. Rushing them will only drive them further away. Have ten times more information than you think you will need. Wants facts, figures and statistics to back up any decision. May need to present 4-10 times to get the sale. Must have time to process and evaluate.

Influencer: loves recognition. Great at starting tasks. Not always great at following through. Loves people, stories, anecdotes. Will make decision after 2-3 times.

Facilitator: these people are the glue holding things together. They consider everyone that is involved. They also need time to get everyone's buy-in. Approach them 4-7 times.



Knowing who you are approaching, and how to approach them can make a huge difference in gaining acceptance. It is also important to know your preferred style as we usually sell to people the way we would like to be sold.

As we start to look around, at both our personal and professional relationships, we will start to discover even more "Diamonds in the Rough." Most importantly, we won't overlook opportunities and can make our own diamonds shine in 2009!

Nikki Vescovi is an expert in creating connections that get results. Work less, make more money, and have more fun NOW. Get her free report, "*The Connection Factor: Your Secret to Success*" which shows 5 simple tips so you can connect with anyone, any time, anywhere, at www.NikkiVescovi.com.

Make 2009 Your Best Year EVER! – Rowdy McLean

Another year – another bunch of ideas, dreams and unfulfilled promises? Or a year of outstanding results punctuated by celebrations of success!

Every year I hear people make New Year's resolutions about the amazing goals they have and how they are going to have the best year ever. I speak to those people toward the end of the year and hear stories of why this did not happen or that did not work out, how this wasn't right or that didn't come together. How it's ok because there is always next year.

The trouble is there won't always be next year, time is ticking and the reality is, you will NEVER be the age that you are right now as you read this, EVER again!



You cannot turn the clock back and the longer you wait before you cross off some of those things on your wish list the more things you will need to compress into the limited time you have left.

Turn your bright ideas into brilliant results?

You will be surprised at what you are capable of if you just take care of a few small things. 1. Procrastination is the killer of dreams, put it off and put it off and your dreams are done for. Don't wait for this to be right or that to occur because the best circumstances may never arrive. Take action now and learn on the journey if you have to. 2. Perfection is the poison. Some people never get started because they want things to be perfect, they plan and prepare and refine and review and discuss and consider and plan and prepare and discuss and consider and refine and review, an endless circle. There never is going to be a perfect situation. By all means set yourself up as best you can, but act! Nothing was ever achieved without action. A journey of 100 miles starts with 1 step, take your first step toward your best year ever NOW!

I have the privilege of mentoring CEO's of large companies, thought leaders and entrepreneurs and the difference between average achievement and awesome results is the successful ones "get stuff done" – they take action!

You are capable of far more than you imagine....

So let's take stock. What is one thing you REALLY want to achieve in 2009? No I mean something you REALLY REALLY want to achieve in 2009. Write it down on a piece of card (you may download a goal card from my website www.goya.net.au) make sure it is written in the positive – for example "I will lose 10kgs and weigh 87kgs by xx/xx" rather than "I want to lose 10kgs"; or "I will learn to type at 80 words/minute by xx/xx" rather than "I will learn to type". Make sure you put a date (keeps you on track). Also write down who you will share this with (they will hold you accountable) Put the card in a place you can see it every day or in several places (home, work, car) then start to take steps toward your goal, chase it down bit by bit, step by step, don't let anyone steal it away (this includes you!) Have no fear and make no excuses. Some people watch things happen, some people ask what happened and some people make things happen.

Rowdy McLean is one of Australia most popular speakers and the author of "Average to awesome- the art of getting things done!" and the facilitator of the motivational seminars "Get off your arse- you are capable of more than you imagine" Visit www.rowdy.com.au for free ebooks and newsletters.

Drowning in Email? Try this S.O.S! – Donna Hanson

I recently surveyed my e-zine database and asked the question "What is the ONE thing about email that frustrates you the MOST?" The overwhelming response was THE VOLUME RECEIVED.

This was no surprise to me. It confirmed everything audiences at presentations were telling me....they were drowning in a sea of emails!

So how did this happen?

Unfortunately, it wasn't like a visit from Santa, we went to sleep one night with an empty Inbox only to wake up to a mountain of messages requiring "immediate" attention.

It has been a progression over time, a vague expectation as to its use by both individuals and organisations. Initially email was fantastic, quick replies, no need for long drawn out niceties, we seemed to be getting lots done. But suddenly the floodgates opened. Now it can feel like the only way to contact someone is via email. Responses can take 4-5 emails over days or weeks. So what can we do to fix it?

Send out an Email S.O.S!

S = **Stop** Sending

Yes you heard me right, stop using this tool of modern communication to send messages – the more you send the more you will receive. Try using the telephone, organizing a face to face meeting, or if technology suits, schedule time for an on-line chat session.

O = **Offline**

Try putting a note in your email signature to tell the receiver of your message that you only respond to email at certain times. You may want to state times – between 9-10am and 4-5pm or say once a day. This creates an expectation that if a message is sent outside these times, don't expect a response. Useful if you work part time. i.e. let senders know you are only in Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

S = Tell Others to **Stop** Sending You Email

Recently former Beatle Ringo Starr declared, "Don't send me fan mail after the 20th October....as I will not be answering it". How powerful is that? **Tell** your colleagues if you don't want to be cc'd or bcc'd on communications – watch the volume drop! Suggest regular calls or meetings instead to answer questions or deal with issues.

Why is it so??

Expectations around email can vary from person to person. If we don't communicate our expectations to others, how can we expect to have them met? So what ACTION are you going to take today to save yourself from drowning in email tomorrow???

Donna Hanson is The Technology Translator. She is the author of *RECLAIM Your Inbox* and a specialist in assisting organisations and individuals to FAST TRACK their computer productivity with everyday software such as email, Excel™ and Word™. Sign up to her complimentary *Monthly Productivity Pointer* to start FAST TRACKING your computer productivity.
www.primesolutions.net.au



Create Big Waves – David Beard

When I was young I lived near a big pond that had a small jetty out into the middle of it. I loved to go there with my friends; we'd make up games and spend hours playing there. Our favourite game was to drop rocks from the end of the jetty into the middle of the pond.

Being boys we made it competitive and the challenge was to see how far we could get the circle of waves to spread out in the pond. Obviously, the bigger the rock the further the waves would go out.

The challenge became finding and being able to carry and throw the biggest rock.



As you get older, you need to work on the big rocks!

It's hard to imagine that this game is relevant to getting old, but it represents the challenge we all face as the years tick by. As we get older, there is the risk that our life can shrink. If your health and fitness deteriorates, the range of things you can do decreases. If you lose touch with friends, your social network can diminish. If you stop doing something you can lose the ability to do it. The circles get smaller and smaller.

Although this seems inevitable, there are things you can do to keep the circles of your life as big as possible. However like finding, carrying and throwing a big rock into the pond it takes effort; but the result is worth the effort and the alternative is a limited life.

What are the big rocks?

Health and fitness: Poor health is a major limiting factor for many older people so it is important to do whatever it takes to protect your health. What I've found though is that even healthy older people can end up not being able to do the things they want if they are not fit enough. Therefore staying as fit as possible is the most important rock you can work on. Doing exercise that gets you puffed a few times a week is essential, as is some strength training a couple of sessions a week.

Relationships: It's important to continue to develop new and stimulating relationships. As morbid as it sounds, if you live to be very old you'll outlive most of your friends, so relationships with younger people are essential. Continue to join new groups and develop relationships with people younger than you.

Purpose: Nothing gives you the motivation to get up and keep going better than having a cause or purpose. Whether it's volunteering your time to a charity or helping out with family, it's important to have something bigger than yourself to focus on. People who don't have an external purpose tend to focus on themselves and their life shrinks.

Start Now

It would be easy to put these off until you are old, but you can't really afford to delay. That's like waiting until your teeth ache before you start brushing them!

David Beard is the author of *"If I'd Only Known I'd Live This Long"* and a regular email newsletter *"Stay Sharp"*. He also speaks professionally and offers personalized Fitness Strategy Sessions to those wanting individual health and fitness advice. Visit www.lifelongfitness.net for details.

Lessons in Business Leadership from Gordon Ramsay – Ross Clennett

Gordon Ramsay is famous. Gordon Ramsay is famous for food. He's even more famous for using language not normally associated with family-friendly TV viewing. To me, *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares* is more than entertaining television; it provides a classic example of leadership in action.

Love him or hate him, you can't deny his success as a businessman: Ramsay owns 15 restaurants, is the star of five television shows and employs over 1,300 people in his various businesses. There's plenty to learn from this success.

Here are 5 major leadership lessons I gained from watching *Kitchen Nightmares*:



1. Ramsay asks questions and observes performance before he acts

Ramsay has no pre-conceived assumptions about any of the establishments he visits. Ramsay interviews the owner, eats the food, questions the chef, examines the kitchen and observes the front-of-house staff in action before he recommends any changes.

2. Ramsay appeals to an employee's pride

"Did you become a chef to serve up this rubbish?", *"Don't you want your father to be proud of you?"*, and *"How are you going to keep your house if you keep losing money every month?"* Ramsay knows permanent change in behavior comes from within.

3. Ramsay's gives everyone a second chance

Ramsay doesn't write off the arrogant, the inept, the lazy or the control freaks. He lets them know what he thinks, tells them what they need to do differently, shows them what to do and then let's them prove they are worth another chance (some aren't - the General Manager, Martin, from Dillions in New York was a classic case in point).

4. Ramsay ensures each staff member knows their job

Confused or blurred job roles (no head chef, multiple managers, etc) are a common trait in each failing restaurant. Ramsay ensures that each person has a specific job to do and that they know exactly how to carry out their role.

5. Ramsay praises people when they have delivered

It's amazing how the personal insults, swearing and heated conversations are forgotten in an instant when, after the night's meal service is complete, Ramsay tells the chef or manager; *"I was proud of you tonight"* or *"You were f**king brilliant tonight - well done"*.

Ramsay may not be the model leader that our parents wished us to be (I wouldn't advocate the swearing) but he fronts a reality television show that leaves all the others for dead as far as providing lessons in leadership and success in business.

Ross Clennett is a recruitment expert and the author of *"Succeed Quickly or Fail Slowly: A High Performance Framework for Recruiters"*. For a free copy of Ross's book or to read any of Ross's articles on recruitment please visit www.rossclennett.com

Growing Through Adversity – Sharonne Phillips

We face problems, difficulties and adversity in some form every day. And when times are tough it seems that more things are against us than for us. It is easy to get caught up in the anger and frustration of what is not going our way.

I think that there is true strength in this turmoil and that we can use it find our way to calm within and through the chaos.

What if our response was different?

When we are caught up in the detail of our problems we are often unable to think of anything else. We focus on the problem at hand – and every time we stop thinking or doing specific tasks unrelated to the problem, whenever we have a break, the problem takes over. It keeps us awake at night, it intrudes into our leisure time and it takes over our lives.

What would it be like if instead of being wrapped up in the problems and difficulties challenging us, we were able to think clearly and function effectively all the time? What if we could use these moments, these issues to enjoy our ability to cope and think about the situation differently?

Consider that what some people call stress, others consider to be the optimum set of circumstances for them to feel invigorated and alive. Studies have long acknowledged we need stressors to enable us to contribute and achieve – too little stimulus and we are bored and have trouble getting things done, too much and we can become ineffective and confused – unable to prioritise to finish anything.

Try these approaches...

There are two techniques I like to use when dealing with problems. One helps me to gain clarity over the issue so that I can solve it, and other allows me to cope with problems that I am not ready to solve, or cannot solve for any number of reasons.

1. Instead of trying to solve the whole problem, just solve one part of it. Break the problem into all the component parts that you can identify, then decide which part of the problem you can take action on to solve.
2. Remove yourself from the issue. Try looking at the problem as if you were someone unrelated to the implications and impact of the problem. Also, look at the problem as if from a great distance. Does this give you any new insights to help you with the problem?

The final word.

Being “stuck” in adversity depletes our energy, focus and attention. It can affect every aspect of our lives.

When you are stuck, get active. Do something completely unrelated to the issue at hand to give you a chance to recharge. Or, act on one aspect of the problem – something that is easy to do NOW!

Sharonne Phillips is the author of *“Simple Steps You Can Take to Survive the Current Financial Crisis”* and *“A Problem Solving Flow Chart”*. Visit www.SharonnePhillips.com and get your complimentary copies now.



Recharge Your Mind: Green Days – Glenn Capelli

In 1966 singer Petula Clarke had a hit record with the song *Colour My World*.

*Oh, you can colour my world
with sunshine yellow each day!
Oh, you can colour my world
with happiness all the way!
Just colour my world . . .*

My wife Lindy and I have taken the spirit of those lyrics to heart by colouring our world with some Green Days every calendar year. What are Green Days? Green Days are work-free days, days to rest, recharge, renew and refresh. Green Days are when we plan and discuss and think about all the aspects of our life other than our work, and given that we have been married and have run our business together for the last twenty years, Green Days have become vital to our relationship.



There are strict rules for Green Days

1. No working or meetings on green time
2. No making or taking work related phone calls or emails
3. No 'talking shop' or discussing work related 'stuff'

For many reasons, in today's sprint-paced world lots of workers don't take any real time-out to refresh and renew. Even on holidays they feel it necessary to allocate work into their 'free' time, they call the office or allow work issues to fill their mind. It can be particularly easy for people who live and work together to slip into work related discussions even when we know we should be having a day off. When Lindy and I are on Green Days we remind each other that this is our green time and we discipline ourselves to postpone any 'shop talk' until later.

You might feel you can't afford the time to have an entire Green Day but allocating a Green Afternoon or even a Green Hour will give you some recharge time. Its impossible to be creative when you feel permanently tired and run down. Structuring official Green Days into our diary marks a green tint of importance to our free time and in the same way we keep all our working engagements we stick to our Green Day appointments too.

As 'homo sapiens' we are also 'homo-ludens' *Man the playful*, and natural play, rest, relaxation, spontaneity and creativity is vital to our well-being. Why not try recharging your life with some green sustainable energy and plan some Green Days in your diary.

The Buddhists say '*When you eat a mandarin, eat a mandarin*'. They are reminding us to *be present for the moment*. I say be present in a Green Day, fill your mind with the magic and beauty of the day. For your on-going working and personal health, make it a priority to colour some green days into your world.

Glenn Capelli is an educator, professional speaker, author, songwriter, radio and television presenter and mentor. His *Thinking Caps* segment can be heard weekly every Tuesday afternoon on ABC Radio. You can find out more about Glenn and his work at www.glenncapelli.com or contact him at glenn@glenncapelli.com.

Spring Clean Your Conversation – Hugh Gyton

As we bring the New Year in it is always a great time to reflect on what we have been doing and how we can improve. We typically review our exercise, look at our diet, and maybe even where we are living and where our career is going. Rarely, if ever, do we stop and review our conversations. Yet they are fundamental to our success in building strong productive relationships both in and out of work. It is all too easy over the years to have developed bad conversational habits that may set your conversations up to fail. So there is no time like the present to spring clean your conversations and shine in 2009.



Get rid of the clutter

Those habitual whinges, go on you know what they are, that are now a habit; the noisy neighbours, the terrible congestion, or your troublesome teenagers. STOP IT! It's boring and you are not boring. Commit to de-cluttering the whinges for 2009.

Add sparkle

Conversations that sparkle have energy and life in them. Delivered with warmth and sincerity, they are a joy to listen to. It's easy to add sparkle to your conversations:

- Be focused on the conversation you are having. Avoid being distracted
- Draw on the positive. Be seen as having an optimistic approach to life and people will be attracted to your conversation.
- Find ways to compliment others daily. Be specific; the more specific the more believable and the more appreciated. Everyone loves a compliment.
- Smile. A smile lights up your face and welcomes others in to the conversation.

Unpack those boxes

OK we all do it, we categorise people and "put them in boxes" figuratively speaking. We may well have some people in our lives that we have labeled and boxed as being difficult to talk to. It could be one of your neighbours, a work colleague or even your boss. Whoever they are, with a difficult label attached to them you won't be surprised when your conversation goes downhill. So start off 2009 the way you mean to go on. Take that person out of the box marked "difficult." Reframe how you view them. See them as someone you are looking forward to getting to know. Be open and willing to have good conversations with them. Find common ground to talk about. Listen fully to what they say, talk at their pace and start building a relationship with them.

Rearrange things

Consider whose conversation and company you really enjoyed last year. Are you seeing enough of them? If not, avoid making the same mistake this year. Lock them in your diary now and schedule several times to catch up early in 2009. It could be meeting for dinner or weekends away. Whatever suits you make sure you are investing your time wisely for 2009 in the company of people you really enjoy.

Hugh Gyton, author of "*The Art of Conversation*" and founder of Just a conversation™, is in the business of changing peoples attitudes and behaviours to the conversations they have in order to improve performance.... in sales, leadership, and relationships. For more information on Selling is Just a conversation or coaching for success visit his website at www.justaconversation.com.

Get the Most from your Young Employees! – Alicia Curtis

Whether our economy is set to continue to boom or slow down in the next couple of years, it's more important than ever to have a fully engaged workforce building your business for the future. Many employers find it difficult to manage and motivate younger employees under the age of 30, otherwise known as Generation Y. I've worked with thousands of these young people to develop their leadership skills and knowledge. Here are my top tips for businesses to get more from their young employees.



5 Ways to Engage and Retain

1. Be the leader that they respect

Gone are the days of the autocratic boss; instead Gen Y's are responding to consultative and empowering leaders who inspire and motivate. Gen Y expects their boss to be their mentor and someone who leads by example.

2. Provide continuous learning opportunities

Training is integral to retain top young staff. If you help them build their resume, they have no reason to leave. Generation Y are looking for constant and continuous learning opportunities such as mentoring, inspiring role models, networking, soft skills training and access to advisors.

3. Develop your workplace culture

Generation Y see the workplace as an extension of their social network so the more you can enhance this, the more likely they are to stay for longer. Some questions to ask yourself: How would we describe our workplace culture? What non cash benefits do we provide for outcomes achieved? What flexibility do we offer?

4. Communicate clearly and with passion

What is your communication style and does it work with your young employees? Tips for personal communication include keeping it clear and succinct, involving your listeners in the conversation and making an effort to inspire people to do their best.

5. Help them develop their specialized career plan

Intentionally growing the employability of the young staff actually encourages them to stay in an organization. Generation Y employees crave workplaces that stretch, challenge and provide interesting and new learning experiences to build their resumes.

By harnessing the drive and the energy of the fast-paced, multi-skilled, self confident Generation Y's, you are promoting innovation and creating a sustainable future for your business. However, the true magic will come when you can effectively build on the talents of each generation in the workplace together. Good Luck!

Alicia Curtis has developed an exclusive online community for young professionals called the yGen club. It provides inspiration, direction and connection with others. It's a private network of the brightest young professionals from around Australia, assisting them with the most cutting edge tools and resources to build your career. Contact Alicia at alicia@aliciacurtis.com for more information or visit www.aliciacurtis.com/ygenclub.html for one month's free trial.

You Empowering You in 2009 – Maree Harris

No one can empower you! Only you can do that for yourself. I want you to believe that in 2009 you can live your personal and professional life from out of an empowering space – and sustain it for the whole year.

Empowerment is an energy and dynamic within you, that powers and drives everything you are and everything you do.

To be, or feel empowered, is to be able to feel, connect with and act on the *power within* you, to believe that you can take control of your life, rather than have it controlled by someone or something else.



Empowerment enables us to stretch to the edge of our potential. It inspires us to take the risk and walk the edge of the precipice to find what is most important to our lives.

We all have a unique and extraordinary power within us. It's like an energy or light deep inside us. It is an enabling power that releases and sets free. It is power that is uniquely yours. In a very real sense, no one can take it from you, unless you allow them to.

How To Empower Yourself in 2009

1. Know and Understand Yourself – Develop self-awareness.
2. Believe in and Trust Yourself.
3. Surround Yourself with Other Empowered and Empowering People and Live and Work in Empowering Spaces.
4. Gear Your Values Towards Your Authentic Self.
5. Create an Empowering Vision for Your Life and Empowering Goals that Motivate You To Achieve Great Things.
6. Make Your Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Well-being a Priority.
7. Act Assertively, but not Aggressively.
8. Take Risks to Create a New Future for Yourself.
9. Work in an Organisation that Empowers its Employees.
10. Really Understand Your Job so that You can Empower Yourself to Do it.
11. Build Good Empowering Relationships with Others.

If 2008 has left you depleted and drained, engage a coach or mentor at the beginning of the year to help you focus, rediscover your empowered self and set you on a road to great success and fulfillment. Having someone who believes in you when you find it difficult to believe in yourself is very empowering.

Maree Harris is the director of People Empowered, a leadership and people development company. She is the author of "*You Empowering You for Personal and Professional Success*". Visit www.peopleempowered.com.au, join her mailing list and receive your complimentary copy now.

Converting Casual Contacts into Business Contracts – Ricky Nowak

Some business people don't give a toss about how to network, believing past successes or their brand will open doors and business. However the savvy leader of 2009 builds business more effectively and economically, and relationships more easily, by establishing a networking plan strategically into their business plan.

Not only does this enable them to cut short their learning curve on "who's who in the zoo" but accelerates their ability to convert those contacts into contracts more quickly and easily.

So, if you're serious about growing your business, be one of a kind and not one of the same and ensure your personal brand stand out before your business brand.

1. Be in the moment when you network - if you suffer from premature exasperation by interrupting, talking too much or being impatient, people will stop listening before you finish speaking.
2. Don't give an elevator seminar on what you do – if you can't say it in 15 words they won't remember it.
3. Ask colleagues, associates or event organisers to specifically make a personal introduction to you to those you want to meet. Keep them in the loop of how things are developing and thank them by returning with something of value for them.
4. Don't be reluctant to ask your networks if they know others who may benefit from your products or services. Provide first hand evidence of what you do so they can talk from experience and value.
5. Take along several blank business cards for those who "don't have any with them...." or have forgotten them. When you leave, write three things on all cards about each person that was meaningful to them so you can follow up accurately.
6. Make contact soon after meeting prospects - don't believe email is good enough. It's just one of the same - not something different. Send a relevant article, have something delivered, and show them you have their best interests in mind by referring someone other than yourself that can add value in a different way. Be generous before you ask for favours, introductions, or sales.
7. Give back, not up if you don't get to second base immediately. Remember NO is only the first of maybe 7 steps you may need to get to YES!

Masterful networking builds business. The stronger your relationships the less likely you will get resistance. If that's important to you for 2009, convert casual contacts into business contracts by creating a strategic approach to networking and business connections that both you and your business partners will reap the rewards.

Ricky Nowak CSP supports and helps Leaders and their teams solve their people issues so they can get on with business. She is an international Speaker, Consultant and Executive Coach, and author of *"How to Make Good People Great Leaders and reap the rewards!"*, visit www.ricky.nowak.com and become a Member of her Leader's Program.



4 Sublimely Simple Rapport Tips – Paul Archer

Move Backwards

When you first meet a customer in person move backwards about a foot as soon as you make eye contact. This is a great little technique to show that you are non-threatening and do not want to put them under any undue pressure. A slight tilt of the head sideways has a similar result, it relieves pressure.

When sitting down, pull the chair back slightly – this also indicates a non threatening gesture.

Step into my Territory

In sales the message is respect zones and territory of your customer. Customers surround themselves with a bubble which we mustn't invade. They also have bubbles round their desks and cars.

Desks have an invisible mid line which you just do not cross, or indeed place your laptop. Items taken over to their side of the desk belong to the customer. A nice little trial close is to place something in the middle of the desk and if your customer takes it over to their side, they might be interested. Body bubbles are even more important. Roughly half a metre in size. Cross this as a salesperson at your peril. Be particularly wary of the zones of people who live outside cities who may well have a larger personal zone than people who have lived in the confines of a city all their lives.

Do the Bill Clinton

I'm sure you remember Bill Clinton, the President of the United States during the 1990's. He was probably the smoothest president of all time and had a knack of building rapport with almost anyone he met. Use his hand shake technique to good effect. Bill would reach out with his right hand to shake and then subtly use his left hand to touch or hold the elbow of his new friend. This would say to them ***"I'm a nice guy, you can trust me, I like you"***. You see touch is a very personal thing and not to be encouraged in sales. But the one place which is public is the spot between your elbow and your shoulder.

Can I Come in Please?

I've left the best one to last. You'll like this. I picked this tip up many years ago as a salesman for a life assurance company. When approaching a customer with the intention of being invited in to their home, I would always gesture by wiping my feet on their doormat. Now I didn't have dirty shoes but it was the physical movement and gesture that just asked for me to come in. It worked every time.

Next time you want to be invited in somewhere, just do the movement with your feet and watch as your customer is slowly hypnotised to say *"oh...do please come in"*



Paul is an international speaker, trainer, author and coach based in the UK. He specialises in rapport selling and rapport sales management and can help you earn your sales bonuses.

Sign up to our weekly sales and sales coaching tips by sending an email to tips@paularcher.com or visit www.archertraining.co.uk

Where You Lead, Will They Follow – Helen Macdonald

Whether you are in a formal leadership position in a company of any size; a team leader or supervisor in one of these organizations; or even if the only person you have to lead is yourself, there are two basic secrets to success that will make a difference to your results in 2009.

Looking at the ladder to leadership success, the first element is your alignment with the process and outcomes and second is the amount of energy you put in and get back from the whole experience. I call these the “Alignment Agenda” and the “Energy Equation”. Get them both right and results will flow. Miss-fire on one or both and you’ll experience blocks and limits to your flow.



The Alignment Agenda - All the Ducks in a Row

Looking at some definitions of alignment, we find interesting references to the arranging of something (people/tasks/functions) in an orderly position relative to something else and the correct position or positioning of different components (people? materials? resources?) relative to one another, so that they perform properly.

Imagine an organization that had all its people and resources arranged to perform at their optimum levels. What amazing results it could achieve!

To get the Alignment Agenda right, we need to look at steps including communicating Purpose; finding Focus and determining Direction. If we are completely aligned with the processes we need to use to get our results then that will create, by default, better results. If we are trying to do things that “feel wrong”, it’s unlikely that we will be able to generate optimum outcomes. Similarly, if the outcomes don’t get us juiced up and enthused, we’re unlikely to be able to sustain the effort required to maintain the output.

The Energy Equation - Energy follows Focus

So, let’s look at the second element of success in Leadership – energy! The formal definitions help us to visualise energetic leadership – it includes a sense of liveliness and forcefulness, an ability to deliver vigorous effort or action and an ability or power to make things work. Isn’t that the kind of leader we would all like to be?

The Energy Equation requires input in three main zones – Connection; Action and Attitude. Pouring some power into these three aspects of the business will have dramatic impact on results.

The organizations that flourish, in good times and in bad, are the ones lead by people who have an ability to bring people together so they can achieve better results and who can energise and inspire themselves and others to create an environment where everybody is encouraged to do their best. I call that a “Juiced Up” organization and that’s where I would choose to work. How ‘bout you?

Helen Mac is an expert on “Leading Women and those who Lead them.” As an international speaker, author & master facilitator, she works with organizations around the Asia-Pacific rim to build positive, productive, profitable workplaces. She has developed an assessment tool to help identify the gaps in your Leadership Ladder, which will focus your improvement efforts into the areas of biggest impact. Visit www.HelenMac.com and complete your complimentary personal leadership audit now.

Success in Business is Common Sense – John Stanley

“Successful businesses do not have a manager – they have a leader”

When countries move into recession, some businesses fail while others prosper. Success, in business is up to you. Successful businesses operate on the same principles. Many call it common sense, but this is, in fact, “rare sense”. If it were common sense then everyone in the world would be running a successful business. Here a few ideas that may help you run your business more successfully in 2009.



Be Consistent

Once you start to improve your business you need to be consistent. Staff take note of little things. I recently worked with a business where the boss would walk in one day and be the best of friends, saying ‘Good morning’ to everyone, next day he ignored his staff. They did not know what to expect, became unmotivated and the result was a lower-than-average sale per customer. Be consistent and, if you want to be successful, make sure you are positive.

Focus on the Customer

Everyone in business says the customer is king. Few, however, introduce policies to ensure this happens. A customer-focused organisational culture is not about slogans. It is about believing the customer is truly king. That means empowering people to make decisions. You need a written company policy and your staff need confidence that you will support them in all customer-related decisions.

Get Results through People

Successful companies get results through their people, based on three important elements:

1. Involve staff in performance surveys concerning customer service by giving them the results and letting them come up with ideas for improving standards.
2. Involve them in new work programmes and changes in the business. Listen to their ideas and incorporate them into your plans.
3. Delegate authority and take on the role of coach rather than manager.

Successful businesses are led, not managed.

Seven Essentials

If you want a successful business and you have not already started, I suggest you start doing the following things today:

1. Produce a written company procedures policy and make it available to all staff.
2. Have a written customer-friendly guarantee policy.
3. Have a written complaints policy that everyone knows and uses.
4. Create a company structure with the customer at the top.
5. Train all staff in positive customer service.
6. Hold monthly team meetings where positive ideas are shared.
7. Train and delegate – it is your only option.

John Stanley is the Retail Guru. Visit www.johnstanleyretailguru.com for hundreds more retail tips and trends insights.

Making a Difference in 2009 – Ann Villiers

When we consider the contributions of Australians who have left lasting legacies we find there are qualities they share, regardless of the time, the place, the project. Reflecting these qualities takes a particular mindset, a way of thinking about what is possible, and then taking action.



People sitting still won't make a difference. People thinking but not acting won't make a difference. But people who take action with enthusiasm, will.

Here are five qualities for making a difference:

Patience and perseverance

To make significant changes that are worthwhile takes time. Despite media impressions to the contrary, major changes do not happen overnight. They take years, possibly decades. If you want to make a difference be prepared to stick at it, be there for the long haul, year in and year out.

The value of organisations

People who have fought for issues recognise that you can't do things alone. Combined efforts make a difference. These days combining the efforts of many organisations may be needed to deal with today's complex issues.

Passion

People who make a difference have a passion for their subject or project. They tend to be optimistic, energetic, have courage, willing to be first and stand out from the crowd.

Vision

People who make a difference have a vision for how things could be and are prepared to take a stand in the face of scepticism and opposition. Yet they persevere, finding supporters, seizing opportunities, making things happen.

Strong people skills

Difference-makers can talk with anyone, build relationships, and persuade people to support their cause. They can picture the possible and excite people's hearts and minds.

What is possible for you in 2009?

How do you want to make a difference for yourself, your family, your team, your community? Are you prepared to make this happen?

I encourage you to decide today how you will make a difference in 2009. Certainly Australia needs people who are willing to contribute, to forge our future and leave a lasting legacy.

Dr Ann Villiers is Australia's only *Mental Nutritionist*®, drawing on iconic Australian stories for timeless wisdom and practical strategies, to illuminate what it takes to make a difference today. Please visit www.mentálnutrition.com, for thinking flexibly, speaking confidently.

Making Affirmations Work For You – Clive Murphy

An affirmation (from Latin affirmare, to assert) is the declaration that something is true or a positive value judgement. The aim is to say the affirmation regularly with the view of achieving the desired state. For example, two common affirmations are “I love and accept myself” and “Today is a great day”.



The problem is, I regularly consult with people who say affirmations yet comment “It doesn’t feel right saying them” and “They don’t seem to work”.

This got me thinking. There had to be a better way.

I was about to present a one hour talk on motivation to around 2,000 people. I decided to listen to the speaker before me who was speaking about having affirmations like “I am a winner” and “I am successful”. As he continued to say these affirmations it became clear to me he believed he was not achieving these states and I asked myself the question “Why are you a winner or a success?”

Know the Reason “Why”

I had one of those light bulb moments.

People say affirmations trying to convince themselves of the state they would like to achieve. Not seeing yourself in the desired state means you are living in “lack”.

When saying an affirmation, place “because” at the end. “I am a winner because ...”, “I love and accept myself because ... ” and “Today is a great day because ...”.

Can you easily complete these affirmations or are you having problems? Most have problems as they don’t know the reason “why” – which is why they say the affirmation – to convince themselves. This convincing seldom works.

Make the “because” specific. For example, “Today is a great day because I make each and every experience work to my advantage” or “Today is a great day because the sun is shining and I am spending it with my wonderful family”. You are now clear on why your day is great. Because you “know”, you no longer have to convince yourself.

Get Into The Feeling

Words by themselves are hollow. As we operate on feeling, it is important to feel yourself already achieving the desired state. For example, “I am grateful for everything I have” means nothing without the reasons why you are grateful. Now take this a step further and feel how grateful you are for each of the reasons – for being able to help people, for what you own and have accomplished.

Now your affirmation has meaning (evidence) and you can feel yourself already achieving the desired state.

Clive Murphy helps program you for success. He is a best selling author who specialises in helping you achieve high self esteem and confidence. His method is new, simple, easy to implement and is regarded by many as one of the best available. To learn about the power of your mind and help realise your potential, go to www.clivemurphy.com.

The Secrets to Managing Behaviour – Candy Tymson

When someone's behaviour is difficult there tends to be a natural tendency to resort to negative responses or punishment in the hope to change things. Recent research however clearly shows that in fact it's positive reinforcement that works best.

As they say in the old song: 'accentuate the positive (in order to) eliminate the negative'. How often do you hear people saying—'no one seems to notice when we do something right—they only notice if we do something wrong and then all hell breaks loose!'

The main problem with this approach (besides the fact that people don't generally feel appreciated) is that if they do do something wrong, they often are at great pains to hide their mistake—which can make things even worse.



In their book *The One Minute Manager* Blanchard & Johnson suggest:

'Help People Reach Their Full Potential—Catch Them Doing Something Right'.

Feedback about performance, particularly positive feedback, is a powerful way to change people's behaviour. Here's how it works:

1. Catch them doing something right
2. Praise immediately—saying what they did right. Be specific
3. Tell them how it helps the organisation and other people working there
4. Encourage them to do more of the same
5. Smile and/or use appropriate touch to reinforce your support of them

Pinpointing Behaviour to Change It

If a behaviour is to be changed or modified, it must be possible to clearly identify it and measure it. It is easy to label behaviour, for example, to say someone is lazy, or disagreeable, but is that helpful when giving feedback?

Remember: What Gets Measured—Gets Done.

It is only when you 'pinpoint' the behaviour you can actually measure it. So if someone is 'disagreeable' their behaviour could be pinpointed by the fact they argue and complain. Rather than saying someone is lazy, it is more measurable if you pinpoint their behaviour, for example, they don't initiate projects or check their work for accuracy.

Once someone's behaviour, either desirable or undesirable, has been pinpointed, then you have a tool to manage that behaviour—rather than relying on what may be seen as your own prejudices or perceptions of what is actually happening.

This approach works extremely well when rating or monitoring a call centre for example. When people are given the list of expected behaviours, and how they are to be performed, then a meaningful appraisal of their performance can be made—and measured!

Candy Tymson CSP is an expert in business communication and gender differences. Visit www.tymson.com.au to complete her gender values questionnaire – it's fascinating.

Make Marketing Simple – Penny Burke

I have worked in marketing for over 23 years (I don't look that old, do I?!) and across a range of sectors – from fast moving consumer goods to retail, industrial to pharmaceutical, and more recently, large scale social and behavioural change campaigns for the public sector. I've been lucky enough to be involved in a whole gamut of marketing 'outputs' – from some of Australia's best loved TV campaigns to the printing of 1.7 million fridge magnets, to the development of countless marketing plans with no advertising campaigns whatsoever.



And I've noticed over the years there's a real tendency to make marketing much more complex than it really should be. The practice of consumerism is actually a pretty straightforward enterprise, and generally your 'target audience' doesn't spend anywhere near as much time thinking about you (or your competitors for that matter) as you might think they do. Frankly, they don't care that much!

So I reckon there are three rules you really need to get your head around in 2009 to get you off to a good start...

The three rules for marketing clarity!

- 1. Work out what you're famous for** – What are you best at? What really differentiates you from your competition? What do your customers say you are famous for? Not just the functional stuff - but how you make your customers feel *emotionally*. It sounds straightforward – but trust me, ask a few of your customers why they love you and more often than not it will be a surprising journey for you.
- 2. Deliver it consistently** – Once you know what you're famous for, the critical next step is making sure you 'own' that position every way possible. The best products, services and companies are not those that come from nowhere in a short space of time – they are organisations that consistently deliver every time, so that customers know in their heart and their soul exactly what they are buying. Consistency wins the race every time.
- 3. Leverage your point of difference** – When you know your point of difference, it is natural to rally round and leverage it as much as possible. But what often happens is that those in charge of the marketing get bored with it, much more quickly than your customers. They start to want to develop 'other strengths' that the company or organisation could stand for – forgetting that it is better to stand for something than to stand for nothing. If I was to throw five tennis balls at you, you might be lucky to catch one in the ensuing schemozzle. But if I threw you just one tennis ball – you'd pretty likely catch it. And that's how it is with key messages about your product or service – you need to find the one key point of difference, and hammer the point home over and over and over in every way you can to your customer base. Er, that's *how* you get famous!

And hey, good luck! Keep it simple and make 2009 the year of getting famous!

Penny Burke is the author of several marketing books and e-books including *Ideas 2* where she outlines the key barriers to gaining greater commitment from your customers. Visit www.essencecomms.com.au and get your complimentary marketing e-books now.

Think BRIC! – David Thomas

Whichever way you look at it – and there are plenty of differing views on the causes, effects and remedies to the current financial crisis – 2009 is going to be a tough year for developed markets. If you're in business, or looking to invest, or advising others to invest, expand or diversify their interests, you're going to find it a challenge to maintain or grow your bottom line over the next 12 months, particularly if you restrict your thinking to your local domestic market.



The saying goes that you should “keep your head while others are losing theirs”, and now is the time to start looking for growth opportunities in countries that display the economic fundamentals that aren't available in Australia and the other developed countries. I'm of course referring to the BRIC countries: Brazil, Russia, India and China, plus other key emerging markets like Dubai, South Africa, Vietnam and Korea.

In all the gloom and doom that's been written, said and broadcast, one fact remains virtually undisputed - the BRIC countries are the world's only hope of maintaining global GDP growth in the years ahead. With their large populations, growing numbers of middle class consumers, strong financial reserves, non existent debt and global growth ambitions, these economies offer great prospects for investors, entrepreneurs and organisations with an eye on the future rather than a fear of the past. As one pundit put it recently: "Its Shanghai, Mumbai, Dubai...or goodbye!".

There are plenty of alternative views on which of the BRICs and/or other emerging countries offer the best economic prospects but in all the gloom and doom that's been written recently:

- The very worst projected annual growth rate I have seen for China in 2009 is 8% (now, wouldn't that be a nice problem to have...)
- India will add at least 30 million additional skilled workers in sectors such as health care, banking and financial services, retail, auto and construction by 2015
- Russia will continue to be the world's largest exporter of natural gas, the second largest oil exporter and the third largest energy consumer
- A combination of new resource wealth (including the discovery of massive new oil reserves), strong financial health and the emergence of millions of citizens into the middle class will transform Brazil into one of the world's leading economies in the next few years
- The BRIC countries are committed to investing US\$22 trillion in new infrastructure (roads, rail, airports, bridges, ports etc.) by 2020
- Nobody appears to disagree that the BRIC countries as a whole are in far better shape than any country, or group of countries, from the developed world

So, my challenge to you is to start learning, researching, travelling, networking and exploring opportunities in the BRIC countries, and start preparing for the new business and investment opportunities of the 21st Century. It's going to be critical for you to become as familiar with these new markets as you are with the more traditional markets of America, Europe and Japan. And the time to do this is **now!**

David Thomas is the Principal of Think Global Consulting. Visit www.thinkglobal.com.au to receive *Insights*, a regular update on global trends and business hotspots around the world, and contact him to assist you with your global expansion plans, cross-cultural challenges or to help you decide how to get started offshore.

The Power of Discomfort – Margaret Gill

My stiff muscles ached and the soft leather couches were the ultimate reward for trudging up a steep cliff in near whiteout conditions. My emotions had taken a massive beating in the preceding days of a tough love business boot camp. I was left feeling about as attractive and lively as a wrung out dishrag.

Seated in a luxury villa perched on a snow swept rocky mountain ridge is an odd place to find business enlightenment, but I did.

Protected by floor to ceiling windows I gazed out on a pristine wintry wonderland feeling safe and warm. The gas fire danced in front of a backdrop of waist deep snow and clear blue sky. I sat and listened intently to the ancient wisdom being bestowed by a profoundly astute Native American Indian medicine man:



“Whatever you create is going to be what life becomes” Richard Running Deer

Discomfort Hurts!

Was this mountain sage completely barking mad? All I had seemed to create in the past two weeks was extreme physical, mental and emotional discomfort in a harsh Colorado terrain. I'd also completed a 10 day silent meditation retreat in rainy Seattle, days before the boot camp. What was I thinking! When I heard Richard's words all I could think was “if pain and discomfort is what I've created here, then what will my life become”?

As it turned out, this trip was a catalyst for change. When I returned home my business really started to gain the levels of growth and traction I had only dreamed of in the past.

Comfort Stunts Our Growth

The extreme discomfort I felt on that trip led me to understand that just before a big personal or business breakthrough, discomfort must appear in some form. Discomfort is our greatest friend because it causes movement, usually toward the exit and a new and fresh beginning. Conversely, comfort causes us to stay still and stuck in our routine.

Does it always have to be hard?

Certainly not, but if we have a comfortable income, a comfortable car/house/boat and a comfortable business and family life this frequently means we don't step out of our box and grow. I have consistently found the magic is outside the box and the lead up to the attainment of a goal is often more fulfilling than the aftermath of the goal's achievement.

Discomfort Leads to Truth

Colorado was right outside my comfort zone because I'm anything but “outdoorsy”. But somewhere on that mountainside I found my truth. By embracing my fear of hiking boots and plastic mattresses, I gave myself the opportunity to grow. So why not figure out where you are sitting comfortably, work out ten things that will put you right outside your box, go do them and create the most “discomfortable” year of achievement in 2009!

Margaret Gill is the founder of Abundant Private Practices. She helps health and wellbeing practitioners and heart based leaders grow their business. Visit www.abundant-private-practices.com for more information

Rely on your rituals - Ian Berry

In an excellent book 'The Radical Leap', author Steven Farber provides brilliant advice when he says "Do what you love in the service of people who love what you do."

If you stopped doing everything you don't love to do, even though you can do much more than you love to do, what would be left to do in your life?

I find this an amazing exercise.



The first step to freedom is to stop doing what we don't love to do over a timeframe that suits our financial circumstances. For most of us this is a gradual process. For things that must be done in order to maintain our income, we simply outsource everything that we don't love to do over time.

There are some things we must do. We sleep. We eat. We use our bodily functions. Failure to do all three means we die. There are other rituals we must do in order to thrive in our businesses otherwise they die. In my businesses there are four rituals I stick to no matter what.

Giving

Giving without attachment is one of the keys to a successful life. In addition to my family and friends, serving my buyers past, present and future is an important ritual. I give free talks, do *pro bono* work, sit on boards without payment, give away resources, and take a number of other actions in order to serve my buyers.

Publishing

I write religiously one article per week, some become blogs, others e-zines. I publish all on my website. I have a system for turning articles into podcasts and special reports as well as podcasts into CDs and videos, and special reports into e-books and e-books into books. In all of this publishing my intent is about giving value first.

Relationships

Most of my business comes from centres of influence. I stay in touch with these folk at least once a month via a variety of means, email, telephone, sending something of value to them etc. Again my intent is about giving value first. I also have a system for staying in touch with buyers past, present, and future.

Personal Development

I follow a routine each week to keep developing and improving myself.

What are the rituals you must follow to ensure you stay alive, let alone thrive in your business?

Ian Berry CSP FAIM is the CEO of Remacue[®], a global community of advisors with unique expertise in the art and science of people engagement that guarantees productivity improvements and profit increases. He is a leading expert in how to build and grow businesses that are great for people, our planet, and peace. Visit www.ianberry.au.com and www.remacue.com.

Meetings! Meetings! Meetings! – David Price

Virtually everyone in the working world attends meetings at some stage. Staff meetings, management meetings, planning meetings, information meetings, update meetings ... they are apparently endless. Research conducted in Australia recently showed that the average manager spent 70% of their time in meetings. When do they get time to *work*?



It really doesn't have to be that bad. There are six keys to successful meetings.

1. Every meeting needs a purpose – if there is no purpose don't meet. Sounds simple doesn't it? Well our research shows that most meeting attendees *do not know* the purpose of the meeting they attend. Most are there simply because the boss asked them to be there without telling them why their attendance was necessary. Most people when asked the purpose replied with the *frequency* of the meeting – not the purpose – things like “We always meet on Friday mornings” not the purpose.
2. Every meeting needs a clear and detailed agenda. Most meetings have either no agenda or standard, bullet point agendas. These are next to useless as there is no focus or outcome. People tend to do little or no preparation for standard agendas. The more detailed the agenda, the higher the meeting outcomes every time!
3. Meetings need a leader who is *fair, firm and focused*. Leaders who earn respect manage to harness energy, wisdom, knowledge and activity from people who willingly *go the extra mile* for them. Great leaders know how to earn this respect.
4. Every meeting needs an agreed and clearly understood process for decision making. If you decide by consensus, what does that mean? At what point do you *not* have consensus and if you reach that point, then what? If you vote, what is the agreed majority required? Or does the boss decide and everyone just nods because it is easier? No prizes for guessing the effectiveness of those meetings!
5. Ideas, recommendations and suggestions are crucial for effective meetings. In boards, you have board papers which include recommendations. It should be the same at general work meetings. If a person raises an issue, then they should also suggest their recommended course of action. Without it, you'll just waffle until someone *does* make a suggestion. So get the suggestions up front, preferably on the agenda so people have time to ponder them.
6. Meetings need a clear record - the minutes. Minutes are *not* a record of what people say. They are a record of the decisions that are made and the action that is required. By the way, almost *no-one* reads minutes. They *do* read action lists. The best way to record minutes is to type them directly onto a laptop computer and then email them to the participants as soon as the meeting ends.

If you implement these six keys in your meetings, you'll see a huge improvement in effectiveness. An added benefit is that people will enjoy coming to the meetings and participate inside and outside the meeting more actively and effectively.

David Julian Price is the “*Master of Meetings*”. He consults to organisations on how to improve the effectiveness of their meetings at all levels, from staff room to board room. He holds qualifications in corporate governance and is the author of 3 books about meetings and meeting procedure. Contact David at david@davidprice.com. www.masterofmeetings.com.

Expand Your World – Shelley Dunstone

As the global economy contracts, the world will become a lot more competitive. There will be more people trying to win business from fewer customers, who will have less money to spend. To be successful, you will need to have a good understanding of your core capabilities, and seek out new and better ways of using them.

In difficult economic times, a lot of businesses go into “survival mode”, doing only what is strictly necessary to keep operating; “battening down the hatches”; looking inward rather than outward.



Instead, go for a flow of new ideas!

Explore new possibilities, by making your world wider. Here are four ways to do that:

1. Meet new people. Attend more networking events, or join a new Association and participate actively. Expose yourself to the diverse perspectives and beliefs that new acquaintances offer.
2. Go to more seminars. Don't restrict your attendance to those that are directly relevant to your regular field of activity. Engage your curiosity and stimulate your mind by exploring other topics. Actively listen and participate, with a determination to discover something of value to you.
3. Visit new places. Travel exposes you to new norms and ways of living. It makes you question your assumptions about the way things should be done. Getting away, having a change of scenery and seeing how things are done elsewhere leads to fresh new perspectives.
4. Read more books. Broaden the range of subjects that you read about, and vary your reading habits. If you tend to dip into books (reading the end-of-chapter summaries, and never quite finishing any) choose an interesting book and read it cover-to-cover – this exposes you to the author's thought process and argument. If you always read the whole book, try reading more books, but just the summaries – this exposes you to more ideas.

Your brain is wired for ideas

If you expose yourself to new information while you have questions in your mind, your brain scans that new material to make new connections, a bit like a Google search. New information is like super-charged fuel for your brain.

Fortune favours the curious

Innovative thinkers ask themselves the questions that others don't, and find inspiration in unlikely places. They question all their assumptions and believe in endless possibilities. Take a wider look at the world, because opportunities are everywhere.

Shelley Dunstone helps businesses to think innovatively to achieve competitive advantage. Request her free ezine, *"The Cauldron of Innovation"* through her web site, www.shelleydunstone.com (click on the "Free Newsletter" button).

Relationships: the Foundation of all Success - David Koutsoukis





Do you find there are some people you get along with straight away? Are there others you find very frustrating or annoying? And have you ever wondered why you 'click' with some people and others drive you crazy? Read on and find out why.



I believe that relationships are the foundation of all success. So, how can we build relationships with people we don't seem to get along with? In the words of Stephen Covey we need to 'Seek first to understand, and then be understood.'

Human behaviour is very complex, but in simple terms psychologists have been able to identify patterns of behaviour. Recognising these patterns helps us understand what makes people 'tick', and what we need to do to communicate effectively with them.

These patterns can be represented as four characters that guide our behaviour - a bit like the devil and angel on each shoulder that 'whisper' in our ear. One or two of these characters often 'shines' more brightly than the others and becomes our dominant personality. Knowledge of these characters within yourself and others will help you 'click' with people by understanding what makes them 'tick'. So, if you want to 'click' with...

Left Brain	Right Brain
 <p>BLUE Analysers</p> <p>✓ Explain the logic behind your words and actions, and back it up with research and statistics if needed.</p> <p>BE LOGICAL</p>	 <p>YELLOW Players</p> <p>✓ Make it fun, exciting and energetic for them.</p> <p>MAKE IT FUN</p>
 <p>GREEN Safekeepers</p> <p>✓ Be clear, organised and punctual, and take into account possible risks.</p> <p>BE ORGANISED</p>	 <p>RED Carers</p> <p>✓ Be friendly and genuine, express your feelings, and show empathy for others.</p> <p>SHOW EMPATHY</p>

Human behaviour is, of course, much more complex than four colourful characters, but the Click! Colours® are a great start to help you build relationships and boost success by understanding people who are not like you.

David Koutsoukis is a team development expert and co-author of 'Click! Why You Click With Some People and Others Drive You Crazy!' Visit www.davidkoutsoukis.com now and get your complimentary copy of 'Seven Vital Facts You Need To Know About Building High Performing Teams'.

Clean up your Email Act – Jani Murphy

We wouldn't be without email. Email allows us to keep in easy contact with colleagues and friends in other time zones, other countries and sometimes just in another office. For most of us email is an essential communication tool, an important part of the processes with which we run our businesses. We receive more and more daily email each year (estimated increase is anywhere between 25% - 40% per annum). In addition to the increase in email volume, more and more of our work also comes to us via email.



So why do we feel anxious when we look at our Inbox?

We have a habit of accumulating emails in our Inbox. We do this for a number of reasons. Perhaps the email is part of an ongoing email conversation; or perhaps you haven't had time to read or file the email. Generally one of the main reasons we leave emails in our Inbox is to remind us to do something, to take some kind of action.

You may have a number of ways to tag emails requiring action – perhaps you change the status of the emails back to “unread”; or perhaps you attach a flag of some kind to the emails. These are all attempts to use the Inbox as a proxy task manager.

However

The Inbox is an inefficient task manager.

The Inbox as a task manager simply doesn't work. As the number of emails in your Inbox increases and you have to start scrolling through more than a screen load of emails, you're in the danger zone. The clutter gets distracting, tasks start slipping through the cracks and deadlines get missed. In addition to these problems, the Inbox doesn't offer any prioritization or scheduling features, both of which are needed for effective workload management.

So where should you keep your email work?

Most email software packages offer a task facility (some with better features than others). When you receive an email that requires you to take some kind of action that you can't do immediately, turn the email into a task and remove it from your Inbox. If your email client has the capability of displaying your calendar and task list on one screen, then you've got a total workload management tool – time activated commitments on the calendar and tasks to be completed on the task list.

For the email client that you use, investigate the tasking feature and manage your work from your task list - not from your Inbox.

Remember, email is not your work, it's the way your work comes to you. The way to stay in control of this work is to capture it and store it in an area that offers prioritizing and scheduling capabilities.

Jani Murphy is a speaker and educator, running Email Productivity Boost seminars and workshops. She is the author of several resource workbooks that will help you gain control of your Inbox and stay on track with your tasks. You can email her at jani@emailsmart.com.au or visit www.emailsmart.com.au for more information.

How Will You Make Decisions This Year - Logically Or Emotionally? – Anne Riches

I didn't know whether we would live or die. On March 22, 1999 my husband and I were trapped in the centre of category 5 Cyclone Vance as it hit Exmouth, Western Australia. We were there for a scuba diving trip. The storm surge was 3.6 metres so we got our scuba gear ready – potentially to use *inside* our holiday townhouse!

Happily we survived the devastation unharmed and indeed returned to Exmouth the following year to dive with the Whale Sharks as originally planned. Although 10% of all the buildings were either destroyed or damaged, Exmouth had rebuilt and looked beautiful.



How will you live out the global financial storm?!

I'm sharing this story with you because the current global financial downturn might feel as devastating as a category 5 storm. Some people will lose their jobs, their homes, see their superannuation funds slashed or will simply worry about their financial situation. And your brain won't help you make decisions during this time, unless you take charge of it – not the other way around. Learn to do this and you will weather any storm.

Logical or emotional decision-making – YOU decide

Your brain automatically focuses on your fears. I call this The Almond Effect[®]. But it is something you can control. You can learn to keep your fears, anxieties and worries in check in your life and your decision making. Try my STAR approach as one way to start:

Be a STAR

S - Stop: simply take notice the moment you become aware that fear, anxiety, uncertainty are impacting you and your ability to 'think straight'. Your body will tell you – increased heart rate, tummy churning over, tears forming, flushed face, the shakes – everyone responds in their own way. How does your body tell you your brain is stressed?

T – Think: immediately take several deep breaths to minimize the impact of the adrenaline that's swirling around your body. Acknowledge that your emotions are in play and ask yourself: Where are they coming from? What's triggering this?

A – Act: Do something to control your emotions before you make any decisions. Here's an idea from one of my closest friends: "I imagine my fears and anxieties are tied to me with string. Then I cut the string and let them fall away." And here's what I use most: First, I name out loud the emotion I'm feeling: e.g. I am feeling really anxious right now. Then I ask myself: 'What's the worst thing that could happen? And what would I do about it?' This usually works – because both of these techniques engage the logical part of the brain. With practice, you can, at will, override your immediate emotional reactions.

R.- Rewire: Practice this over and over – whenever you feel your mind being clouded by irrational thoughts. You'll be amazed at how much control you build into your life, the quality of the decisions you make and the relationships you have with others.

Anne Riches is an educator and speaker. Her special blend of neuroscientific understanding, extensive corporate experience, open, fun and heartfelt style means audiences easily learn brain-based ways to lead themselves and their people for better personal and business results. Please visit AnneRiches.com

Thanks Big Kev.....I'm EXCITED – Rob Salisbury

It was a cold winter's afternoon years ago when I first met *Big Kev*.

With dismal Sydney weather outside, it prompted my motivation to finish house projects on the inside. Ticking off each mini job, I was also enjoying a legendary Clint Eastwood western on television.

With scores of boring commercials popping up at allocated times to interrupt 'my movie', I had paid little attention to any of them.

I was adjusting a ceiling fixture, when a loud husky voice boomed from the television.....'*Hi, I'm Big Kev and I'm excited*'.



Peering out from the tv was a barrel chested man in stature smiling through bright white teeth in a colorful shirt patched worked together with varied red, white and blue Australian flag symbols.

Big Kev had done his job well. He succeeded where other commercials failed. His voice, infectious enthusiasm and appeal had caught my attention. I had stopped to watch a presentation about cleaning products I should consider or buy.

I have often thought about *Big Kev's* impact and commercial. Not seeing him on television for a long time, I did some research on Google. To my dismay, I found Frank '*Big Kev*' McQuay had passed away suddenly on 5 December 2005.

Realising I will never see Frank in another '*I'm Excited*' commercial prompted the impulse to write about his commercial appeal and lasting personal impact.

In fact there are similarities with *Big Kev's* message and an ad copy formula I learnt decades ago from my mentor and sales training authority Tom Hopkins.

This formula for writing effective ad copy reminded me of what *Big Kev* had done in a 30 second presentation of himself and his products.

A - Attract attention in a manner or style that works best for you.

I - Build interest in your product, service or offerings quickly.

D - Stimulate an emotional desire in people to get excited about your offering.

A - Ask people to take action to either use or recommend your offerings.

C - Gain commitment with them owning your offerings or in referring you.

The brilliance of **AIDAC** can be easily missed. Study it, adapt it and test it with your own situation. You may find yourself saying "*I'm excited*" in 2009 after gaining new business from the AIDAC formula and *Big Kev's* example.

Rob Salisbury B. Com, CSP is a corporate trainer, conference speaker and highly rated industry MC/host. He has been engaged over 1800 times for events in the USA, Europe, UAE, SE Asia, Australia and New Zealand. He can be reached at SRI Singapore + **65 6842 6085** or SRI Australia + **612 8250 4470**. www.strategicresources.com.au

Get R-E-A-D-Y for 2009 – Nicola Baaini

The world is a funny place at the moment – there is the dreaded GFC (Global Financial Crisis), we are either preparing for or recovering from Christmas, which in itself carries its additional financial burdens and all the while trying to justify how we can take a break in these times of upcoming uncertainty.

Are you READY for 2009? Are you READY to make sure that this time next year you won't be worrying about the same things again for 2010? Let's get READY to face the challenge.

RECHARGE: For most industries January is the most 'acceptable' time to close your business (except for retail where there is never a good time to close). A month off in January is met with acceptance by most people. Recharging replenishes all those creative thoughts and with a bit of time out you may be surprised as to how many ideas you come up with that you want to implement for the new year! At minimum take an extra week to work on the business not in it.

EXCITED: Tired + stressed + worried = lack of clarity and a lack of clarity can have us wondering if being in business is really worth it at all! Clarity should bring a plethora of ideas around what you can do to make 2009 a bumper year. Get excited about how your extraordinary ideas will bring value to others in the coming year and make you significant revenue in the process. Then get excited dreaming about what you are going to spend the extra revenue on – maybe an extra special break at Christmas next year??

ACTION PLAN: Write your action plan. The extra time you closed your business is a great time to work on an action plan and get all those ideas into a format that you can develop over the course of 2009.

DISCUSS: Talk to everyone you can about your ideas and how your 2009 looks. Catch up with business associates and mentors who may be around, there may be extra time for a chat. What can you do together in 2009?

Y (income): Y the financial sign for income. What can you do today to make sure that this time next year you are not worried about how the business will survive if you want to close for as long as you want to? How much do you want to earn? How much do you need to have put away? I have always placed 10% of any income that I earned throughout the year into a high interest bank account. I love it when Christmas comes around – I close, I take a Christmas bonus and I build a great vision for the upcoming year without any worries!



Nicola Baaini is the owner of Your Business Solution, and an MYOB Certified Trainer & Consultant and small business coach. She works closely with clients to ensure they are getting the MOST out of MYOB and establishing proper bookkeeping procedures and practices to optimise their ability to achieve corporate profitability. Visit www.yourbusinesssolution.com.au, sign up for her newsletter and receive a complimentary e-book *The 7 Common Mistakes People Make When Setting Up MYOB*.

Focus On The Right Goals – Kathleen Franklyn

Goal setting – important and often talked about, but how good are you at setting specific and achievable goals? And are you **focusing** on the **right** goals? Achieving the right goals will make all the difference as to how you feel at the end of the week, month or financial year!

Life is busy and time is a rare commodity. So we need to make sure we devote time and effort to the right goals. Simple isn't it? Or is it!?!?

So what is Focus and why is it so important?



Dictionary.com defines focus as “a central point, as of attraction, attention or activity”. So the key is to make your business goals a central point of your daily/weekly/monthly attention.

As a business coach for small business owners, my role is to get my clients to **focus** on the **right** goals to achieve greater success in their business. It is easy to get bogged down in the day-to-day tasks or details, responding to urgent requests from clients, or responding to tight deadlines (ie, important and urgent). However, the important goals that can take their business to the next level are often shelved (important, but not urgent). So how can you focus your attention to achieve greater success?

1. **Commit to Focus:** Make a regular appointment with yourself to focus on your business goals. Put it in your diary and commit to keeping that appointment! Get out of the office to somewhere you can't be disturbed and check in on your progress and priorities. Do this a minimum of once a month.
2. **Set your goals:** Pretty standard and obvious. Consider engaging someone (a coach or mentor) to challenge your assumptions to ensure your goals are the right ones to focus on. Small business owners are often the sole “brains trust” for their business.
3. **Blue-Sky-ing:** Take the focus on your business higher than where you normally look. What other possibilities are there? What haven't you considered?
4. **Prioritise:** Which goals are you going to focus on? Rank them, and remember to revisit them regularly. An important goal now may not be the right goal 6 months from now.
5. **Challenge Assumptions:** Focus your attention on novel opportunities or new ways of approaching your goal. What could you do differently? What are you willing to try – and for how long?
6. **Action/Achieve:** Focus your attention on specific, actionable steps to ensure that you can achieve your goal. And do it!
7. **Set Milestones & Celebrate:** Set small milestones so that you can track your progress. Set celebratory points along the way – go to a movie, stop to read a book. Celebrations are especially important if you are a sole business owner!

With a commitment to Focus you **can** move your business to greater success...

Dr Kathleen Franklyn is a strategic business coach who works with successful small businesses. She has worked in corporate Australia for the last 10 years – in sales, sales management and marketing. You can email her at kathleen@kathleenfranklyn.com.

Contact, Clarity, Consistency in Turbulent Times – Tom Murrell

The world changes in an instant. Markets go up. Markets go down. Fortunes are lost and fortunes are made.

In fact, people remember the pain of losing money in the stock market more than they remember the pleasure of making money in a rising market.

So what will the world financial crisis and potential for recession mean for your business and your brand in particular?

Here are some strategies to build your brand in turbulent times.



Contact

As growth contracts, focus on marketing to your existing database where you already have existing relationships.

With so much change happening so quickly it is essential to communicate more frequently with your stakeholders. If these are customers, they want to know you will be a reliable supplier. If they are investors, they will want to know your company's future strategies. Communicate critical business information to investors on a real-time basis. If they are staff, they will want to know if their job is safe. Timely, accurate and frequent communication is essential in the current economic climate.

Proactive, honest communications can help build credibility in a rapidly changing marketplace. Market in a more meaningful way to your existing customers in a downturn.

Clarity

You need to be really clear on your position in the marketplace. Spend a lot of time analysing where you are in the market. Either move up or down but don't stay in the middle. Work on a clear, sustainable and unique value proposition based on superior performance, low cost or personalised treatment.

If you plan to move from middle to high, look at your pricing strategies in particular and rather than discount, look at how you can add more value to what you already offer to command a premium.

Consistency

Look at your core products and services and the fundamentals of what you are good at. Refocus and stick to these. Consistent, well thought out messages delivered with clarity are essential around your core brand. As consumers become more stressed, cynical and sceptical, traditional marketing such as advertising will become less effective so beef up your online and reputation capital building activities to increase credibility, visibility and word of mouth. This could range from increasing public speaking efforts to holding more events or gaining free editorial media coverage.

Thomas Murrell MBA, CSP is an expert in how to build, brand and sustain reputation capital. Get his free eBook "*How To Turn Your Big Marketing Idea Into A Competitive Advantage*", which shows you how to attract, win and retain even more profitable customers, at www.8mmedia.com

Expect More Network Success – Ruth Bonetti

In tough economic climates, winners are those who make the most of networking opportunities. Who create a confident, positive impression that lingers and so people they meet scribble on their business cards 'NB. follow-up'. Learn tips that I recently reminded myself.



Prospect

This mother of all networking opportunities was daunting. But I was determined to make the most of Frankfurt Book Messe, the world's biggest book fair. It's mega huge, wall-to-wall, aisle-to-aisle publishers, agents and distributors in 8 massive convention halls. Counter tactics eased self-sabotage:

Prepare, of course!

Coming armed with hard copy and digital material to give prospects helped. It freed me to focus on my positive first impression and arresting one-minute sales pitch to publishers and distributors, knowing they'd have little time to absorb it then but could digest my material after the hectic event. My present brief flagged my clear mission: to extend global distribution and publication for my books for **musicians** and for **speakers**.

Presentation

- My booklet and web-linked CD presented a businesslike proposal.
- In the entry hall I spent a half hour sorting business cards, folders, information and sample books for easy access before braving the melee.
- **Poise:** Breathe. Focus. Faith. ('Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it.'" – Isaiah 30:21).
- **Posture check:** Drop shoulders. Lengthen spine. Stand against a wall. Breathe.

Plot plan of attack

Check the website's map and listings (mega!) for relevant matches send emails to contacts asking for advice and leads. Thus I realised I could spend 80% of my time in 20% of the Messe, even just in Halle 8, where I could focus on relevant English-language publishers (applying the 80/20 **Pareto Principle**).

Plod...

Knowing the aisles were long and bewildering and people walk marathon equivalents in a day, I wore sassy but flatty boots. Stuffy air clouds thinking: regrouping occasionally in fresh air to refocus my hit list and maintain water, helped ensure a productive two days. Even enjoyable!

Publish! Yes, I came away with positive leads. Next step: the follow-up.

Enjoy your opportunity in the spotlight – and shine!

Ruth Bonetti empowers people to be fantastic on their feet in public presentation via words and music. Her workshops, books and coaching develop holistic, practical and proven techniques for confident performance. Download Ruth's free e-Book *52 Tips for Performance Power* at www.RuthBonetti.com.

How to save energy (yours!) – Catherine Palin-Brinkworth



It doesn't matter who you are or what you do, you need all the energy you can get! And in 2009, your energy is your most valuable asset. With that energy, you can earn money. You can exercise, to keep fit and ensure mood stabilisation. You can play with your children, build stronger bonds with your partner, learn and grow.

I am NOT a health and wellness expert. But over the last ten years, I have beaten Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, mycoplasma pneumonia, legionella, Q fever and aspergillus. I have finished a Masters Degree, helped my son to finish high school and gain an Honours degree, continued to run a successful speaking and consulting business, expanded a training business and established another. I have served on the boards of three not-for-profits, and chaired a second-tier accounting firm. I've learned the hard way how to manage my energy. And now it's much easier. Here are the important and non-negotiable rules I have learned:

Stop worrying: It may never happen. Here's what's smarter: Seriously stop and make a list of EVERYTHING that could go wrong. Work out a strategy for every possibility. File it. You are prepared. No worry necessary. Wipe away every worry. It works.

Ban the Blame: Continually stuff happens - and we get angry. Fair enough. Feel it, and then LET IT GO. Stop laying blame and holding grudges. They don't hurt the target - they hurt you.

Unpack your Pistol: Same deal. You can put your energy into trying to defeat a perceived enemy or you can simply put your energy into excelling. Into creative problem solving. Into giving helpful positive feedback. Into relationship building. Into sales. Into having a good time!

Let Go of Guilt: We constantly have a choice as to whether we live above the line or below it. Above the line gives us more life force, below it drains us. Guilt drains us. It focuses on the past. You're doing your best, aren't you? If not, lift your game a bit. You CAN choose. And you'll have more energy.

Laugh lots: This is more important even than exercise! Laughter releases endorphins - gives you a better high than the most illegal of drugs - and boosts your energy big time. Unless you are getting your giggles by ridiculing others, then it's negative, nasty and sucking you dry. Laugh as much as you can, even at your own face in the mirror, smiling and pulling funny faces!

Spread the Love: What? At work? No, not that kind of love, my friend. The caring kind, where you wish someone well. Think now of ten people you care for, and link one to each of your fingers. Now every time you look at your hands, send them all a positive supportive thought. Generosity builds energy. You'll even like yourself better, and it will help to give your life constant purpose.

YOU are a unique human being. Your unique gifts and abilities are amazing, and their value is unquestionable. It is your responsibility to make the most of them and to use them to their greatest value. That is your only challenge, and that is why you need all the energy you can get. Have a wonderful year!

Catherine Palin-Brinkworth M.AppSci is a Certified Speaking Professional, a business mentor and strategist on leadership, change and growth. Visit www.catherinepalinbrinkworth.com to download further articles.

Energize Your Voice and Inspire – Barbara Baldwin

The voice is the expression of the soul. What are you expressing when you speak?

When we walk onto the stage we want to give voice to the message we carry in our heart, to share our experience and learning. We step onto the stage with conviction and we certainly want to express the richness and depth of our convictions. We do this with our words, our gestures, our facial expressions - and above all with our voice. It's our voice which expresses our passions and conveys our deeper meanings and intentions.



I've seen fantastic presenters with amazing, inspiring, content-rich things to say, but because they weren't grounded in their body and were unable to support their voice, they sounded hoarse and parched, their voice lacked the richness of their words, and ultimately they damaged their voices and strained their listeners.

To use our voice to the best advantage we need to think of the voice as resting on three floors – like a 3-storey building: the first floor is the actual floor we stand on, the second is the pelvic floor and the third is the diaphragm. A voice that rests on these three floors is powerful and commanding, without this support it sounds weak and frail.

How can we achieve this vocal support?

1. The 3 floor exercise

Firstly, when you stand on the stage, push your feet into the floor and stand tall – and keep your knees loose, and slightly bent. In this way you make full contact with the first floor – like a martial artist. Next, slightly tighten your buttocks and engage the muscles of the pelvic floor – this is the second floor; and finally inhale, directing the breath into your stomach (not into your chest), then expel the air with a long, firm breath – like blowing out a candle. Now that you have firmed up those three floors, breathe normally, maintaining this awareness when you speak. Your voice will sound strong and rich.

2. Speak into the space

Before your presentation walk around the room and get a sense of the space from every corner. Then step onto the stage and speak *into* that space – maintaining awareness of the 3 floors. Hear the strength and resonance in your voice.

3. Enjoy the sound of your voice

Open your mouth and take pleasure in the sounds you make. Don't press from your throat, smile and release the sounds, words, sentences and let them carry your thoughts. Your message will be heard with a new depth.

When your voice is enlivened the call to action is inherent. Establish a firm foundation, create resonance and give generously of your voice. The depth and authenticity of your voice will reach and inspire your audience.

Barbara Baldwin is a speech and voice coach and is passionate about the potential of the human voice. With a background in speech pathology and artistic voice production she brings unique skills and exceptional depth to her work. Learn more by visiting www.leadingenglish.com.au

Eliminate your People Problems Forever – Sue-maree

How would you like to make 2009 the year you master the art of eliminating the people problems in your workplace and skyrocketing the productivity and profitability of your people? Think it can't be done? Does it sound too good to be true? I guarantee it can be done. And here's the best part – like most things – it's easy when you know how.



What exactly is causing your people problems?

Every day in every office in the world people are far less productive than they could be. They're avoiding the boss, avoiding colleagues, avoiding clients. They're avoiding phone calls, appointments, and just about any other task you can think of. All this avoidance compromises productivity – and therefore profitability – which is costing you money.

You think this doesn't happen in your office? Think again. My research shows that intelligent, educated, competent professionals are regularly stressed, anxious and frustrated by things that happen in every office, every day. Factors such as:

- Deadlines
- Competing interests
- Receiving incomplete instructions
- Receiving conflicting instructions
- Other people not pulling their weight
- Sub-standard work from others
- Different personality types
- Differences in work ethics
- Discussing fees and bills with clients
- Not feeling liked, respected, valued, appreciated by colleagues and clients
- Other people being moody, grumpy, nasty, impatient, rude, obnoxious, patronizing, condescending, snide, domineering, aggressive, submissive, backstabbing, undermining ... (you get the idea)

Watch out for warning signs that people are less productive than they could be. They include: Stress, Anxiety, Frustration, Complaining, Gossiping, Procrastinating, Impatience, Intolerance, decrease in Morale and increase in Absenteeism & Turnover.

What's the solution?

Find out exactly what's going on in your business that you don't know about – and do something about it! Identify the stresses, anxieties and frustrations experienced by your people that are compromising their productivity and profitability. How? As a special offer to readers of this e-book here's the perfect opportunity to find out – for FREE.

Go to my website at www.suemaree.com. At the member login enter the password: 2009 for access to the "Offload Online Survey" – an easy, targeted, online survey that takes each person less than 5 minutes to complete. Once the responses are in, you'll receive a report identifying the specific issues reducing the productivity and profitability of your people, and what you can do to eliminate those issues.

Sue-maree is Australia's leading expert on eliminating people problems and increasing the productivity and profitability of people in business. For more information go to www.suemaree.com.

Get In Gear! – Simon Tupman



Make 2009 the year of getting more out of your business by leveraging.

Traditional thinking encourages us to build wealth by selling more. Yet selling is just one component of wealth creation. No matter what you sell or produce, your wealth can be increased simply by leveraging off three components, each of which is like a gear in a car. The more you use them, the more momentum you build.

1. Your external people (customers, suppliers, referrers, friends)

Your external people can provide additional sources of income for your business by involving them in your business and offering them a spin-off.

For example: Sell advertising space to them in your newsletter; a professional practice that sends out a monthly newsletter to several thousand external people could sell advertising space to a client or supplier such as a wine company looking to sell its wines to that practice's clients.

2. Your internal people (colleagues, staff, team members)

Your internal people also offer opportunities for leverage. Many businesses employ people to do 'a job'. Yet most people want to do more than a 'job'. They want to feel they are making a contribution beyond selling their time. The trick is to engage them in such a manner that their role offers broader opportunities than their 'job description'.

For example: Give all your people a business card. Treat all of them as sales representatives of your business and ensure that they know the range and value of your products and services. By doing so it not only makes them feel involved and valued but also provides them with a tool to promote your business within their own social networks. Don't assume a secretary can't sell!

3. Your know-how (intellectual property)

Every business has know-how in the form of knowledge, information, experience or expertise. Businesses that can capture this know-how can then leverage off it by retaining it for the benefit of existing and new team members or by on-selling it to other interested parties.

For example: Licence or franchise your know-how. A company that bakes and sells cookies will have developed the recipes over time; additionally it will have learnt what systems work best when it comes to manufacturing and distribution. So perhaps it has an opportunity to sell its expertise as well as its cookies? Just look at MacDonald's; its success wasn't due solely to its hamburgers!

So, how about your business? Are you taking full advantage of the gears to accelerate your business growth? If not, then make a start and make the most of the opportunities. It may make a significant difference to your bottom line in 2009.

Simon Tupman specialises in developing better people and better businesses. He can show you how to make this process fun as well as rewarding. You can read his free articles in information at www.simontupman.com and www.lawyerswithalife.com.

Be Yourself by being S.A.F.E. – Brad Cork

It is easy to let other people control your life, your happiness and your emotions. But why do we do this? It is almost never a fulfilling way to live.

The great news is that you can take back control of your life with four steps to being confident with who you are and S.A.F.E. in your ability to live your life the way that you choose.



Separate

Although we know that we are separate from other people, we don't live our lives like that. If someone around you is angry, how do you feel? Yes, most of us will either be angry or uncomfortable. The reality is we don't need to allow the other person's expression of emotion to change our emotional state.

Being **SEPARATE** is about realising that no-one else can make you do anything and that no-one else can make you feel anything! Get rid of the language such as "He made me angry" and take responsibility for choosing your own emotions. You will be amazed at how liberating it is to be in charge of your own emotions.

Anxiety

How much time do you spend worrying about things that never happen? Yes, most things that we worry about never happen, and even if they do happen, generally the worry didn't help the outcome anyway.

Anxiety is a common emotion in today's world and yet it is almost never helpful. Being aware of when you are anxious and why is the first step to overcoming anxiety. Consider writing down the things you are anxious about in a journal and see if you can find a more constructive way to deal with the situation.

Fear & Doubt Based Thinking

Think about every decision you make for a day and ask yourself why you made that decision. You will be amazed at how many of them are based on fear and doubt based thinking. An example would be "I won't do because what would they think of me?".

Again write down some of the fear and doubt based thinking you regularly use and then come up with a better thought process that you can use.

Encourage

Finally, encourage other people and you will be amazed at how encouraged you become. One of the best things you can do for someone who is depressed is get them to help another person. Life wasn't designed for us to be focused on ourselves. It works so much better if we focus on others!

So have a S.A.F.E. 2009 and be amazed at how much more in control you feel.

Brad Cork is the author of *"Self-Managed Teams: How to do more with less!"* and the people expert. Visit www.improvingpeople.com.au for more information and free reports to help you maximise team performance and profit.

Believe it Before you See It! – Erica Bagshaw

Do you put off starting toward a goal because you can't see how you will manage it? It is easy to do, I know. Read on and be inspired to have a go anyway.



I love to goal set and I had just spent the weekend in Adelaide visiting friends, relaxing and reviewing some of my goals. The priority goal for me was a health and fitness goal. I wrote it up using my 6 step goal alignment process™ and some of the action steps were: to be training 3-4 times a week and to find an exercise buddy. As I was writing it, I could hear some of my internal chatter coming up about the impracticality of finding an exercise buddy. All of my close friends live a long way from me and I know that due to my work commitments I need to start my routine at 6am. It would have been easy for me to minimise my goal to something more “achievable” but I have learned not to do that. So I wrote down the actions, not really knowing how they were all going to be fulfilled.

I came back to Sydney fresh and inspired and began my routine straight away. On Wednesday morning I was up, dressed in my exercise gear and stepping out of my door at 6am. Gosh it was dark!! As I entered the hallway, the door of the flat opposite me opened and there was my new neighbour standing in her gorgeous pink and grey exercise gear. We had briefly met some months ago but hadn't seen each other since. We greeted each other in surprise, and Sue asked me if I was headed to Centennial Park to exercise, which I was. She offered me a ride and off we went together. As we were driving there Sue remarked that she had just done a goal and a vision board for health & fitness that weekend and was keen to get back into a routine. I looked at her in amazement and told her about my goal that I wrote at the weekend and the fact that I was looking for an exercise buddy. She immediately jumped at the opportunity to buddy with me and so now we meet in the hallway at 6am, 3 mornings a week to go and exercise. What a manifestation! I am now training 3-4 times a week and I have an exercise buddy. All in the space of a week!

Would you like to start getting fast results in your life too? Here are 5 key steps to get you going.

Step 1: Write a list of the most important areas of your life i.e. health, career, family

Step 2: Decide how satisfied you are in each area on a scale of 1-10.

Step 3: If any of these areas rate 6 or below, decide what you would like different.

Step 4: Take each of the items from Step 3 and write them up as a statement in the positive. For example if you want to “stop drinking so much coffee” your statement could become, “To drink x coffee's a day and to substitute fruit juice or herbal tea for the other times.” The positive statement gives you a tangible picture that you want and that you can plan for.

Step 5: Identify the specific steps you need to put in place to support yourself in making it happen and do them.

Erica Bagshaw is an expert in alignment. Through NLP Coaching she helps you to align your purpose, thoughts and actions personally and in business. When you are aligned, your life can flow powerfully and effortlessly. Get your free e-book **NRG at Work**. Great ideas to keep your energy firing. www.thealignmentgroup.com or phone 02 9923 1852.

Developing Intelligent Behaviours – Karen Boyes

Successful people use *Intelligent Behaviours*. These behaviours, 16 in all, as identified by Dr Art Costa, are best described as 'knowing what you do when the answers are not immediately apparent.' Here are four behaviours worth developing in 2009:



Persistence

To be successful in any field of endeavour you must develop persistence. This is your ability to keep going when faced with a challenge, using a multitude of problem solving strategies to overcome the dilemma. People who are persistent are able to analyse a problem and then develop a system, structure or strategy to solve the challenging situation. As Margaret Carty said "Be like a postage stamp. Stick to one thing until you get there."

Managing Impulsivity

Effective problem solvers are deliberate. They think before they act and intentionally form a vision of the project, plan or goal before starting the task. These people are great at considering the alternatives and consequences of several actions before they start a task. These successful individuals can delay gratification and know if they work hard now, the rewards will come later. "Thought precedes action, action does not always precede thought." *Doug Horton*.

Striving For Accuracy

People who obtain exceptional results in their lives embody this intelligent behaviour. They have a desire for craftsmanship, mastery and attaining the highest standards possible. These people take pride in their work and have a desire to check and recheck for accuracy. Mario Cuomo, a great speechwriter and politician, once said that his speeches were never done – it was only a deadline that made him stop working on them. Ray Kroc, founder of McDonalds, said, "The quality of an individual is reflected in the standards they set themselves."

Responsible Risk Taking

Flexible people seem to have an almost uncontrollable urge to go beyond established limits. Their risks are educated, however, they do not behave impulsively. They draw on past knowledge, are thoughtful about consequences and have a well-trained sense of what is appropriate. They also know that not all risks are worth taking. Stepping outside your comfort zone and accepting confusion, uncertainty and a higher risk of failing are pre-requisites to acquiring this intelligent behaviour. "Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go." *TS Elliot*.

Design your 2009 filled with Intelligent Behaviours!

Karen Boyes is an expert in Effective Teaching, Learning & Living. She is the Queen of Practicality, turning research into easy and simple to use techniques that create success. Described as 'Mrs Education' of Australasia, Karen is the link to inspired teachers, students and parents. Subscribe to Karen's free newsletters and tips at www.spectrumeducation.com

Expectations, Needs and Promises – Vanessa Hall

Make 2009 “*The Year of Getting Things Done*”, and build healthy, trusted relationships by following these three simple principles.

1. Manage expectations

Everyone goes into relationships with expectations. We often don't take the time to think about what we expect from another person, and more importantly, we don't share what we expect with them. The thing is, though, when people don't meet our expectations, we start losing our ability to trust them. When others expect things from us that we have no capacity to, or willingness to deliver, they lose trust in us.

By managing expectations we can ensure that we get done what we need to, and keep the relationships with others intact at the same time.



2. Meet needs

We all go into relationships to satisfy needs. Like expectations, we are often not aware of what our needs are, or what others need from us. Think about what you really need from each relationship (business or personal) and make sure you are dealing with people who can satisfy those needs for you. Be aware that others are in relationships with you because they also need something from you.

By meeting needs we can make sure that the relationships we are in are satisfying for both parties.

3. Keep promises

How many times do we make those throw away comments about doing something, or 'maybe' doing something for others? Every time we do that, others perceive them as promises, commitments, and nine times out of ten, they believe them! We actually create stress in our own lives when we make promises that we can't deliver, including promises to ourselves (like 'I'm going to lose 10 kilos in the next 2 weeks').

When we break promises, we break down trust. So only make promises you can keep, and then keep them!

Good luck!

Vanessa Hall is an expert on building trusted relationships. Her business can help you improve your relationships by finding out where there may be some trust gaps, and then helping you fill them! Check out her web site at www.entente.com.au, and try the 'Trust test'.