

SOAR TO SUCCESS



Jeanne DeWitt

*Soaring Your Business
to the Clouds with
Technology*

This is
Below Your
PAY GRADE

**10 Things to Make Your
Business MORE VALUABLE!**

Plus:

- * **Are You Selling To Your Third Easiest Customer?**
- * **Speaking With Credibility: How Authentic Are You?**
- * **The IRS Rules on Cancellation of Debt.**
- * **How Often Should You Talk About Yourself on Social Media?**
- * **Retrain Your Brain and Get a Great-it-tude!**
- * **And so much more...**

From The Publisher

Welcome to the the April 2015 edition of *Soar to Success* magazine. It's our intention to provide you with practical tips, tools and techniques to grow your business or improve the quality of your life, in the three areas of **Core Business, Personal Growth and Business Acceleration Strategies**. We believe you can SOAR to SUCCESS when you nourish these aspects of your business and life



I'm Pat Altvater, the CEO of AFP Marketing and creator of BizTV Shows®, a group of online video networks that educate, inspire and motivate business owners, currently in Toledo and Columbus, OH., and Indianapolis, IN., with Portland, OR coming soon.

Soar to Success magazine is a **digital multi-media** publication because we know people like to consume information in various ways. So please take advantage of all the links provided to videos and other content.

Jeanne DeWitt, co-owner of Computer Programming Unlimited, an IT company that has been in business for over 29 years, is our featured expert this month. Be sure to read the article about Jeanne, how she became involved in IT and grew a successful business with her husband, David Hood.

Hope you enjoy this issue and please subscribe to receive future issues.

Pat Altvater



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Cover photography by *Photos by Yvonne*

Jeanne DeWitt:

Soaring Your Business To The Clouds With Technology

By Pat Altvater

Jeanne DeWitt and her husband, David Hood, have operated a Toledo based IT company for **over 29 years!** Their company, Computer Programming Unlimited (CPU) has stood the test of time.



David and Jeanne were not married, when they started their business. They began primarily as software developers to bring computer based solutions to businesses in the Toledo, Ohio area.

Over time, as technology changed and new solutions became available, their business has evolved as well. **They are now a leader in “Cloud Technology.”** They continue to provide IT solutions but with the cloud solution, their clientele has expanded from the Toledo area to reaching around the world.

Soar to Success had the opportunity to chat with Jeanne about how she got started in IT, the longevity of her business, being in business with her spouse and what she sees for the future in IT. We also asked her what it takes to Soar to Success. This is a condensed version of our interview; listen to the full podcast at our website.

Breaking Into A New, Male Dominated, Industry

There were NO women in the IT industry when Jeanne started. In fact, when she began

at Bowling Green State University, there was no such thing as a computer science degree or even computer science courses. The course curriculum did not exist yet. . When they finally offered the first course, Jeanne took it and was hooked. She found that it affected her creative side as well as her mathematics and science side. She could also tell it was going to be a really big part of the world and **wanted to be a part of that!** She continued taking courses and ended up pursuing several degrees in that field.

The Key to Being Partners for Over 29 Years

Jeanne and David met at her first job after graduation from BGSU. They worked to handle all the IT needs for a company that owned several smaller businesses.

Jeanne and David realized that independent small and mid-sized businesses could benefit from technology help too. They started CPU to allow small and mid-sized businesses to have the advantages that larger companies with an IT department experienced.

They had their business for about a year before they started dating and got married five years later.

Jeanne says “When people find out we are married and have worked together for so many years, they are always curious. Because we started in the same industry and have so many of the same likes, it’s actually pretty easy.”

Their company grew in size; Jeanne and David actually work in different departments. Jeanne

devotes her time to sales and marketing and project management, while David manages the IT side of the business. They don't see each other during the day and have made a commitment to allowing each person to run their part of the business, coming together typically to just talk about the vision for CPU.

How To Sustain a Business for 29 Years

Jeanne states "The biggest reason we have been successful for so long is our ability to **plan for change and adapt**. The technology industry, as a whole, changes so quickly that if we were to stay static, we would have been out of business many years ago." One of the most important changes, they have seen, is **remote versus on site access**.

There was no Internet or even fax machines when they started, all documents had to be



mailed. When a client had an issue, they had to go to their location. This severely limited their ability to expand outside a 50-60 mile radius. Today 95% of their business is remote. With the development of their cloud business over the past 10 years, they have greatly expanded their capability and now service client's needs on a worldwide basis. Jeanne is passionate about

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- ✓ Eliminate capital expenditures



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cloud technology which now allows small and mid-sized businesses to compete with the IBM's and Microsoft's of the world at an affordable cost.

What it Takes To Soar To Success

Soar to Success asked Jeanne to identify three traits that she recognizes in successful people; those that she knows will go on to *Soar to Success*.

According to Jeanne, the first thing is **excitement for their profession** and a strong **WHY** behind their decision to be in business. She says **“That passion is what gets them up in the morning and gets them excited about what they do.”**

Second is the ability to **adapt to change**. Jeanne says **“Every business is going to experience change over time. If you can't adapt to that change or aren't open to new possibilities then running a sustainable enterprise will be very difficult. Every successful business person I know listens to their customers and reacts to what they want and need.”**

The third item Jeanne identified is the ability to separate business from personal, especially in a family owned business. **“One of the keys that has made us successful is our ability to not take the rare disagreement personally. When we come home at night that conversation is done until we have to take it up at the office again the next day. We are able to go out and have fun and keep work, at work.”**

Our hats are off to, Jeanne DeWitt, along with her husband David Hood. They have built a very successful sustainable business, as well as, a strong marriage.

Contact Jeanne at CPU Cloud Solutions or on Facebook. Linked IN and Twitter.


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Best Practices to Achieve Great Tech Etiquette: Part 2

By Holly Kile

Still wondering if you've got great tech etiquette? This month we'll cover 5 more best practices to ensure you have what it takes.

In the last issue we covered 5 best practices to ensure you have excellent tech etiquette. Nobody wants to be that person who is annoying and never seems to be very far from their gadgets. Apart from completely unplugging, I recommend 10 ways to keep your tech etiquette in check.

Here are the five we didn't get to last time.

6 use punctuation and capital letters. I really can't stand it when people don't bother to use punctuation or capital letters when they're supposed to in email (can you?)

7 Spell check is your friend. I know we send messages from our phones and we've all had a run-in with the cursed auto-correct but please, before you hit send, review your message and make the corrections.

8 Find out how it's best to communicate with your clients and colleagues. Some people don't like phone calls. Others avoid email like the plague and believe it or not, there are some people that don't have the ability to text on their phone. Don't assume just because you like to communicate one way that your way is preferred



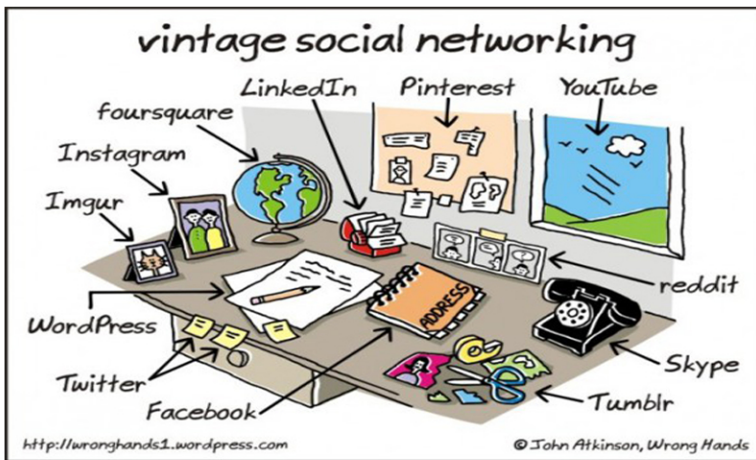
by all. Take the time to ask what they prefer and do your best to accommodate.

9 Don't mass invite people to an event via social media. There's no possible way that everyone on your list is a good fit for a particular event that you are hosting. I know you want all of your seats to be filled but it's better to select who should be invited than just invite everyone on the list. We've all gotten that invitation from someone you barely (or don't even) know and thought "What would make them think I would go to this?" Don't be that person. Deal?

10 Don't tag people in a photo just to get your post to show up on their feed. If you're genuinely tagging a photo, that's one thing but a picture of a cat that says "Have a nice day" where you tag half of your friend list so

that your name can show up in all of their friend's feeds - kind of a tacky move so let's not do that anymore ok?

Now you have our best 10 tips for proper tech etiquette. If you were a tech etiquette consultant, what would your top tips be? Be sure to let us know at our blog at hjkglobal.biz. Remember that it only takes a little bit of magic to make your business fly.



Somewhere between learning what you need to do to expand your business and finding the right tools to do it is the problem with how to get it implemented the right way. Your marketing or sales coach is not tech support and even the thought of contacting tech support makes your eyes glaze over. What you really need is someone that can translate geek to a language you understand. You need someone to hold your hand through the process. Pixie Dust Marketing, a division of HJK Global, is exactly what entrepreneurs and small business owners need to take their business to the next level.

Founder and Chief Pixie, Holly Kile has been working with business owners for more than a decade helping them streamline their processes, discover hidden revenue opportunities and create solid visibility strategies.

Watch Holly's video on this topic:



Connect with Holly at hjkglobal.biz and on [f](#) [in](#) [t](#). Also watch Holly's video series on Indy Biz/TV Shows



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Is Cloud Right For My Business?

By Jeanne DeWitt

Everyone is talking about the cloud these days and if you are a business owner or executive you have to be **wondering if the cloud is right for your business or not**. Let's take a look.

First let's briefly cover the concept of Cloud Computing. Back in the late 1800's, companies – largely factories – were required to produce their own electricity to operate the tools and machines they used. It was very expensive and only larger companies could compete. In the early 1900's that all changed with electricity becoming a utility just like it is today. Now anyone could “plug” into electricity at a cost that was affordable to any business. This changed the entire landscape of business competition allowing smaller companies that could not previously afford to generate their own power to be competitive.

Today the same **Technological Revolution** is happening with Cloud Computing. Think of it this way, the web and cloud computing is to storing and processing data what the electrical grid and electric company is to plugging in your coffee maker: **a more convenient, more reliable and less expensive way to access the “computing power” and resources you need.**

Technology analysts agree that Cloud Computing is becoming widely adapted by small, medium and large businesses. **So why are companies moving to the Cloud?**



According to a recent survey:

- 93% of businesses are moving to the cloud because it **increases productivity outside of the office**, allowing users to access information from anywhere and on any device.
- 60% are moving to the cloud because it **eliminates capital expenditures for hardware, software, and networking equipment** allowing you to spend that money in more strategic ways.
- 59% are moving to the cloud because it gives you **built-in state-of-the art disaster recovery capabilities** reducing the business risk associated with owning and managing computer technology.
- And finally 57% of businesses are moving to the cloud because it **provides a competitive advantage**, allowing access to the technology and software that was just not affordable before.

Still not sure? Over just the next few years small and mid-sized businesses will shift over 2.4 million on-premise servers into the cloud allowing them to leverage more technology than most could ever image. If you think cloud may not be right for your business you might want to think about it this way – **what might your competition be doing and how far behind might you be if they moved to the cloud.**

If you would like to find out more about how the Cloud can help your business, please check out my website and contact me.



Also watch my video on this topic as well as the other quick tip videos in my series, IT Done Right!

Jeanne DeWitt and David Hood, started Computer Programming Unlimited, Inc. in 1986 to solve computer problems for small and mid-sized businesses in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan.

Over the years, they have developed a unique company model making IT Hassle-Free and Budget Friendly, deviating from the typical “Break Fix” type computer company where it is standard to wait for something to break and then send out a technician to fix it, basically profiting from your IT failure. Instead, they have made their success on preventing computer problems from ever happening, virtually eliminating downtime and lost productivity. To do this they have invested in a myriad of tools, processes and certifications that allow them to provide you with affordable solutions and the type of care that Fortune 500 companies have internally.

Computer Programming Unlimited has expertise in many areas including Cloud Services, Backup and Disaster Recovery, Email and SPAM protection, Managed Firewalls, VoIP, Application and Database Development and Website Design.

For great information watch Jeanne’s video series, IT Done Right and connect with her at their website at: <http://cpuCloudSolutions.com> and on [f](#) [in](#) [t](#)

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The IRS Rules on Cancellation of Debt; *Understanding the Tax Consequences*

By Tina L. Moe, C.P.A., CGMA

While it may seem like a good idea to negotiate that credit card balance down to a lesser amount, **beware of the possible tax consequences** that can hit you at tax time!

Many Americans were hit very hard due to the recession that began in late 2007 and officially ran through mid-2009 and possibly longer, according to some experts. America hit record highs in both unemployment levels and personal bankruptcies and a lot of people are still working to recover from it. **Many people opted to reduce their debts by working out a debt cancellation plan** directly with their creditors as a way to avoid bankruptcy. Unfortunately, and unbeknownst to the taxpayer, **they created a taxable event called cancellation of debt income.**

According to the IRS, a debt includes any indebtedness whether you are personally liable or liable only to the extent of the property securing the debt. Cancellation of all or part of a debt that is secured by property may occur because of a foreclosure, a repossession, a voluntary return of the property to the lender, abandonment of the property, or a principal residence loan modification. Basically, if you are liable for a debt that is cancelled, forgiven or discharged you will receive **form 1099-C, Cancellation of Debt**, and it must be included in gross income unless you meet an exclusion or exception. And, if you receive a Form 1099-C but the creditor is continuing to try to collect the debt, then the debt has not been cancelled and you do not have taxable cancellation of debt income.



But there may be a way out and there are some **EXCEPTIONS** to this rule.

- If you **file bankruptcy and the debit is discharged** in your Title 11 bankruptcy, you do not to include this amount of cancelled debt in your gross income for tax purposes.
- Qualified farm indebtedness
- Principal residence indebtedness
- Debt canceled during insolvency

Tina L. Moe, C.P.A., CGMA, formed **A.C.T. Services** in 2002, and began building her business. Her practice has grown to a clientele more than 1,200 clients and a team of more than a dozen staff members.

Tina attributes her business growth to being proactive with her clients, maintaining affordability and accessibility of her services as well as being relatable as a small business owner herself.

Tina is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Indiana CPA Society. Contact her at:

www.actservices-inc.com



The IRS offers a worksheet to help determine if you qualify under the insolvency rules but this basically means that you have more debts than the fair market value of your assets.

Be sure to seek professional advice when taking this position with your cancellation of debt.

You can WATCH my video, using the link here, for a more in depth look at the tax implications of cancellation of debt.



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Life Without a CRM: *Is It Worth The Effort?*

By Troy Hanna

Think that your life is simpler without the added stress of one more piece of technology? Read on as I paint the grim picture of what life without a CRM is actually like.

I get it. We are all bombarded with more technology sometimes we can handle. I'm not surprised when people tell me that they aren't interested in a CRM because they already have a ton of other programs. The problem with that idea is that the CRM is something that should take priority right up there with email and a website.

Here's what life without that valuable technology might - or perhaps already is - like:

- ✓ **Lost New Sales** - I thought we might start with a big one. One of the greatest features of a CRM is that it can help you stay on top of your sales prospects. When you allow your prospects to fall through the cracks, suffer delayed follow ups or other miscommunications, you run the risk of not



only losing the prospect but other business that is related to people they potentially will speak to.

- ✓ **Lost Repeat Business** - Even worse than losing potential new customers is losing existing ones. Your CRM functions as an assistant that helps you keep in touch with your customers. In a life without a CRM, you don't have that help and you can end up **chasing your tail** only to find yourself exhausted and without notable results.
- ✓ **Missed Connections** - In our world without a CRM, we also run the risk of missed connections. Your CRM can help you connect members of your database to keep track of their relationships to each other but you can also easily connect people that are able to help each other. Without that CRM, you have to rely solely on your memory and ability to connect the dots for yourself. When you are able to connect people together regularly with your CRM, everyone in



your community is appreciative of this added value.

Lost sales, lost existing customers, lost opportunities to connect others for new business all lead to a **long term negative impact on your bottom line**. So, whether your issue with a CRM is technology or price or some other construed reason,

I'm here to tell you that a life without a CRM just isn't worth it.

Now that you're ready to have a life with a CRM, join me in our video series on Indy BizTV Shows and learn more about how to effectively use your CRM system.

Troy Hanna is the President of AddressTwo, the simple CRM for small business. Troy is passionate about the customer experience and teaching others how to stay top of mind, organized and always growing their businesses.

Troy has even created a blog for small business owners, U.AddressTwo.com, where outside small business thought leaders contribute blog articles targeted to the small business owner and staff. Be sure to also watch his video on this topic:



Connect with Troy at AddressTwo and on Facebook, Linked IN and Twitter.

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What Should I Delegate and How Do I Do It?

By Cindy Allen Stuckey

Delegation—You know you're supposed to do it, but how do you do it effectively?

Too often we get into leadership because we are good at our jobs. Being good at your JOB has NOTHING to do with the skills needed to lead people who DO the jobs. In fact 75% of first-time managers struggle to be effective in their new positions

When you think of delegating, have you ever had any of these thoughts?

- ▶ I can do it myself better and faster
- ▶ What if I'm not needed
- ▶ What if they do it better than me
- ▶ I can't give up control
- ▶ What if they don't do it right
- ▶ People will think I'm just trying to lighten my workload

Delegating is a good thing because it:

- ▶ helps you improve your productivity, build your skills as a manager, and provide an opportunity for you to work on higher level projects.
- ▶ helps your employees because it empowers them and increases their skills and confidence.
- ▶ helps the organization because it builds collaboration and grooms successors.

How do you decide what to delegate? A good place to begin is to delegate recurring activities,



duties that aren't really part of your core competencies, and tasks and responsibilities you were promoted from.

It's not a good idea to delegate performance issues, disciplinary actions, politically sensitive issues, or emergencies when there's no time to explain or train.

Now that you know what to delegate, it's time to do it. **Here are 6 steps explaining how to delegate:**

1st Step: Begin with the end in mind. Describe the desired outcome in specific measurable terms, set deadlines, and establish performance expectations; make sure you focus on "what" needs to be done, not "how"; also clarify consequences.

2nd Step: Identify boundaries. Establish the lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability; identify what is included in the assignment and what is excluded.

3rd Step: Establish communication expectations

Decide on the method, face to face, phone call, email; the frequency; and how and when you will respond. Make sure to inform others about the delegation and document all conversations.

4th Step: Provide support. Both tangible (money, people, time, equipment) and intangible (show/demonstrate, confidence, caring, and fairness)

5th Step: Anticipate problems. THEY WILL HAPPEN; train employees to be problem solvers by resisting the temptation to tell them what to do; ask for their ideas on how to fix the problem first.

6th Step: Review the Work. Recognize and acknowledge quality work that meets previously established standards and completion of the project; remember that ultimately, accountability remains with you.

Successful delegation is using the power of other people's help. So put aside your pride and show respect for the talent that others can bring. **Watch my video on this topic** and go to my website for more information on Secrets of Great Leaders that No One Talks About.

Cindy Allen-Stuckey, founder and Chief Strategy Execution Officer of Making Performance Matter, collaborates with organizations to bridge the gap between their strategy and execution by focusing on their only real competitive advantage—their people. She does this by aligning the business strategy with the day-to-day activities of all levels of the organization and then by developing the necessary people structures and processes.

Cindy has extensive experience in three global manufacturing organizations. She holds masters' degrees in both management and education, is certified in Human Performance Improvement, and is a certified WBE (Women's Business Enterprise).

For a complimentary organizational assessment, contact Cindy at: www.makingperformancematter.com. Connect with her on [f](#) [in](#) [t](#) and watch her video series on Indy BizTV Shows.

Making Performance Matter works with organizations to close the gap between their business strategy and execution by focusing on their only real competitive advantage -- **their people.**

Contact **MPM**

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Retrain Your Brain and Get a *Great-it-tude*

By *Jamie Sue Johnson*

In today's world with the news coming at us from all angles we forget how great we have it. It is those times we can choose to **retrain our brains** and learn to shift to a Great-it-tude, by playing the Shift It! game.

The **Shift It!** game can be played anytime when you or someone else in your life is complaining. It is best to discuss this ahead of time so everyone knows the rules and commits to be willing to play the game. I was griping and complaining the other day about something and my daughter stepped up to the plate and called out, "**Shift It!**" Since I know how to play and have a commitment to live in Great-it-tude, I shifted in that moment. My daughter and I use this game all the time to aid us to Shift It! to retrain our brains and shift to a more positive way of thinking and an attitude of Great-it-tude.

Once you share the rules then any one of you can speak out Shift It! and the other person must stop and make a shift to a slightly more positive statement. For example, if I am complaining about my car needing service and the expense of a new battery. I might be saying, "I can't believe how expensive it is to take care of my car maintenance." My daughter would say, "Shift It! mom." Then I shift to a Great-it-tude and speak. "I notice I am concerned about money," again she says, "Shift It!" Then I say, "I am really blessed to have a car that I can rely on and count on." "Shift it!" she exclaims again. Then I say, "I am so grateful



Another example of the Shift It! game can be watched on my video. An attitude of Great-it-tude. Watch it below.



Now this is difficult to start but as you keep at it, you will be more and more able to Shift It! to a Great-it-tude.

Making each statement a little less intensely focus on the bad, shifting it to make it a bit more positive to a Great it-tude actually retrains my brain and has me feel even more positive about

work and life. **Understanding how to retrain your brain to the positive ultimately shifts your mood positively too.**

Take a moment to go to LIVE IT in 3D on facebook and let me know how you are retraining your brain to a Great-it-tude with the Shift It! game. If you want more support in shifting join in the Live It! Telecoaching series where I support you in retraining your brain to live a life you love.

Jamie Sue Johnson, Executive Coach and President of J2 & Associates, has over 25 years of business experience in the corporate sector and as an entrepreneur. Her management experience includes handling multi-million dollar budgets and organizations of over 130 employees.

Jamie Sue is Certified as a Master Coach and as a Coach Training Leader. She co-founded a coach training firm and has been a coach and motivational speaker for over 16 years.

Connect with her on Facebook, Linked In and Twitter and also check out her videos on Columbus BizTV Shows for more motivational moments.



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Moving From Perfection to Progression!

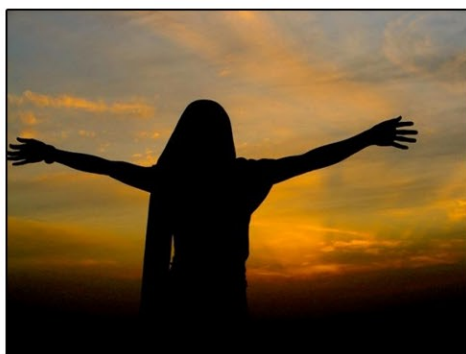
By Rochelle Forrest

Your experiences, **no matter how seemingly painful or disturbing**, have been perfect and have been given to you to create the life plan that you need. **All of our experiences are perfect for our life's plan.**

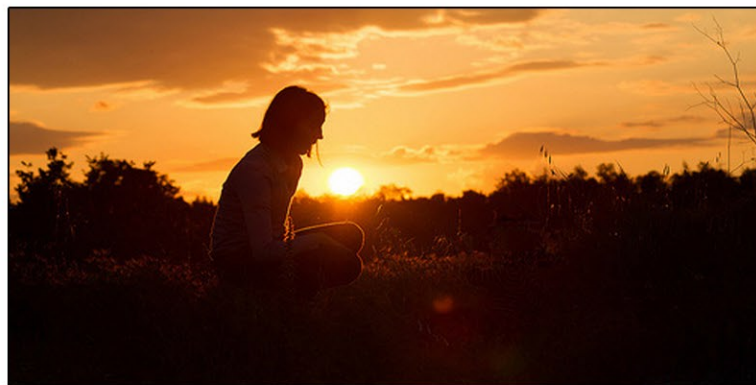
Sometimes, things happen in life that are painful. **Very painful.** And often it is only in hindsight (it has been years for me) that we can see any perfection in those situations.

Yet, if we are each part of the whole, despite feeling broken off in our minds, **then the whole cares about you** and is working to bring you exactly what you need to do your part. If you can see your experiences, especially the challenging ones, as a gift from the whole, then you aren't cut off at all. You can begin to catch a glimpse of the perfection that exists in every moment. It's then that you understand that

your life lessons bring you exactly what you need for your progression so you can fulfill your purpose.



have been formed and informed without all your experiences. Both easy and hard lessons? **Think about that for a minute.**



As we open to the possibility that perfection is always present, **even in pain**, we can begin to **free ourselves** from the need to suffer through life. What is present is presented for our growth and expansion, for our highest good, for our progression! Opening to this sense of perfection is like a door opening to God. We return to our loving source. We re-member the whole.

Make a list of 3 **major life challenges** you have faced. Maybe loss of job, loved one, business, or even abusive situations. Now take a deep breath and silently pray to see the perfection in those experiences.

If you would like more resources go to rochelleforrest.com and opt-in to get my FREE eBook, *Re-Ignite Your Inner Light*.

Also watch my video on this topic.

Holistic Transformation Coach and Motivational Speaker, Rochelle Forrest, R.N., has over 30 years of service in the primary and aligned Health Professions. After many years in the public sector, Rochelle founded her company to encourage individuals to **step fully into their soul purpose** and live their full potential. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her coaching practice and her audiences.

Learn more at www.RochelleForrest.com and watch her video: *Opening to Perfection* on <http://IndyBizTVShows.com>.





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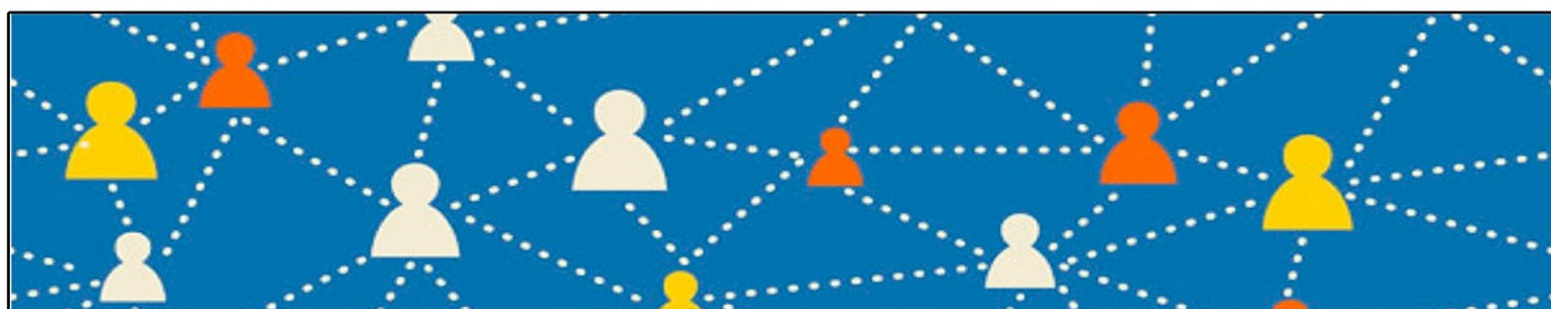
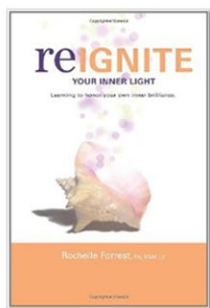


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SPEAKING WITH CREDIBILITY:

How authentic are you?

By Lillian Zarzar

When you speak, how do people hearing you know that they should listen to what you have to say?

Authenticity – a word you hear, yet do you know what it means? Authenticity contributes to your believability.

Authentic means to be sincere, genuine and reliable.

That means when you speak, and you are authentic, you have created the notion of sincerity with those who listen to you. When you speak, and you are authentic, you had better know what you are talking about because people will rely on your message!

Through your life's journey you acquire skills and have inherent talents that you apply to achieve the success you obtain. Beyond your knowledge and expertise, though, is the feeling you stir in people who listen to you.

Do you enjoy what you are sharing as you speak? Do you believe what you are saying? Do you want your listeners to believe you? Do your listeners find value in what you are saying? Can your listeners tell that you care that what you say is true and important for them?



The answers to these questions would be a resounding YES! ...if you are authentic!



Let's look at **three principles** that relate to your authenticity:

1 Be Sincere. Demonstrate you have an interest in your listeners obtaining the information you give them. Whether you are in a meeting, a conference or a conversation, people want to know that you want them to have the information you are sharing.

Focus on your message to them and recognize its impact on their jobs, their income, their relationships, or even their health.

Ask them questions as you speak so they can respond and offer you additional information that can help you help them. Use **active listening skills**: nodding your head, making eye contact that show your concern for their welfare.

2 Be Genuine. Indicate you are engaged with your listeners. Look approachable by opening your stance, shaking hands, smiling. Speak in their language instead of above or below their understanding. Connect with them at a level that elicits a feeling of trust and connection to you.

Consider carefully the words you choose as you speak to them. Your genuine interest in them encourages them to open up to you to develop the relationship you have with each other.

3 Be Reliable. Develop trust with your listeners through identifying your sources in your topic or subject.

When you are giving advice, your listeners believe you because **you have expertise** and a base of knowledge they can rely on. **Quote yourself based on your experience in a particular area. Quote sources that are founded on years of research.** Investigate the information you are sharing before you offer a course of action or suggestions. Therefore, they know that you know what you are

talking about! Remember, in today's world, the Internet is at everyone's fingertips. Whoever is listening to you is also reading on line!

And one more thing, **be enthusiastic!** People are drawn to you because you are inspired by doing what you love and sharing it!

I can help you to present your message with authenticity. Watch my video and call me 614-486-5523.

Lillian Zarzar is a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) the highest earned designation conferred by the National Speakers Association (NSA) and the International Federation of Professional Speakers (fewer than 300 women in the world hold this designation). She is past president of the NSA-Ohio chapter and current member of the association.

She is also a Trained Demartini Method[®] Facilitator and has been quoted in Self Magazine, highlighted in Columbus Business First and appeared on Fox 8 Good Day Columbus. She is the author of Apple-osophy: Slices of Apple-Inspired-Wisdom., and co-author of 5 books, the latest being Conversations on Success.

Learn more at: <http://LillianZarzar.com>

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This is Below Your Pay Grade

By *The Merit Group; Shamara Cox and Terry Dove Pittman*

Most entrepreneurs wear so many hats in their businesses that they often lose sight of the fact that many of the functions they carry out are at a level that is below the real value of their time. Usually by resistance to delegating menial and time consuming tasks, business owners are in effect working decidedly below their pay grade.

Many entrepreneurs start their initial journey in business as a sole owner or a solopreneur. As a solopreneur every task from answering phone calls and prospecting new clients to posting on social media and handling all financial responsibilities falls to the owner. This can often lead to what is known as the **“Superman or Superwoman” mindset**. You know, the *“I am invincible and can do it all at the same time”* syndrome.



This can lead to unhealthy mental habits especially when a business has grown from sole ownership to a thriving enterprise. This methodology must be broken if the company is to remain sustainable.



As your business grows into an enterprise or a company that has employees other than the owner, you must learn to rely on the team support that has been built. **Delegation is the key to a successful and profitable enterprise.** It can have positive repercussions within your business culture and overall morale of your employees. When a task is delegated to a team member, especially one that is challenging and new, it could give that employee the opportunity

The Merit Group Partners:



As a consultant, **Shamara Cox** has worked with businesses partnering in strategy, technique and implementation. Her creativity redefines their potential and adds immeasurable value. Shamara has been training and coaching entrepreneurs, and consulting with such enterprises like Simpatico Equine Services LLC, Beacon of Hope Shelter for Women, LLC, Vanhorn Vacations LLC, TC Howe Community High School, Paradigm Coaching LLC, Emmerich Manual High School and Charter Schools USA, a mega education management firm, for over 15 years. Shamara is the proprietor of Shamara Cox LLC, her personal motivational speaking brand, Partner at The Merit Group LLC, CEO of BLING Sorority and Founder of Pressed Oil Life Ministries, Inc.



Terry Dove Pittman attended the Business Finance Magnet program at Northwest High School, where she graduated with honors and later attended Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis completing her Paralegal certification. Professionally, Terry was Authentication Deputy for former Indiana Secretary of State Todd (2002-2011); where she acted as International Liaison and Special Deputy between the State of Indiana and many foreign embassies and foreign nationals. Not surprisingly, her “go-getter” attitude, willingness to work hard and desire to excel in service to others led her to join many community organizations. She is a graduate of the Indiana Leadership Forum (2004), Hoosier Congressional Policy Leadership Series graduate (2009).

Connect with them at [The Merit Group Indy](#) and on [f](#) [in](#) [t](#)

shine and you as their boss the opportunity to assist them in their professional development. It is a great exchange that births loyalty and appreciation for all concerned. Delegation is an art that has to be practiced and can sometimes be very difficult for those at the top of the company hierarchy. Knowing what tasks and to whom is vitally important; below we have outlined a simple pay grade grid to give examples of how to delegate tasks according to pay structure.

\$10 per hour	\$100 per hour	\$1,000 per hour	\$10,000 per hour
Talking to qualified prospects	Emailing prospects and customers	Negotiating with prospects	Creating better offers
Running errands	Coaching notes	Building a funnel for sales	Executing brilliant ideas
Cleaning, sorting	Customer follow-up	Doing social media with technique and skill	Public-speaking
Building websites	Website design	Creating a strategy for marketing	Establishing value and culture of business
Creating forms and applications	Ordering marketing materials	Delegating tasks	Securing government contracts

As shown in the grid, tasks in the \$10 per hour pay grade should most definitely be given to staff members other than owners. These tasks are often those that distract a business owner and consume much of their day unnecessarily, leaving tasks in the \$10k column untouched.

Proper delegation and ultimately the trust that employees can deliver results will tremendously maximize your time, energy, value and most importantly...**profits**; while also changing the business culture for the positive within your company and this makes for a **healthy and robust enterprise**. Watch our video on this topic.

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Are You Selling to Your Third Easiest Customer?

By Jack Klemeyer

Third easiest? You're probably wondering "What about the first and second easiest customers to sell?"

The first easiest customer to sell is **your existing customer**; those folks who have already bought into you, your company, your products and services. There's a saying I have heard from successful salesmen, mentors and coaches that goes like this ... A buyer is a buyer is a buyer. For simplicity, I am using the word customer but it could be client or patient just as easily.

The *second easiest customer* to sell is a **referral** from an existing customer. Someone who has experienced you and all of your offerings and then invites a friend, family member or associate to do business with you is almost as good as it gets.

Before I clue you in on the third easiest customers to sell, I want to share a couple of points that I heard from **Jay Abraham**, one of the highest paid consultants on the planet. Jay said that there are only three ways to grow your business:

- 1. To get more customers.**
- 2. To get your existing customers to buy more.**
- 3. To get your existing customers to buy more often.**



I've added a **fourth** to his three, which is simply **to improve on any one of the three**. Those four are foundational and you should have an established strategy behind each one for your business to make sure they happen on a regular basis.

Of the four, **the first one**, to get more customers is the one that most people focus on in their business. Sometimes it is the only customer businesses work to get. **It's the most difficult and the most expensive to execute successfully.** Knowing that, why does getting customers to buy more, to buy more often and to improve on all three take a distant back burner to getting more customers?

Now to the promise of the **third easiest customer to sell ... it's the lost customer**. Those customers that for whatever reason have left you or you have left them; they no longer buy from you.

You need to have a strategy, a campaign, to communicate with these people in an effort to

win them back. It makes sense. They know and are familiar with you, your company and your products. You should keep track of why people stopped doing business with you and categorize those reasons and act on them.

Just so you know, when price is given as the reason, it's probably not. I'll bet you a cup of coffee on that one. Get around the price issue: When you hear it as the reason they left simply ask, why else or why in addition to price? Usually price is the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. Something else happened somewhere else. Find that.

Give your attention to all the easiest customers if you want to increase sales and business.

Jack Klemeyer, founder of GYB Coaching, which stands for Grow Your Business, specializes in bringing high-impact, result-focused group and individual coaching to business owners. Known for his warmth, originality, humor and insight, Jack uses those attributes and every resource available to teach others skills to build relationships and create marketing strategies for products and services to increase sales and profitability, while enjoying the process.

Connect with him at <http://gybcoaching.com>

Watch My Video Series:



Learn more about the topic of Jack's article and many other topics in his quick tip video series, *The Guy To Know When You Want To Grow Your Business*. Also connect with him on Facebook, Linked IN, and Twitter.

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10 Things That Make Your Business More Valuable

By Patrick Good, Certified Value Builder™

The value of your company is partly determined by your industry. For example, cloud-based software companies are generally worth a lot more than printing companies these days.

However, when we analyze businesses in the same industry, we still see major variations in valuation. So we dug through the data available to us from our partners at **The Sellability Score** and we found 10 things that will make your company more valuable than its industry peer group.

1. Recurring Revenue

The more revenue you have from automatically recurring contracts or subscriptions, the more valuable your business will be to a buyer. Even if subscriptions are not the norm in your industry, if you can find some form of recurring revenue it will make your company much more valuable than those of your competitors.

2. Something Different

Buyers buy what they cannot easily replicate on their own, which means companies with a unique product or service that is difficult for a competitor to knock off are more valuable than a company that sells the same commodity as everyone else in their industry.

3. Growth

Acquirers looking to fuel their top line revenue growth through acquisition will pay a

3 REASONS TO GET YOUR VALUE BUILDER SCORE



premium for your business if it is growing much faster than your industry overall.

4. Caché

Tired old companies often try to buy sex appeal through the acquisition of a trendy young company in their industry. If you are the darling of your industry trade media, expect to get a premium acquisition offer.

5. Location

If you have a great location with natural physical characteristics that are difficult to replicate (imagine an oceanfront restaurant on a strip of beach where the city has stopped granting new licenses to operate), you'll have buyers who understand your industry interested in your location as well as your business.

6. Customer Diversity

Acquirers pay a premium for companies that naturally hedge the loss of a single customer. Ensure no customer amounts to more than 10 percent of your revenue and your company will be more valuable than an industry peer with just a few big customers.

7. Predictability

If you've mastered a way to win customers and documented your sales funnel with a predictable set of conversion rates, your secret customer-acquiring formula will make your business more valuable to an acquirer than an industry peer who doesn't have a clue where their next customer will come from.

8. Clean Books

Companies that invest in audited statements have financials that are generally viewed by acquirers as more trustworthy and therefore worth more. You may want to get your books reviewed professionally each year even if audited statements are not the norm in your industry.

9. A 2iC

Companies with a second-in-command who has agreed to stay on post sale are more valuable than businesses where all the power and knowledge are in the hands of the owner.

10. Happy Customers

Being able to objectively demonstrate that your customers are happy and intend to re-purchase in the future will make your business more valuable than an industry peer that does not have a means of tracking customer satisfaction.

Like a rising tide that lifts all boats, your industry typically defines a range of multiples within which your business is likely to sell for; but whether you fall at the bottom or the top of

that range comes down to factors that have nothing to do with what you do, but instead, how you do it. To learn more about how you can immediately start building more value in your business, view this short video or click here to assess your business's current value.

Then contact me; I'm a  Certified Value Builder™

Patrick Good helps business owners in the NW Ohio area grow their profits and transform their business; his philosophy is "your business should work for you, instead of you working for your business."

Pat is the Owner of PAG Associates, a Corporation consisting of 5 business units, including AdviCoach of NW Ohio. Pat founded AdviCoach of NW Ohio in 2010. Watch Pat's video on this topic:



Find out more about Pat at:

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Also watch his other videos on Toledo BizTV Shows

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3 Ways to Leverage Video Content in Your Networking Process

By Pat Altwater

If you have a **content video series channel** on your website, You Tube or a platform like our BizTV Shows®, here are three ways to leverage those videos when you are networking.

First, include the link to your video series on your business card that you give to prospects when you meet them at a networking meeting. Make sure to say something like, “I provide tips to help others like you grow their business.(or whatever it is that you do). You can use the link right here on my card to access my tips.”

Second, when you schedule a one on one with someone **provide a link to your video series** in the email that you send them. Or refer them to the link to your video series in your email signature.

And finally, if you have strategic partners that you work with to pass referrals back and forth, **educate them** on how to properly position you through the use of your video series. Have them share the link to your content when they are making e-introductions or talking with your ideal clients.

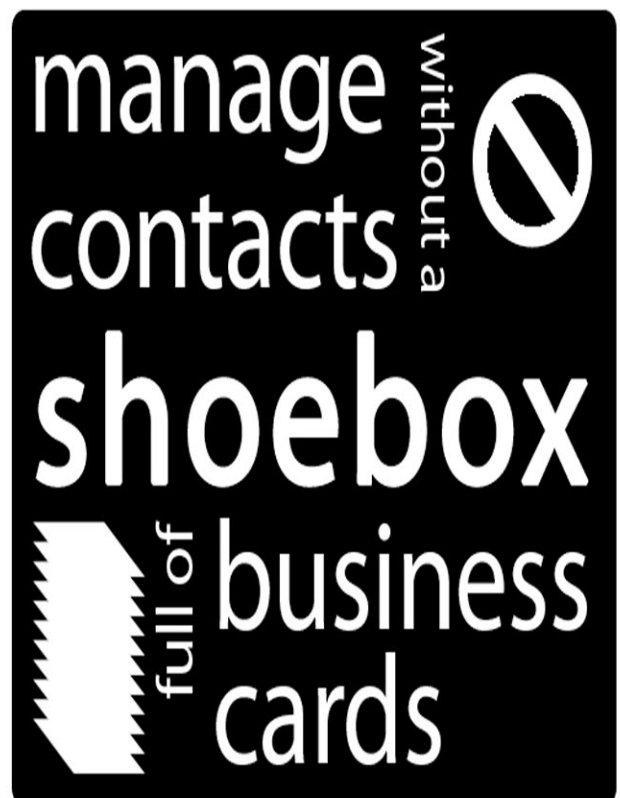
When your ideal client, based on your suggestion or a suggestion from a strategic partner, goes to review your video series, you are **about 60% more likely to get their business** and it speeds up your sales cycle, because they get a feel for you through your videos. **They already know and like you!**

Watch my video on this topic.

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How Often Should You Talk About Yourself On Social Media?

By Tina Imperial, Marketing Manager at Rainmakers

When business owners are ready to get social on social media, sometimes all they can talk about is themselves.

How often should you talk about yourself or company on social media?

Picture this: You're at a party. Good tunes, good people good food and then you meet this woman.



All she talks about is herself. Boring. DON'T BE HER!

When you post on social do more than make every post and tweet about your company. Keep it interesting by talking about a variety of topics relevant to what your target audience would like to hear or respond to.

For a good example of a company that effectively uses social media look at BarkBox, on Facebook and notice how few posts are about their product.

When posting on social for your company use the 80/20 rule. 80% should be about topics

relevant to your audience that aren't about you and 20% should be about your company.

To learn about networking and business development go to rainmakers.com.

Watch How To Be A Rainmaker and Make Rain for Yourself and Others



Nikki Lewallen is the Executive Director of Rainmakers and a passionate public speaker, facilitator and business development specialist. Nikki has been an integral part of Rainmakers explosive growth over the past eight years, seeing membership triple and market expansion from Indianapolis throughout the Midwest.

Tina Imperial is the Marketing Manager at Rainmakers. She creates original material for blogs and social posts, and helps spread the word about Rainmakers events and trainings on numerous social media platforms. Tina is extremely knowledgeable and passionate about social media and online marketing.