SOAR TO SUCCESS

NIKKI LEWALLEN
What it Takes To Be A Business Development ROCKSTAR

5 Myths About Working From Home

THREE Super Secrets for Keeping Your Resolutions

Plus:

* 4 Things You Need to Know to Have a GREAT 2015!
* Are You Ready to File Your 2014 Taxes?
* 5 Reasons Why Emotional Intelligence is Important!
* Wondering If Using A Cloud Is Right For You?
* Are You Sleep Walking Through Your Life?
* And so much more...

soartosuccessmagazine.com *January 2015*

From The Publisher

Welcome to the first 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 differently. So please take advantage of all the links provided to videos and other content.

Nikki Lewallen, with Rainmakers, is our featured expert this month. She shares advice on what it takes to be a Business Development Rockstar and Soar to Success, among other things.

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

Pat Altvater

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Nikki Lewallen:
A Business Development Rockstar!

By Pat Altvater

Nikki Lewallen truly is a Business Development Rockstar! That's not an empty self-proclaimed title; it's a fact! Just ask the many Indianapolis business owners that she has impacted over the years.

I recently had the opportunity to talk to Nikki about how her career has evolved and how she established such powerful credibility and a great reputation in a short period of time. We also talked about what she thinks it takes to **Soar to Success.** You can listen to the interview at our website and get the highlights in this article.

Being Driven is a Crucial Norm in Her Life

Nikki graduated college with a Masters Degree at the young age of 23 and began working as a mental health therapist. She found she was not happy in her chosen profession which left her unfulfilled. The owner of the company, where Nikki was employed recognized Nikki's true talents were her outgoing personality and communication skills paired with her drive to really help out in the community. She encouraged Nikki to stay with the company but in a role that more suited her – **business development.** With her help, Nikki got a coach and began a quest to learn everything that she needed in order to be successful in her new position.

Through Nikki's initial sales efforts, the company began to add clients and grow. Nikki got the satisfaction of that **winning feeling,** which had been missing from her work life as a therapist.

She had always been an athlete and loved the competitive aspect of sports. Completing the sales process and building new relationships gave her that same **feeling of accomplishment.**

Being a Giver Comes Naturally to Nikki

In 2005, Nikki heard about **Rainmakers,** a networking company that started in Indianapolis in 2002, and decided to join. Nikki told me, "***I fell in love with all these people following their dreams, growing something and everyone was helping each other, bringing on accounts and growing their businesses,***" and stated that she felt right at home there.

Very soon thereafter an opportunity came for Nikki to **join the staff at Rainmakers.** She did and her new role at Rainmakers became the best on-the-job training she could find. Even though she didn't really know much about the business, she relied on her basic tenet of wanting to help others.

She quickly learned that to best help the Rainmakers community she needed to understand what each member wanted or needed and then figure out how to help get that done.

She firmly believes that **the more you help other people, the more they are willing to help you.** That's how she built her credibility and reputation, by always looking for a way to help those she meets achieve their goals and then build a relationship from there.

Personal Growth is Another Important Tenet

Nikki also believes that to be successful, everyone must **move outside their comfort zone** and tackle the things in life that are uncomfortable for them.

For example, at one point in her life, she was scared to death of getting up in front of people and speaking. She realized that to proceed and find success in her career, becoming an accomplished public speaker was a necessity.

Like everything else in her life she asked her trusted advisers for help. Through a referral she was introduced to **Tommy Richardson**. He became not only a coach, but a mentor and a friend. She paid for his tutoring with her own funds because her personal growth was that important to her and it was a move she did not regret. Richardson helped her hone her public speaking skills, among other things, and they have retained a close relationship.

Nikki understands the value of personal growth and regularly attends seminars and training classes to expand her acumen and skills. In addition, she takes time for daily activities that renew her energy so she can be the best for herself and her clients.

Being a Risk Taker is Key To Her Growth

In 2014, Nikki purchased Rainmakers, the company she took a chance on nine years ago.

Nikki has grown the full-time staff at Rainmakers by **tapping into her own personal savings.** She and her team have a BIG vision for 2015. Nikki knows from experience that in order to achieve BIG goals

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you have to invest in the infrastructure that can support the goals. In the past, she tried it the other way and has also watched other business owners try to do it on the cheap, and knows that never works.

Nikki shared her advice that the **people** have to **come first,** even though that's scary and a risk financially. That's the best way to achieve your BIG goals and vision.

What it Takes To Soar To Success

When asked the top three traits she looks for in her prospective clients to know that they will Soar to Success through their working relationship, she said:

*"The people I work with that are most successful have an **amazing drive;** that's what I look for number 1. I love to work with them because they have skill and interest in working with someone to help them and they have this incredible drive. Number 2 is **persistence.** That means being able to overcome hurdles, one challenging day doesn't create the next challenging day. They are persistent in following their activity plan, no matter what comes up. Number 3 and I should have said this one first, **they are a giver, not a taker."***

Many business owners owe their success to Nikki Lewallen's **personal drive** and **giving mentality**!

Get to know her at Rainmakers and on LinkedIN.

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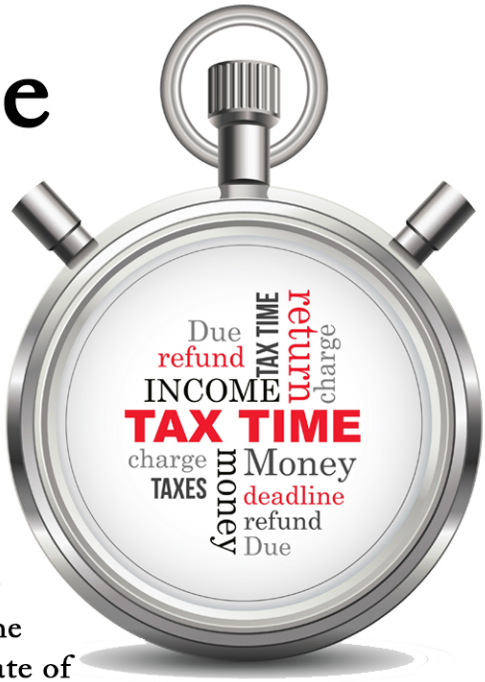
Are You Ready To File Your 2014 Taxes?

What You Need to Know.



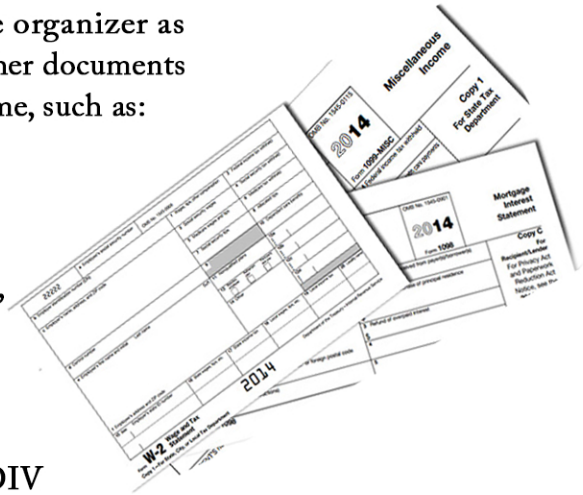
By Tina L. Moe, C.P.A., CGMA

Every year I send out tax organizers to my clients in hopes that it will help them understand what information I need to be able to prepare their taxes accurately and efficiently. **The tax organizer itself is not very complicated, but it can be lengthy and intimidating.** My advice to you is to begin completing the organizer with the easy stuff: your name, address, social security number, date of birth,and the same information for your spouse and dependents.

However, if you're using the same tax accountant as the year before and all of your information is the same, you don't need to fill this portion out as they will already have this in their system. **That alone saves you about ten minutes!**

Use the categories in the organizer as a checklist!

Take the time to look at each category of the tax organizer and use them as a checklist. Only indicate changes in your address, filing status and dependents but leave them blank if they are the same as last year. If you have W-2's, you don't need to fill this portion of the organizer out. Instead, simply clip your original W-2's to the back of the organizer as well as any other documents reporting income, such as:



1099,
K-1,
SSA-1099,
1099-G,
1099INT,
1099OID
and 1099DIV

You don't need to transfer the information over to the organizer if you include the forms with your packet.

Now let's talk deductions.

You will save your tax accountant time and save yourself money if you start adding up your deductions by category and filling in the appropriate boxes with totals. For example, if you have a stack of medical receipts go ahead and add them up and enter them on the appropriate medical expense line.

Every shred of information you provide up front saves your tax accountant time because they won't have to call you to ask you more questions. If your tax accountant charges by the hour, it takes time to call or email you to hunt down information or forms that was listed in the organizer.

Taking the time to compile all of your information up front, using the tax organizer as a guide, and turning all of your tax information in together **can save your tax accountant a lot of time and you money!**

For a free tax organizer, visit my website at **www.actservices-inc.com**.

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.

Tina's website is www.actservices-inc.com

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5 Myths About Working From Home

By Holly Kile

Think you want to work from home? It's not all about getting to wear your bunny slippers and pajamas to work every day!

I'm blessed to be able to work from home. I've worked in a regular office and have no ill will to the traditional work environment but have found that I am much better suited to the work at home lifestyle. If you are considering working from home, there are a few things you need to know beforehand. Today I am going to talk about the first five, of ten, common myths you hear about working from home.

Myth 1

Anybody can work from home. I would love to tell you that anybody can work from home but the truth is that not everyone can handle it. Yes, there is a great deal of flexibility and other benefits but to work from home successfully requires a lot of discipline.

Myth 2

You can do any type of job from home. This is a pretty easy myth to bust open. There are some jobs that just don't make sense at home. Some occupations require specific work environments like a lab or a restaurant so it would be a bad idea to try to manipulate those in order to fit a work at home environment.

Myth 3

The only people who work at home are entrepreneurs who own their own business. This is simply not true. There are lots of people that work for other people that also work from home. There are sales people who sell in a particular territory that may not be in the same location as the home office. There are also plenty of corporate employees who telecommute for their jobs.

Myth 4

You don't need special training to work from home. Working from home requires the same amount of specialty training that doing the job in an office would require.

Sometimes it actually requires more training since you may not have the resources or collective pool of knowledge of other office personnel when you are working in your home alone.

Myth 5

All you need is a laptop and a cell phone. Oh if it were just this simple. Most of us can have the occasional day in the coffee shop and conduct our business with the laptop and cell phone but the reality is that you still have files to maintain, things that require printing from time to time, and a need for office supplies like a stapler or paperclips, all of which will at the very least require a place to be stored when you're not using them. The best thing you can do is to set up your office so that you have everything you need to conduct business efficiently. If you are trying to operate under the laptop only mode, you are likely to not have the tools you need to get the work done.

This covers **five of the ten myths** about working from home. Come back next month to find out 5 more myths you need to understand before you work from home.

Watch my video on this topic:

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.

Catch up with Holly at:

http://hjkglobal.biz

And on Facebook, Linked In, and Twitter

Also watch Holly's videos on Indy BizTV Shows

YES, EVEN YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS TO HAVE A SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Many business owners have asked me if they have to be on social media; many would prefer to avoid it! Here's the bottom line: EVERY business needs to have a social media presence. Gone are the days when we rely on the Yellow Pages or an actual drop in to a store to discuss a potential purchase. Most consumers turn to the Internet to at least research their options and many just make their purchase online. It's this reason that you have to have that presence.

When a consumer does research on a particular product or service, they will naturally review your website and those of your competitors. Once there, they'll probably look to connect with you on social media. Why do they (we) do this? Because we're curious but also because we like to do business with people that we know, like and trus. A website can give you a lot of information but it's on social media that the magic happens. That is where you have the opportunity to showcase your expertise, interact with your community, and deliver an added level of superior customer service.

If you're not on social media, you've robbed your potential customer of a chance to get to know you better. It sends an immediate signal to them that you don't want to interact with them. You've effectively ended the conversation at your website. So if you're not on social media, it's time to get you there. Your business with thank you for it.

Visit **HJKGLOBAL.BIZ/INSTANTSOCIALMEDIA** today for something to say…right away!

Wondering about the Cloud?

Find out which cloud computing solution is the right fit for your business.

By Jeanne DeWitt

Most likely you've heard all of the commotion around cloud computing and know that it's the **"Next Big Thing"** in business technology. Yet, despite all of the hype, most businesses really don't understand exactly what cloud computing is and what it could do to help their business. "What are my options?" and "What is right for me?" are two of the top questions that I hear quite often. There are at least 4 types of cloud computing solutions for your business.

Which one is right for you?

First there is Pure Cloud: This is where all your applications and data are put on the other side of your firewall meaning they are totally in the cloud and accessed through various devices (laptops, desktops, iPads, phones) via the Internet.

Second there is Hybrid Cloud: Although "pure" cloud computing has valid applications, for many it's downright scary. And in some cases it is NOT the smartest move due to compliance issues, security restrictions or performance issues. A hybrid cloud enables you to put certain pieces of existing IT infrastructure (say, storage and e-mail) in the cloud, and the remainder of the IT infrastructure stays on-premise. This gives you the ability to enjoy the cost savings and benefits of cloud computing where it makes the most sense without risking your entire environment.

Third is Point Solutions. This is simply to put certain applications, like SharePoint or Microsoft Exchange, in the cloud while keeping everything else on-site. Since is usually a critical application that everyone needs and wants access to on the road and on various devices like tablets, this solution is often a great way to get the advanced features of Microsoft Exchange without the cost of installing and supporting your own in-house Exchange server.

And finally is Public Cloud vs. Private Cloud. A public cloud is a service that anyone can tap into with a network connection and a credit card. They are shared infrastructures that allow you to pay-as-you-go and are managed through a self-service web portal. Private clouds are essentially self-built infrastructures that mimic public cloud services, but are on-premise.

Private clouds are often the choice of companies who want the benefits of cloud computing but don't want their data held in a public environment.

Keep in mind that there is no "perfect" one-size-fits-all cloud solution for every business. All options have upsides and downsides. Which option is best for your business should be determined by your IT provider based on your company's needs and business requirements. Click the link below to watch my video about cloud solutions.

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 visit their website at http://HireAnITExpert.com and on

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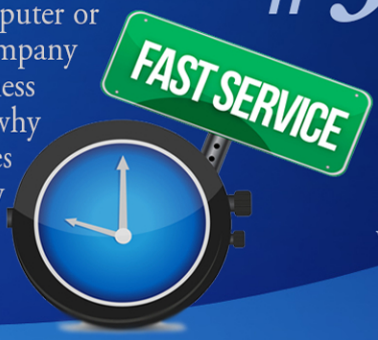

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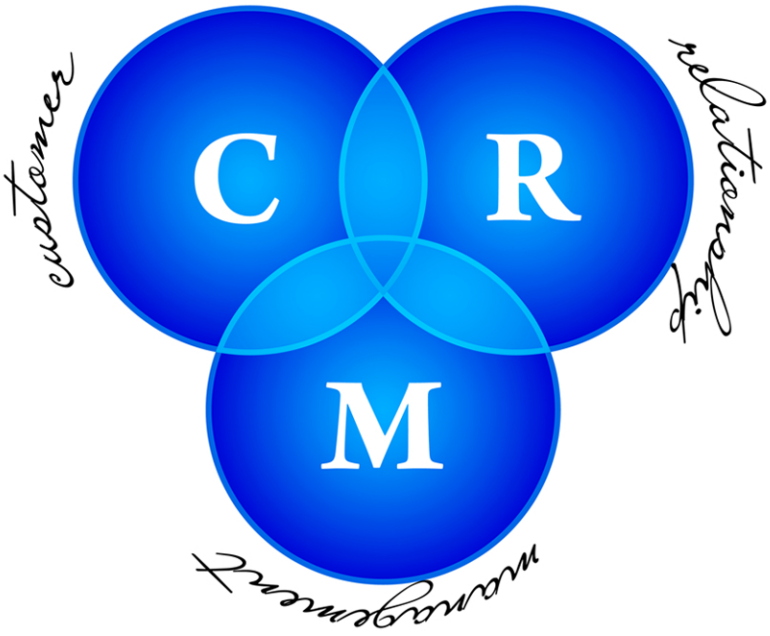
Three Areas You Should Be Measuring in Your CRM System

By Troy Hanna

You're using your CRM but how do you know if everything you're doing is working the way it should?

There are **three areas** that you should be reviewing to measure the success of your CRM strategy. These three areas are **Sales, Marketing** and **Service.** Now let's dive in and talk about what you should be reviewing in each category.



Sales

Part of looking at sales is easy. You track dollars in so you know what sales you are making but you need to look further than that. Aside from tracking dollars, you should also be tracking things like **numbers of prospects, numbers of new customers and numbers of retained customers.**

Think about it: if you look at **prospects vs. customers** then you can determine what type of **close rate** you have and use that data to start looking at how long your sales cycle is, which is extremely important for making projections.

Other numbers you want to look at is the number of **sales calls made** and **number of sales calls per opportunity.** This helps you look at efficiencies.

Finally, you also will want to track the **number of proposals** given and compare that to the number of closed proposals.

Watch Troy's videos on many CRM related subjects, including this one!

Marketing

The next category you should be looking at with a measuring mindset is your marketing. Don't just look at the click through rates and open rates, you should also look at **how many campaigns** you are doing, **number of purchases** in each campaign and **how much revenue is generated.** Drill down in the number of new customers acquired through a campaign and I suggest you even look at the referrals. You'll also

You'll also want to keep track of things like **cross-sell ratios** and **up-sell ratios**.

For those email marketing campaigns, don't forget to measure how your email list is growing. Checking how your campaigns affect the growth there can give you important information about campaign performance

Service

The final category I suggest you measure is your service. Now you may not have a traditional service type business where customers file a ticket and you need to troubleshoot but if you are, you need to make sure you use your CRM to track the cases. Look at the number of cases or tickets you are handling and the time it takes to close them. **How many close the same day? What is the average number of calls or tickets per day? What is the average time between complaint and resolution? What is the average service cost per interruption?**

Each of these details can help you create a better service relationship with your customers. Ignoring the data will only ensure that you don't improve which will definitely have a negative impact on your bottom line.

Measuring elements in your sales, marketing and service categories is not just a good idea, it's a necessity for your growing business. Be sure that you are using your CRM reporting fields and functions to their maximum potential to ensure your continued success.

For more information about CRM solutions visit AddressTwo University at:

http://u.addresstwo.com

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.

As customer relationship management software is becoming a vital tool in the sales and marketing world, AddressTwo believes that keeping it simple and easy to use is a key aspect in growing your business.

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.

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Are You Sleep Walking Through Your Life?

It's time to A.W.A.K.E.

By Rochelle Forrest

What are you passionate about?

What makes you excited?

Do you feel like you are **sleep walking through your life?** Going through the **motions** but not really feeling **emotions**? It's a dull, listless life, isn't it?

A good place to start to transform is to **identify what is fun for you.** Really fun! Have you felt joy lately while doing something or being with certain people? Make a list of all those people, places or things. Many of my clients can't remember the last time they felt joy, so don't feel bad if it's difficult for you.

Another step in the right direction is to think about how you make a difference. Do you contribute to your community or non-profit organizations in a way that helps feed your soul?

Take time to slow down, meditate and listen to your inner voice. What is it telling you? Maybe it's encouraging you to A.W.A.K.E.

A.W.A.K.E. stands for:

Aware – how much of your day are you really in the now?

Wonder – during the day are you creating a curious consciousness which helps to expand thought

Alive – do you stop to feel the power of your breath? Do you feel the presence of the people around you?

Know – are you listening to and following your inner voice

Experience – are you living fully into the now and do you realize that your thoughts this very moment are creating your future.

Start today. Pay attention to your daily habits and stay A.W.A.K.E. Follow your tugs and begin to live A.W.A.K.E. and on purpose. When you find yourself off course, just make a little correction. When you're A.W.A.K.E. you are aware and you'll see those times when you need to adjust ever so slightly.

If you need help to A.W.A.K.E., I can shine a light on your path. Go to RochelleForrest.com and sign-up to receive my ebook, ***Re-Ignite Your Inner Light*** absolutely FREE. Or maybe you are ready for the deep dive! Check it out on my website. **Don't forget, I'm here to light your way.**

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 my video: **It's Time To A.W.A.K.E.** on http://IndyBizTVShows.com.

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rochelle@createhealthnaturally.com

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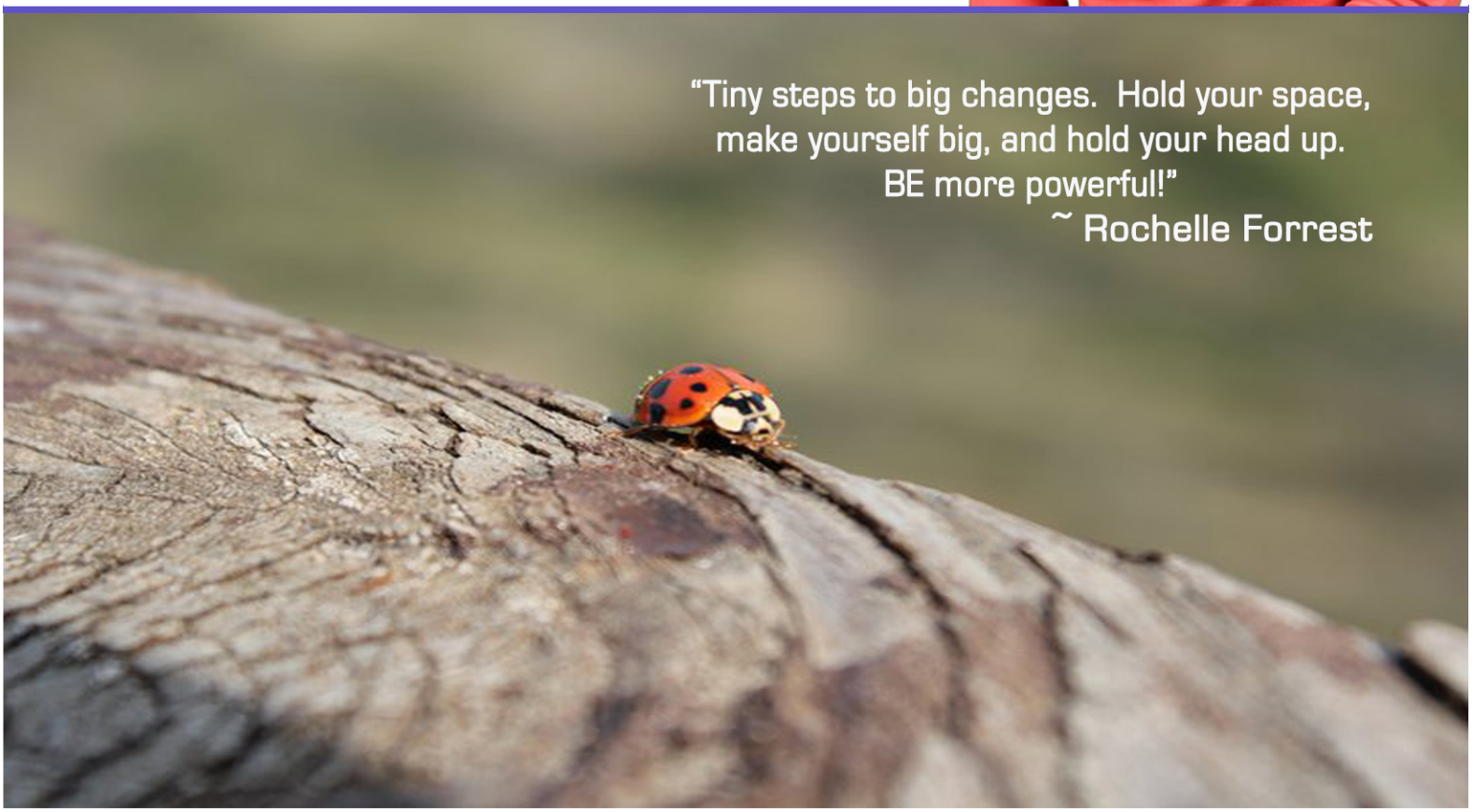
and grab your **FREE** copy of the eBook version of her book,

Re-Ignite Your Inner Light!



Practice What To Say, When You Have to Say Something!

By Lillian Zarzar

How often do you practice for that meeting with your staff? Or with your boss? Or even with your spouse? Find out how to practice what to say when you have to say something!

You practice your instrument for the performance. You practice your singing for the concert. You practice your sport for the competition. You practice your lines for the play.

These practices help you to refine your skills in each of these areas. When do you practice your daily speaking?

That's right! **When do you practice speaking?** Just because you talk doesn't mean you are able to articulate what you want to say to someone – especially in a difficult situation or conversation!

Watch Lillian's video on this topic!

Think about this: Let's say you have to respond to a challenging situation – perhaps to give feedback to a client, a boss, a staff member, a significant other...and as soon as you open your mouth, **something falls out! And it isn't what was in your head!!** Of course, an hour later you are brilliant in coming up with the right thing to say!

Here are **three tips** to prepare for those crucial times when you have to say something:

1 Imagine the conversation

and write down what you want to say. In those critical conversations, you want to **speak from certainty** to increase your credibility. Choose your words carefully. Consider the meaning of the words you are using and how they come across to the other person. You want to ensure you are using words correctly and appropriately. Think about what you want that person to know.

2 Anticipate what the other person may say or how they may respond

Even though you can't control their reaction to you, you can prepare yourself to know what you can say when they speak. So examine the alternatives of what

they may say as a result of what you tell them. Put yourself in the place of the other individuals to consider how your words may affect them.

3 Practice saying what you are going to say

Practice in the shower, in your car, wherever you might have a few minutes. Think about what you are going to say and how the conversation flows. Review how the conversation unfolds so you are prepared to take it in the direction you anticipate!

The practice of speaking is an art form – it enables you to refine, tune, clarify, and become more adept – you improve with every word.

Preparation and practice enhance your performance. That's why physicians and attorneys open a practice!

What is your speaking practice? I'd love to help you craft your message so that you are understood in the way you intend!

Check my website at **lillianzarzar.com**, or call me at 614-486-5523, and let's have that conversation!

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 with the Demartini Institute in Texas, a private research, education and service institution dedicated to the development of human awareness and potential.

Lillian Zarzar 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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Practicing Perspective:
An Overview

By Dr. Deitra Hickey, PhD

Have you ever said to yourself or heard anyone say, "*I just want to be happy?*" I want peace and contentment each and every day.

Often times, we just go through the motions and accept our natural thought-process as if we have no other choice. The thing is, **we do**…we have complete control over how we choose to think and look at the world around us.

The concept of perspective is just that, it is the lens in which we choose to look at life through.

Are you focusing on the positives of what's going on around you or **do you tend to hone in on what is going wrong, what needs improved, or what you haven't completed yet?** I will be the first to admit, practicing perspective is not an easy task. I say this because we are human and sometimes, our natural thought-process veers towards the negative; sometimes to the extent that we sabotage our mood or even our entire day.

Have you ever been stuck in a traffic jam because of a car accident and you were already late to wherever it was that you were going? You say to yourself, "ugh, I am already late, why do these things always happen to me?" You glance over to the opposite lane of traffic and see the cars flowing on by without even a slight delay. You say, "Why aren't I over there? Why do I have such terrible luck?" your future.

This is the **perfect moment to practice perspective** and if you take a moment to stop comparing yourself to the opposite lane of traffic and instead take a deep

breath and glance at the car ahead that was actually in the accident and compare yourself to them. It is then that you realize, THEY had a bad day, not me. That is someone's spouse, maybe a parent, or child and they may even be in a life changing state. Sure, it is not convenient to be stuck in traffic but there are much worse circumstances you could find yourself in. This analogy aligns right along with other inconveniences in life, **try to find a silver lining and at minimum, remember things could almost always be worse.**

Understanding this concept of perspective comparisons is a powerful component to attaining the emotional and mental peace that we all desire. When was the last time you patted yourself on the back and relished in your accomplishments? Or, are you too busy worrying about what you haven't completed or all of the things on your to-do list.

Take a moment and practice taking the time each day to **congratulate yourself on what you have done; focus on the wonderful things in your life,** not what you think are missing.

By practicing positive perspective, you are on your way to a attaining the happiness and contentment that you deserve. Be sure to watch Dr. Hickey's video on this topic.

Dr. Deitra Hickey PhD. has utilized her life experiences to develop a passion to help others find their balance and honor themselves through physical, mental, and emotional wellness.

Deitra developed a strong will and resilience at a young age by taking care of two paralyzed parents after witnessing both of them being shot. She then cared for her mother who suffered from Multiple Sclerosis until she passed away at only 48.

Dr. Hickey made the decision early on to take control of her life. She has dedicated her life to assisting others to find positive perspective and happiness. She encourages the importance of capitalizing on life's challenges to strengthen and empower versus using adversity as a crutch.

In addition, Dr. Hickey is the owner of Serenity Health and Wellness Center in Maumee, OH.

Learn more about Serenity at their website and on

THREE Super Secrets for Keeping Your New Year's Resolutions

By Leslie R. Podolsky

Did you know that at least 50 percent of all Americans make a New Year's resolution? That sounds reasonable. But, according to research, ***88 percent of those people fail!*** While everybody is excited to start the New Year with fresh ideas and resolutions, many times we lose steam by February. **Here are three super secrets for keeping your resolutions!**

NUMBER ONE:

Make your resolutions specific and attainable. Not only do you need to know what your resolutions are, you also need to know how you will accomplish them! Start by breaking down your goals into small steps of action that you can easily manage, so that you don't get overwhelmed and do nothing.

For example, if your resolution is to conquer your email back log, then your first small step could be to choose ten emails to delete. Your next small step might be to unsubscribe to ten newsletters or blogs that you never read. These tasks take less than five minutes and you can do them every day!

The idea is to create tiny habits that will become part of your normal routine, so you will do them without even thinking about it! These tasks will keep you moving forward to your ultimate goal.

NUMBER TWO:

Hold yourself accountable for reaching your goals. You can do this in a few ways. First you can **write down your goals.** There is something about having them in black and white that makes you more able to accomplish them. You can even post your list in a place where you will see them every day.

Next, tell your colleagues and friends about your resolutions. The more people who know about them the bigger support system and cheering, section you will have! Also, many people enlist an accountability partner. This is a person with whom you communicate regularly about your goals and resolutions. Often times, it is easier to keep a promise to someone else rather than yourself. If you tell your accountability partner that you will follow up on a particular lead before your next meeting, you will have to answer to her if you don't do it!

NUMBER THREE:

Give yourself rewards and do it often! Yes, you deserve it! Positive feedback significantly increases your chance for success. Start by recognizing your small steps or mini-goals. For instance, if your resolution is to organize your desk, and you have cleaned out just one drawer, then it is time for a reward. Pat yourself on the back and treat yourself

to that cup of fancy coffee that you love. This will be great motivation to continue the process. Take small steps until you are done.

Also, laugh at minor setbacks and keep a CAN DO attitude. **Remember it is always better to get back on track than to give up!** Watch my video on this topic.

Leslie Podolsky is the founder and owner of ORGANIZED by Design, LLC. She is a licensed architect and has spent over 18 years working in the architecture and design industry with residential and business clients. She is excited to use her talents to bring the two worlds of organization and design together by creating beautiful and functional spaces for her customers.

She especially loves crafting custom designed storage solutions and setting up systems to keep her clients organized! Home offices and small businesses are her specialty!

Learn more about Leslie at her website and on

7 Ways to Boost Your Energy in 10 Minutes or Less

1. Do a downward dog. Some studies have found that yoga can be an excellent fatigue fighter.

2. Belt out your favorite tune. Singing gives you a kind of emotional high while it reduces levels of stress hormones in your body.

3. Have a drink of water. Dehydration can leave you feeling drained and fatigued. Drink enough water to keep your body well hydrated.

4. Go nuts. Eat a handful of almonds and peanuts.

5. Grab a cinnamon stick. Research finds that just a whiff of this scented spice can reduce fatigue and make you feel more alert.

6. Get moving. Exercise is a natural energy booster, because whenever you do it, oxygen-rich blood surges through your body to your heart, muscles, and brain.

7. Let the sunshine in. Research confirms that just a few minutes of walking outside on a warm, clear day enhances mood, memory, and the ability to absorb new information.

(source WebMD.com)

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Is NOW the Time to Sell Your Business?

By Patrick Good

Have you been thinking about selling your business but just can't decide if now is the best time? Do you find yourself repeatedly analyzing the economic situation and wishing you had a crystal ball? There are positive signs and there are negative signs. If you're still up in the air and can't quite decide whether or not to hit the eject button, here are **six reasons you might want to consider getting out now.**

1 You're done fighting!

A lot of business owners took the Great Recession in the teeth. If you've got your business stabilized and the prospect of possibly having to fight through another recession leaves you panic-stricken, it could be time for you to get out.

2 The worst is behind you.

Let's say you were mentally ready to consider selling a few years ago and then 2008 hit and 2009 was bad, and in 2010 and 2011 you made cuts and adjustments, so now you're starting to see some profit and and revenue growth. With your numbers going in the right direction, now might be just the right time to make your move.

3 The tax man is coming.

Governments around the world are looking for money to fund the cost of an aging population. At some point this will mean increased taxes.

4 Nobody is lucky forever.

If you're lucky enough to be in a business that actually benefits from a bad economy, congratulations! You've probably just had the four best years of your business life. But no cycle lasts forever and right now might be a great time to take some chips off the table.

5 The coming glut.

As a business owner, demographics are not on your side. As the baby boomers start to retire in droves, we're going to have a glut of small businesses coming on the market. That's great if you're buying; but if you're a seller, you may want to avoid the flood (translation: lower selling prices) and head for higher ground now.

6 The closing window.

Since 2008, it's been tougher for private equity companies to raise money; so many firms had their last successful round of fundraising a number of years ago. Many of these funds have a five-year window in which to invest or they have to give the money back to the people who gave it to them. Some boutique private equity firms will make investments in companies that have at least one million dollars in pre-tax profits (larger private equity firms will not go below $3 million in EBITDA); so if you're in the seven-figure club, you could get a bidding war going for your business among private equity buyers keen to invest their money before they have to give it back.

To find out how your business is performing on the eight key drivers of Sellability and start your journey to increasing the value of your largest asset, **get your Sellability Score now at Get My Score.**

Patrick Good, Toledo Business Coach and Advisor, 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. AdviCoach is the nation's fastest growing business coaching and advisory firm. Pat has a broad business background with over 25 years of experience and success in a wide range of areas including Sales and Marketing, Business Development, Operations, Materials Management, Purchasing, Manufacturing, and Engineering.

Find out more about Pat Good at:

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Also watch his videos at:
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- ☑ **Money** — Are you earning the profit you dreamt of and do you have the funds available to cover both day-to-day expenses as well as expansion?

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5 Reasons Why Emotional Intelligence is Important for Leaders

By Cindy Allen Stuckey

If I were to tell you that there is a factor for success that increases your ability to influence others and be more efficient, collaborate better with your team, and be more effective as a leader, would you be interested?

You've heard of IQ which measures intellectual ability. But have you heard of EQ – emotional intelligence? It's been called the missing link that sets high performers apart from the pack.

EQ is defined as having the ability to identify and manage your emotions on the one hand, and then to pick up on the emotions of those with whom you are interacting on the other hand. It really is the ability to express the appropriate emotions at the appropriate time so that you can influence others and work more effectively, put people at ease, confront problem employees, and build relationships.

Studies show that having a high level of EQ is a better indicator of being successful as a leader than having a high IQ. That's why it's such an important leadership skill.

Here are 5 reasons why you, as a leader, should cultivate your emotional intelligence:

Self-Awareness

EQ gives you the ability to know what you're FEELING and what's important to you. This helps you perceive your emotions as they arise in response to a situation.

Emotional Management

With a high EQ, you can have the ability to MANAGE your own emotional state; regulate yourself, & stay in control so you don't let your anger take over your behavior.

Effective Communication

Now that you are aware of your emotions and can manage them, you can clearly CONVEY DIRECTIONS & KNOW WHAT TO SAY to inspire & motivate others.

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
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04 Social Awareness

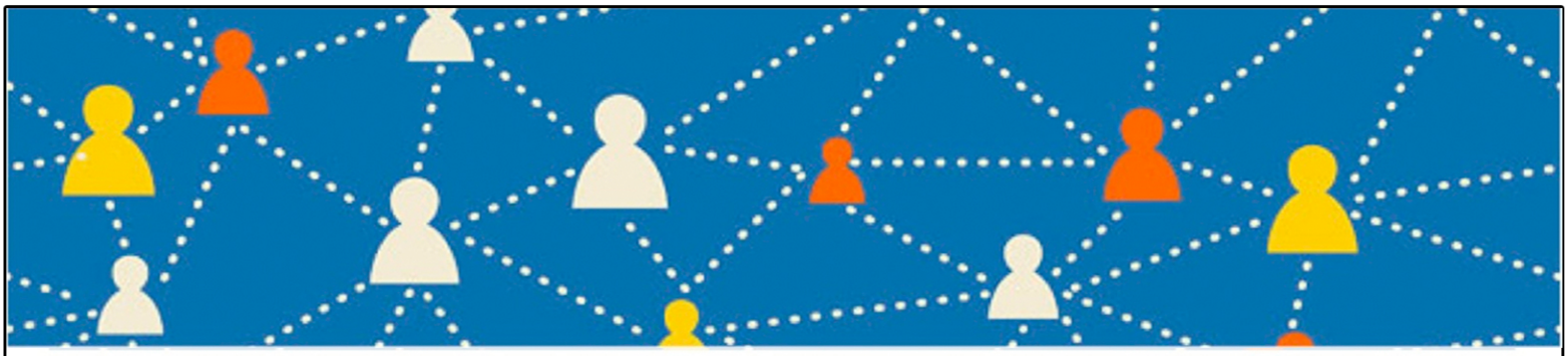
Leaders with high EQ are well tuned to the emotions of others and are able to pick up on what is going on around them. It's critical for leaders to be able to inspire & motivate a team.

05 Conflict Resolution

There are always conflicts in the workplace. Leaders with high EQ are able to handle conflicts better, provide resolution and develop a more effective workplace.

Do you want to know to rate your emotional intelligence? Go to my website to take a quick assessment and come back next month when I'll give you strategies to improve the 1st skill necessary, your **self-awareness.**

Watch Cindy Allen-Stuckey's video series.



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4 Things You Need to Know to Have a Great 2015

By Jack Klemeyer

As a business owner there a probably a million things you could focus on and most of them will not matter a bit when it comes to your business growth or money making possibilities. But there are **four things that do matter.** In fact, knowing these four things are critical to success: Ideal Customer, Source of Customers, Value of Customer and Your Unique Selling Proposition.

Let's look at each to give you that competitive edge in 2015.

1 Ideal Customer

It all starts here! Some call them patients or clients, whatever you call them ... you need to know what makes up your ideal customer. The ideal customer is the combination of a person you enjoy working with, you make money doing business with them and you do great work (results focused) for them. What do they look like, how old are they, what is their gender? These are all part of the demographics of the customer.

There is another important element and that is their **psychographics.** How do they think, how do they act and what and how do they feel?

2 Source of Customers

Where do your customers come from? How do they (or in the future, how can they) hear about you? Once you know this, you know how to capture them, as I like to say, where they nest or gather.

3 Value of a Customer

This is an important number. With knowledge of this number you know how much you should invest to get a new client, patient or customer. This number can be determined short term such as for one year, or determined for the long term such as lifetime value.

4 Unique Selling Proposition

This is what truly differentiates you from your competition. It is best summed up by the trademarked question by would famous author and consultant, Dan Kennedy. Here is Dan's question. "Why should I, your prospective customer (patient, client) chose to do business with you over any and all other options including doing nothing?"

Answer that and you're on your way to a great 2015.

Knowing the answer to the combination of these four simple, but often overlooked business basics will ensure your business grows! Start today and discover the answers. **You can have the best year you have ever had in 2015!**

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.
http://gybcoaching.com

Be sure to watch Jack's video series

and connect with him on Facebook Linked IN Twitter

"You have to spend a good amount of time working ON your business, perfecting your skills and sharpening your saw."

~ Jack Klemeyer
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shares his proven strategies for using networking to build the business you've always wanted.

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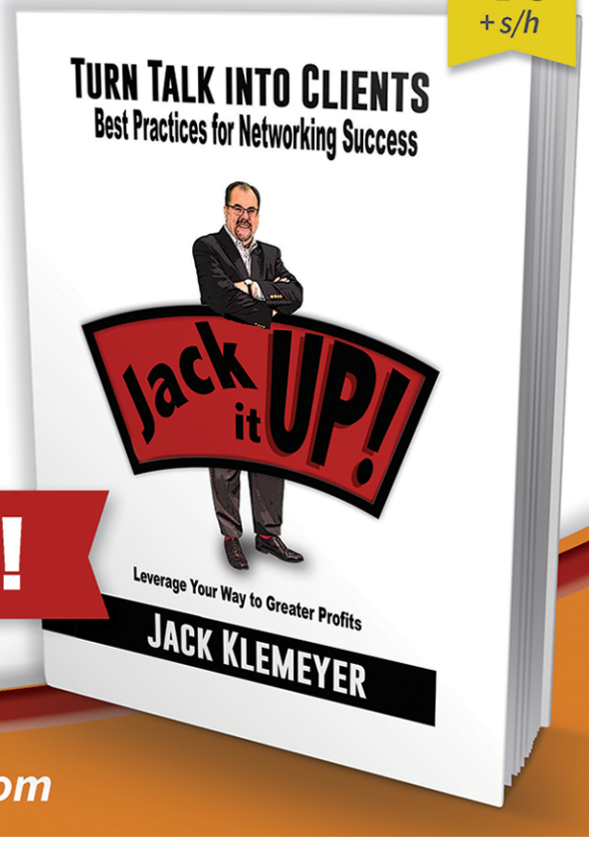

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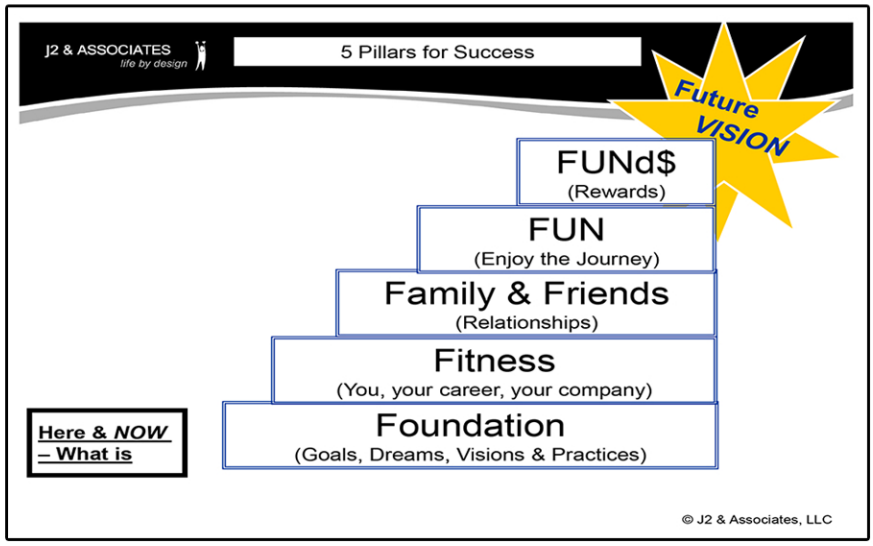
Motivational Moments

By Jamie Sue Johnson

Are you ready for your best life, to come to life? AND Live IT?

It is the new year and a time to **refresh your goals, your energy and your passion for work and life.** In coaching we work with our clients to assist them in bringing clarity, planning and action to their business. One Model I designed and have worked with over the past 16 years is the 5 Pillars to Success: Foundations, Fitness, Family & Friends, Fun and FUNd$ ©.

By using this model as a format you set yourself up to Soar to Success in 2015.



Foundation

Foundations help us to focus in and refresh our business. As a business owner, how do you keep it all in balance? What are your foundational practices that you follow? The first Pillar is your foundation, your core values, your spiritual practices, visions and goals for your life, your family and your business.

Fitness

Next bring your attention to your health and the health of your business. Pillar 2 Fitness is about your energy and your company's energy to maintain or grow. Is it time to get your annual physical and your company's, by reviewing your books & your market?

Answer the question: what does being healthy and active as a person, a family and a company mean to me?

Family & Friends

Look in your life and there are people everywhere, family, friends, business coworkers & partner. Most of us want to contribute and to be supported in winning in our personal and professional goals. Are you a champion for others in their work and lives?

Are you supporting folks to Soar to Their Success.

Fun

Do what you love and love what you do. Are you grateful, are you satisfied, are you enjoying your work and life? How balanced is your life? Take a self assessment to see where you stand.

FUNd$

Our Finances source many aspects of our lives. When you do what you love and love what you do we know the FUNd$ flow. With the Live it Life Series we focus on your financial future and the rewards to celebrate along the journey.

Use the 5 Pillars to support yourself or your business team in creating your business vision for 2015 and beyond. Coaching is all about you soaring to success. Life a life you love. Dream it. Design it. Do it.

Jamie Sue Johnson, Motivational Speaker, Executive Coach and President of J2 & Associates is Certified as a Master Coach and a Coach Training Leader. She co-founded a coach training firm and has been in the business for over 15 years. Check out her videos on Columbus BizTV Shows for more motivational moments.

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Networking Revelation:
Ask a Different Question

By Tina Imperial

Depending on your comfort level, networking can be a nasty chore evoking visions of awkward conversations and rampant business card flinging. Shake it off. **This is not war, it is networking.** You can improve your experience at a networking function or any social function, for that matter, if you lead with a more opportunistic conversation starter other than **"What do you do?"**

On the surface, that over-used question appears to be a good starting point, but in practice it can **come off as unnatural and abrasive.** Networking events, like other social events, are opportunities to make connections but, frequently, we are too self-focused to make the most of them. Common reasons for attending a networking event include obtaining a new client, connecting with a supplier or cultivating a reputation - all good things. Unfortunately our agenda, when executed poorly, transforms us into prospectors. **What should you do instead?**

While it's **important to be intentional** about the event, it's even more important to be authentic.

Authenticity is a core building block for strong relationships.

Imagine how different your experience could be if you made authentic connections with people rather than qualifying them and moving on to the next lead. Remember, relationships take time.

Consider one of the five questions shown in the box on the right.

Before asking "What do you do?" ask:

- What have you found helpful about attending this event?
- What changes have you seen in your industry in the last few years?
- Are you looking to meet a particular person?
- What do you love the most about what you do?
- **How can I help you?**

If you're ready to get results from your Indianapolis area networking activity, get plugged into Rainmakers. Contact our Success Manager, Stephanie at:
stephanie.dohnert@gorainmakers.com