

BUSINESS SUCCESS IS NOT AN ACCIDENT WE MUST ALL MANAGE SMARTER!



Success in business today is the result of being realistic about where we are now and where we need to be in every aspect of our operation. “The beginning of wisdom is the recognition of reality.”

So, here’s a reality check. The Disaster Restoration business is tough...and getting tougher. We have more demanding customers, more and stronger competition, increased complexity and shrinking margins.

The insurance industry is passing off more and more administrative work to us and monitoring our expenses and our customer service to the second. On top of that, great staff are hard to find and keep...and that problem won’t go away any time soon.

To succeed in business today we must all manage smarter. We must work ‘ON’ our business, not just ‘IN’ it. In spite of what anyone tells you, as business owners, leaders or managers, our first job is clarity. Specifically, clarity about the value and experience that we commit to deliver, what we commit to become, how we’ll get there, the extraordinary bottom line we commit to generate... and how we commit to behave along the way. If we as leaders are not clear about these 5 things, who else in the business could possibly be?

Then, our next task is to create and deliver the compelling customer value and experiences that will ‘grab’ our target customers and clearly differentiate us from our competitors. We need to be a ‘story’.

Then, we must be relentless marketers and promoters. We need to tell our story. There’s no point in being the best if we’re also the best kept secret. The good news is that the technology of the internet, customer databases, websites, E-Newsletters and social media make it easy and affordable to get our story out.

Next, we must develop world-class operating efficiency in order to be price-competitive, service-competitive and profitable in this highly competitive business. To make all of this happen, we need to develop a dedicated and top-performing team. We cannot grow our business without growing our people.

It’s common to hear managers in our industry say that, “You just can’t get great staff anymore.” The truth is that the best people have to work for somebody...it’s just that we have to deserve them. How do we do that? On one sheet of paper, describe the kind of business in our industry, in your market, that the best people would want to work for. How would it hire, pay, train, communicate, mentor, thank, respect and celebrate

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good people? Then, on a 2nd piece of paper, write down what you need to get off your behind and do to become the kind of business that you just described on page #1.

Failure to deal with non-performance is one of the biggest problems in

many businesses today. Everyone on your team is part of your value or part of your problem. Make a list of your ‘problem’ people. Everyone on that list is either rescuable or not rescuable. If they’re rescuable, for pete’s sake get on with it. If they’re not, invite them to make an alternate career decision. The people who ‘quit and stay’ are killing you.

Next, we need to better understand the math of profitability and have the courage to turn down unprofitable work. Our profit is something we plan for...not something we hope for. Small improvements in sales, margins and expense control can make a huge difference on our bottom line, and most of us don’t understand that.

So, how do we make all this happen? Simply put, as business owners, leaders and managers we need to grow ourselves in order to grow our

business. Who we used to be won't get us to where we need to be.

Attending content-rich Management Boot Camps and Business Summits is one way you and your management team can get away from the day-to-day operations and focus on the insights, tools and processes that will grow your business and your bottom line.

To help you make this year your best ever, here are 3 questions to explore with your management Team over the next few days. While these questions are simple, some of the answers will not be. If necessary, assign homework and research to members of your team to gather more info so you can come up with and discuss innovative ways of taking your business to the next level.

1. What bottom line profit do we commit to generate this year that will make us financially healthy and allow us to fairly reward our Team for their time, effort and investment in the business. List at least 5 specific things we commit to do to make this bottom line happen.



2. We are what we communicate. Come up with at least 5 things we'll do to more effectively promote our business, 'grab' our target customers and communicate our total value offering.

3. We can't grow our business without growing our people. What training, development or mentoring does each person on our Team need to help us grow the business, serve our customers more wonderfully and operate the business more effectively?

Just going through these 3 questions will get you and your Team thinking about what needs to be changed or improved to make this year your best year ever.

For each idea you come up with and commit to, be clear about what will be done, by whom, by when and measured how, to make it happen. Failure to implement effectively is another of the biggest challenges in most businesses today. Remember, businesses do not die from a single shot to the head. They die, slowly but surely, from a thousand uncompleted tasks.

Let this be the year that you and your Team make clear and measurable business commitments. We encourage you to schedule at least 4 hours each week to work 'ON' your business. Remember... success in business is not an accident. It takes



careful planning, Team development and a commitment to make it happen.

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Donald Cooper, MBA delivers the 'straight goods' based on his real-world business experience on how to sell more, manage smarter, grow your bottom line...and have a life! For his unique ability to inform, focus, coach and inspire Donald has been inducted into The Canadian Speaking Hall of Fame.