



Tips FROM THE Top[®]

Business insights
from those at the top
for those at the top



THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD[®]
Achieve Success with Peer Advice and Coaching

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Local Contact

Quick Tips

Before You Open The Door

There are certain attributes you just can't train; they have to be present from the beginning. Trust, honesty and reliability must already exist when an employee comes on board. Being able to distinguish between what must come in the door with the applicant and what they can be taught once inside will help with hiring successful employees.

*Charles Smith, Tally Systems,
Ronkonkoma, NY*

Working Hard

We all know that our employees are the key to our business's success. If you're

The Assistant Dilemma

We often struggle with the decision of whether and when to invest in an administrative assistant. A simple time management system can help. Keep track of and record those repetitive tasks that you perform daily, weekly and monthly. This will give you a good start on a job description for the assistant. It will also help you realize how much time you are spending on activities that do not capitalize on your strengths as the CEO.

Sandra Hanlon, S'Hanlon Online Auctions, Wilmington, DE

Put More Lines in The Water

The effectiveness of your marketing program will be impacted by a combination of the content pieces you use, number of prospects targeted and the frequency of your contact with them. If you aren't happy with the results generated, don't just change the content. You may need to expand your prospect list as well as your frequency. It's not always about gaining more prospects as much as sometimes just needing to put more lines in the water.

Marc Rocklin, Rocklin Irving Advertising, Lincolnwood, IL

Debriefing the Sales Process

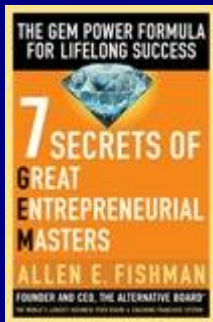
Upon losing a "beauty contest" involving formal proposals with multiple vendors, it is advisable to send a letter to the potential customer thanking them for the opportunity. More importantly, ask for feedback about what your firm could have done better. This will accomplish two things:

1. It lets the customer know that you are still interested in their business and don't harbor any ill feelings about the process (in case the winning vendor does not work out).
2. It gives you quality feedback from the customer's perspective on improving your sales and proposal process.

Bob Sullivan, NAI Sullivan Group, Oklahoma City, OK

continually willing to train, coach, teach and guide your employees while also providing a vision for them to attain a better life, they, in turn, will make the commitment and work hard for you and your business. This is what real motivation is all about.

Gene Kobayashi,
Kuiada Art Supply,
Salinas, CA



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*800 CEO Read, Aug. 1st, 2006.

Using NetPost For Mailings

The US Post Office provides an online printing service, which is competitive and efficient for the limited mailing list requirements of small business. The service offers letters and postcards of various sizes (black and white or color). Upload your images, text and mailing list in the netpost format. After the final copy has been approved, you then pay and mail out your copies. Learn more at www.usps.com/netpost/.

Dave Huffman, Huffman LeVigne Associates, Westlake, OH

Battling Negative Rumors

A local competitor started passing a rumor around that our company would soon be going out of business. To counter this rumor, we sent in a secret shopper to check out the details regarding the rumor so we could then correct the misinformation in our discussions with our customers. We sent a mailer to all of our customers announcing our calendar of special events and promotions for the next six months as well as a special discount punch card.

Jeff Gurney, State Beauty Supply, Greeley, CO

Public Speaking

When polled on their greatest fear, people always put public speaking at the top of the list. We encourage all of our managers to develop their public speaking skills in order to overcome this dreaded task while also building character and self-confidence. “Learning by doing” is the best way to develop public speaking skills. In addition, there are many tools and resources available to help someone develop public speaking skills.

Andy Ziegler, eBlueprint, Cleveland, OH

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