

Putting Planning into Action

In this final article we are focusing on activities that you can use to get your plan going without breaking the bank. In the same way that we have addressed how to “make strategy a habit,” “be surgical in your decision-making,” “evaluate your opportunities strategically”, “identify common risks and threats you might face,” “create momentum in your life,” and “lead successful meetings,” we are tackling how to make the most of your resources in uncertain economic times by applying what we have previously discussed and putting pen to paper in order to plan for 2009.

You can start the ball rolling by picking even one activity that’s essential to moving your organization forward and implementing it. We encourage you to start with the following and put your plan into action today!

- **Drive your organization with a big vision.** Forming a strategic vision should provide long-term direction, delineate what kind of enterprise your organization is trying to become, and infuse the organization with a sense of purposeful action. Vision serves as a unifying focal point for everyone in the organization – like a North Star. In fact, your vision statement needs to be something you can achieve at some point in the future. Visions are also referred to as big, hairy, audacious goals or BHAGs.
- **Establish big goals.** A big vision is achieved through accomplishing big objectives and goals. That’s all execution really is - your organization’s ability to achieve goals. Clearly communicate your objectives and goals, assign responsibility to someone with measures and targets, and regularly review and hold people accountable.
- **Celebrate wins.** Publicly share big accomplishments, milestones, project completions, and revenue goals. In this way, you will help motivate people and fuel enthusiasm for further growth while also creating a team atmosphere.
- **Seek out new ideas.** Invite left and right-brained people into your organization to create a complete brain trust of skills and competencies. Left-brained folks bring the analytical perspective to the table, and right-brained people focus more on creativity.
- **Ignore distractions.** In tandem with new ideas, you also must maintain focus. In an increasingly competitive environment, growth comes from being great at one thing at a time. Succeed at one thing that you know people need. That takes focus on the customer and focus on what you choose to do better than anybody else.
- **Empower through ownership.** Taking ownership is similar to accountability. Empower your people by assigning ownership. Recognition is the number one motivator. Give ownership of key business metrics, and then give that individual or team the autonomy and authority to drive that revenue past the forecast!
- **Be passionate.** If you’re motivated and excited about what you’re doing, people will follow, and your organization will grow because positive attitudes and energy are contagious. Having and showing passion about your work may be the most important elements because there’s true spirit behind growth.

Success isn’t a matter of chance but rather a matter of choice. Planning will help you navigate turbulent times and help pave your way to success. We encourage you to choose success and start planning today!