

“Gonna do” isn’t a real strategy

Creating great places to work and do business

Sid Ridgley

What’s it really going to take to move you or your organization from knowing to doing? You have many great ideas for your company, and others know you do, too. Yet, for some reason, it is extremely difficult to move from concept to implementation. Why?

The simple answer is procrastination (“I was gonna do that eventually”), which could be either part of the problem or the entire problem. Either way, procrastination isn’t a medical condition nor is it a personality trait. It is a mental condition, which means there is hope. Focusing on the following four things will help you and your organization make things happen while accomplishing more.



Benefits

Identifying the benefits and making them personal will increase the motivation level surrounding the task. Logic tells us that developing a business plan (or making a few extra sales calls, or developing a new marketing plan) is a good use of time and resources. But logic doesn’t generate energy—benefits do. When we make the benefit personal, we’re operating on 220 volts. For example, one of the many benefits of a business plan is people in your organization have a better understanding of what is important and how they can contribute (a 110-volt statement); add the words “and we get our bonuses”, and it becomes a 220-volt statement!

Priority planning

In most organizations, there are too many initiatives or activities on the go, and they suck the living lifeblood out of most people. Too many things to do and not enough hours in the day!

When re-focusing priorities, experienced leaders with whom I’ve worked almost always choose activities that involve growing the business. The belief being that, when the business grows, more resources become available to do other things. For most people, it is a lot more fun to devote time and energy toward acquiring and/or serving customers well than to a cost-cutting activity.

Rewards

If benefits provide the energy, then rewards provide the octane. People who are passionate about their work like receiving rewards when things get accomplished. The act of rewarding oneself or others when an achievement is made does three things: first, it keeps us going forward; second, it helps us know we are on the right track; and, third, it recognizes that effort is being expended.

Monetary rewards ought to be used for ‘results’ while non-monetary rewards are best used for completed activities and/or milestones. When the size of the reward is out of sync with results (i.e. major results equal small reward), employees quickly become unmotivated—the opposite effect of what is desired.

Leading by setting an example

Leadership is everywhere, and people take their cues on how to behave, what to do and what to value from those around them. You don’t have to be the boss to lead.

The key is demonstrating commitment toward the accomplishment of goals and objectives—your own and those of the organization. Commitment is a feeling, compliance is not. Commitment causes you to like what you do and continue doing it, even when the rewards aren’t obvious. When people are committed, they keep trying—even in the face of adversity.

3 things to do for 2011

Identify—right now—the two to three highest-priority goals you have, then define the benefits of achieving those goals. Second, determine what an article in a magazine might say about you and your organization’s accomplishments were it published this time next year. Third, remove the word ‘try’ from your vocabulary, because ‘trying’ just doesn’t work.

The reality is, “gonna do” affects each and every one of us to some degree or another. The goal is to keep it under control and focus, focus, focus. Even though we make mistakes, getting things done feels good... very good. “Gonna do” won’t change the world, but “Got it done” will. **EB**

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