



Winter 2005

MAXIMIZING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' TIME

3 Ways to Save Time in Your Business



Dear Business Owner:

Thank you for requesting this report from Alpha Business Coaching. It will discuss three ways to save you time in running your business. They are:

1. Create a Strategic Plan
2. Qualify Potential Clients
3. Delegate the Right Tasks

We believe this report on TIME management can help you take the right steps to plan for maximum success in your business this year.

Lynda Conrady Hess, President

Create a Strategic Plan- to know where your business is headed

All businesses, no matter what the size, no matter what its goals, should have a strategic plan. Some reasons why-

1. A plan will increase your chances of staying in business. With a plan, you will lay out the steps you need to take to be successful. It will provide a structure for you in an often unstructured world.
2. A plan should focus 80% of its time on the area in which the business is having the most trouble. If sales are low, the plan needs to focus on marketing. If employee turnover is 50%, it should concentrate on hiring and keeping people. If customer referrals and satisfaction is low, it should work on client relations.
3. Writing a plan will force you to think about your business strategically. It will make you develop specific goals for your business rather than just using other businesses' objectives. It will show you where the holes are in your business so you can fill them.
4. Most importantly, a plan is not just empty words. It includes actions that are going to be taken in every area of the business. It will set up objectives, measurable ones, so that you'll know at the end of the year what worked and what didn't.

MAXIMIZING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' TIME

Qualify Your Potential Clients- by listening not selling

When you first meet a potential client, do you start by selling or by asking questions? Let me suggest that you should ALWAYS begin by asking questions. Don't just ask one question (why did you call my company?) but many questions. Make sure you understand the need that brought the person to inquire about your business in the first place.

Recently I contacted a "college solutions consultant" about my nephew's college troubles. Before I could even explain the situation, he launched into a 15 minute explanation about how he works with high school students to prepare them for college. If he'd have asked questions first, he'd have learned that my nephew has completed 1 year of college but isn't sure what's next for him. Instead of finding out my "need", this consultant wasted his time and mine by telling me a lot of things I didn't need to know.

For every 5 potential clients you talk to, only 1 of them is really ready to buy from you. The other 4 have issues like: no money, not the only decision maker, really just want some free education, just want to compare prices. Until you know and address the reasons these people aren't ready to buy, you can't help get them ready. Ask questions to uncover these areas.

Do you know who the best customers are for you? What makes a great customer great for you? What did you do to make them great? Profile your great customers. Then, take this profile and structure your sales efforts to target finding those GREAT customers.

Delegate the RIGHT Tasks- that support your company direction

Every business owner wears many hats. How can the owner decide which hats are the right ones to wear to move the business ahead the fastest? This can be done by asking yourself several questions:

1. "Whose job am I doing right now?" Classify the tasks you're doing into separate roles. Then ask if you're performing roles that could be done by someone else? Would having these tasks accomplished by someone else free you up to do work that is best done by the business owner? This leads to the next question.
2. What jobs are essential that I (the owner) do? We believe the tasks that are best done by the owner are the critical business tasks. These are: strategic planning, sales, hiring of personnel, and financial reviews. These are functions where the owner's influence and guidance are essential. These are areas where mistakes can't afford to be made. What would happen in your business if you focused on these top areas?
3. What jobs do I like to do and I'm good at doing? Are you doing the tasks that are your strengths, not your weaknesses? In corporate America, typical performance reviews spend much time focused on problem areas or "opportunities for improvement". People are coached to improve all the areas

MAXIMIZING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' TIME

in which they're weak. New studies are showing that focusing on perceived weaknesses prevents focus on strength areas, which can reap more benefits. Owners who build up their strengths can reach their highest potential. This isn't suggesting that weaknesses should be ignored, but allows for a focus on the positives. After all, isn't it more fun to do tasks you like to do and are good at doing? Aren't you more willing to develop your skills in areas that are appealing to you? It also provides more opportunities for confirmation of you and the work you perform.

Have you worked through a "S.W.O.T." analysis recently? Identifying the areas of "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats" in your business is a great way to find the best areas on which to focus.

Next Steps- to help your business move ahead faster

Alpha Business Coaching is woman-owned business in the metro Washington DC area. We help small businesses grow and improve their bottom-lines by delivering results-focused coaching and consulting services.

We know from experience that businesses see faster improvements if steps of change are taken with a coach. If you know the right things to do to make your business successful but aren't doing them, a coach will help you create an action plan and then follow-through on the tasks.

Coaching shouldn't be thought of as just a perk, but a necessity for any business that is serious about excelling. A sports team would never consider trying to be successful without having a coach beside them step-by-step.

Are you ready to take some of these steps so your TIME will be better spent on your business? Call or email us today.

email: lcness@alphabizcoaching.com
phone: 703-738-4634

web: <http://www.alphabizcoaching.com>

See below for a coupon for a FREE introductory coaching session.

**FREE
COACHING
SESSION**

**Contact us to learn about our FREE COACHING session.
Learn what coaching is all about and how it can take
your business to a new level.**

There is no obligation or commitment.

[Check it out now...](#)

Offer Expires: February 28, 2005