



January 2008

Planning for a Great 2008 ...don't be like Alice

Dear Small Business Owner:

I know it's halfway through January and most of you planners have already got your goals set for 2008. But I thought I'd talk to the other half out there, who might not have gotten around to their 2008 business planning yet.

I find it makes planning easier if you break down a business into 5 major areas (bases) and think about improvements by area. Here are the areas:

1. **Product:** Have you developed your product to maximize your company's delivery capabilities? Consider technology improvements, quality improvements, line expansion or contraction, specialization, subcontracting, and production levels.
2. **Market:** Are you reaching the best market with the best message? Consider marketing message, marketing levels, marketing targets, marketing venues, customer satisfaction, referral programs, what your competition does, how effective your sales process is.
3. **People:** How can you best make the people working for you more satisfied in their jobs? Consider team organization, staffing levels, performance feedback, training, job definitions and enhancements, morale.
4. **Finances:** Which areas most need to be addressed for better controls? Consider revenue levels, profit levels, overhead levels, salaries, and benefits.
5. **Systems/Organization:** How well is your company run? Consider standard operating procedure implementation, estimating processes, ordering processes, client delivery processes, referrals and lead tracking systems, office procedures, and use of technology.



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We all have heard the "Alice in Wonderland" discussion between Alice and Cheshire Cat. Alice asks which way she ought to go when reaching a fork in the road. Cheshire Cat replies that it depends on where you want to get to. Alice says she doesn't much care where. So Cheshire Cat says the obvious, "Then it doesn't much matter which way you walk."



Don't let this be your unintentional way of proceeding in your business. Know who you want to sell to and how to reach them. Know what your revenue goal is and how many doors you have to knock on to reach it. Know how satisfied your employees are and how to make them even more productive.

If you need help in getting these plans written down and actions tied to getting them accomplished, that's what Alpha Business Coaching does with small businesses. Give us a call so you know which way your company is headed in 2008.

Sincerely,

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