

ST APPPOINTMENTS

MAKING OPPORTUNITIES KNOCK ON YOUR DOOR

All in the learning business

Lifelong learning
When people ask me what business I'm in, I often say, "I'm in the learning business." It sounds intriguing, and it is certainly true. But, truth be told, we are all in the learning business.

Why?

Because as humans, we are learning machines. We are most alive and functioning closest to our potential when we are learning, adapting, adjusting, and finding new ways, approaches and techniques to improve our lives (or the lives of others) in some way. I believe in the above statements. They are as true as any other statement I could write here. But rather than talking about the philosophy of humankind, let me get much more pragmatic.

Change and Learning

Change is all around us. Some say the rate of change is increasing, but whether that is true or not, this is definitely a fact in our business lives. Products change, customers change, process and policies change. We are put on a new team, we are entering new markets, and we have set new goals. In all parts of our daily professional lives change surrounds us.

In order for us to cope with that change, we need to be willing and able to change. And learning is a key component in developing that ability.

So when I talk about continuous learning

or life long learning, I'm not suggesting everyone needs to take a course at their local college, or go back to school for a new degree. Continuous learning is an attitude and a set of behaviors that allow us to succeed in our ever-changing environment, and is the best lever we have to turn who we are today into who we want to be tomorrow. Change requires learning and conversely, there is no learning without change.

So if life long learning doesn't necessarily mean the "professional college student" and doesn't require us to be the person who was always asking questions in every class we attend, what are the behaviors that make up a true continuous or life long learner?

I'm glad you asked.

The Behaviors

There are some common threads among those who actively are learning and growing as professionals (and humans). Life-long, continuous learners:
Have a beginner's mindset. If you approach anything with the mindset of an expert, you will learn nothing. With the expert's mind, you are looking for confirmation and validation of what you already know. A beginner on the other hand, looks constantly for one new tidbit, one or more ways to expand on their current expertise. In other words, expert or not, they don't think that way, because they know that only with an open, beginners mind, can they benefit from

the learning opportunity.

Make connections. Peter Drucker, the famous and influential management thinker wrote, "To make knowledge productive we will have to learn to see both forest and tree. We will have to learn to connect." Continuous learners do that. They continue to think about what they have learned in one part of their life and how it relates to and connects with challenges, problems, opportunities and situations that occur in other parts of their life.

Are flexible and adaptable. Learning requires change, so continuous learners realize that they must be willing to adapt and change if they want to grow.

Are always learning something. Continuous learners learn new things "just because." They've always wanted to play guitar, so they take lessons. They want to ride a unicycle, so they try it. They learn how to quilt. They learn a new language. These people don't invest the time required just so they can play "Love Me Tender" or say "good morning" in Chinese. They also do it because they realize that our brains are like muscles. The more we exercise them the stronger they will be.

Are continuously curious. One of the most powerful learning questions we use is "Why?" Why is the question of the curious. Continuous learners remain curious about people, places, important and mundane things as well. By cultivating their curiosity they are adding to their knowledge and per-



spective, while exercising an important part of our learning brain at the same time.

Learn in multiple ways. In school we learned in a relatively limited number of ways, which unfortunately leaves some people with a limited view of learning. Continuous learners know that they can learn by reading, by listening, by trying, through others, with a mentor, etc. (etc.)
Teach others. Something magical happens when you teach someone something - you suddenly understand it better yourself. Continuous learners teach others not just to help the other person (or to show them how much they know) but because they know it helps them deepen their mastery of their own learning.

How to Use This List

Now that you have read this far I hope you

are convinced of how valuable it can be to be a more active learner. You have also read a list of characteristics. Now that you have read that list of characteristics, I'd like you to read it again. As you read it ask yourself these questions:

How well do I stack up against these behaviors?

Which ones would I like to get better at?

Who do I know that is exceptionally good at each of these characteristics?

How can I learn these traits and habits from those I know who are better at them than I?

Your answers to these four questions (and the action that you take) will put you on the road to being a more continuous and life-long learner.

Enjoy your journey - sideroad.com

Swedish Cooperative Centre Programme Co-ordinator - Batticaloa.

SCC was created by the Swedish Cooperative movement in 1958 with the aim to contribute to poverty reduction through mutual cooperation and collaboration. The organisations vision is a world free from poverty and injustice. The primary target group for SCC is poor women and men, mainly in rural areas, who are members or potential members of democratic organisations or informal groups working for common goals. SCC works in partnership, supporting mobilisation and development of member-based organisations.

The SCC country programme has project locations in Hambantota, Moneragala, Galle and Batticaloa Districts. The Programme is directed at building the capacities of local co-operatives, community based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs in mainly three development competencies:

The SCC is searching for an experienced and qualified project coordinator for its Batticaloa office. The nature of projects undertaken in the district is:

- Development of community organizations and their capabilities,
- Environmental sustainability,
- Women's rights,

The Programme considers cooperatives and community based organizations as privileged organizational forms to deliver services to low income people and at the same time address issues connected with their basic rights.

The project coordinator would have following functions and responsibilities:

- Programme management:** in collaboration with local partners, overall responsibility for planning, implementation and monitoring of the SCC supported projects in Batticaloa and Eastern Sri Lanka, ensuring that activities and use of human and capital assets are in agreement with project documents, work plans and budgets.
- Staff management:** overall responsibility for the functioning and development of the local programme team.
- Programme synergies:** overall responsibility to maintain and develop strategic collaboration with other development programmes and organisations working in Batticaloa, as well as with local government.

The ideal candidate should have following background:

- Fluency in Tamil, Sinhalese and English.
- Documented experience in development programme planning, implementation and monitoring, including staff and budget management.
- Documented experience of civil society development programmes/projects.
- Proven leadership skills and keen interest in promoting team dynamics.
- University Degree in Social Sciences, Economy or any other relevant field.
- Computer literacy.

The candidate should be prepared to undertake extensive field work and work with the other project teams located in Colombo, Galle and Hambantota.

Conditions of employment

The contract period is three years, starting no later than February 2010. The duty station is Batticaloa. Benefits are regulated by SCC's personnel policy. Salary is subject to negotiation.

Information and application

For further information regarding the position, please contact Upali Herath, National SCC Representative for Sri Lanka, at herath@sccorp.lk or phone 11 288 2005.

For further information about SCC, please see our website: www.utanranser.se

Applications including complete CVs, at least two references and salary and conditions demanded should be submitted to SCC Office in Colombo, 285/2B, Kaduwela Road, Battaramulla by email to herath@sccorp.lk no later than 15 December 2009.

In keeping with the SCC policy, the position is gender equal.

**Resident Representative
Swedish Cooperative Centre,
285/2B, Kaduwela Road, Battaramulla.**

Pitfalls of goal setting and what you must do instead

To all success-minded business owners and leaders... "Traditional goal-setting - as touted in millions of books, seminars and expensive programs - just doesn't work!"
Yes, that's right. The likelihood is that the way you have been setting goals is actually the very reason why you are not achieving goals. How do I know?
Be honest with yourself. How many goals have you set in the last year which...
you did not take action on?
you gave blood, sweat and tears to achieve with little results to show for it?
you lost your focus or motivation to keep going!

The good news is: through the tools of NLP (NeuroLinguistic Programming), you can learn the most powerful goal-setting techniques of top achievers to create powerful compelling outcomes in your business. Let's first take a look at the top 7 pitfalls of traditional goal-setting... and how the new turbo-charged techniques can ignite your most ambitious goals into high velocity results.

Pitfall #1: Lack of Precision

Vagueness is deadly in any business, especially in the area of goal-setting. Vague goals create vague, if any, results. When you write your goals in specific, precise language your subconscious mind, which is the part of you that actualizes your goals, gets busy in the "how" and drives all its energies toward accomplishing your goals.

"I want to earn more money" or "I want my employees to be more productive" is like speaking greek to the subconscious mind. It doesn't know how to interpret what you want. Instead, a more precise goal is stated as: "I want to earn \$100,000" or "I want my employees to get out their reports by 3pm daily." That goal is precise, specific and measurable. Now the subconscious mind will go to work and keep you focused, until you get to that end result.

Pitfall #2: Not Knowing Your Compelling "Why"

Most people set their goals in a vacuum. They set goals on what they think they want, rather than on what they really, really want. I.e. goals that will motivate them and create meaning and fulfillment in their businesses and lives.

The secret: Ensure that you are defining goals congruent with your most important values. Values are your subconscious drivers that motivate you to do or not do anything.

For example, let's say you set the goal: "I want to make \$100,000. Yet family, fun and recreation are your most important values. If your goal is not congruent with your top values, you will produce original results with that goal. Your subconscious mind will always drive you to take actions and decisions that feel your most important values. Always always ask, "why is this goal important for me to achieve?" It's a "power question" that will link your goals with your values.

Pitfall #3: Lack of a Time Deadline

It has been said that a "goal is a dream with a deadline." Without a deadline, it's likely that achieving your goal exists only vague-



ly sometime in the future. "I want to achieve \$100,000" lacks any sense of direction. The old "homestay" syndrome kicks in and your subconscious mind takes a nap, thinking it has all the time in the world.

A goal with a time deadline instead alerts the subconscious mind that you are ready to take action, focus your energies and achieve your desired outcome within a certain timeframe. I.E. "I want to earn \$100,000 by December 31, 2008" is a goal that creates a sense of urgency and puts you in momentum.

Pitfall #4: Not Considering the Consequences of Your Goal

In NLP, we always check for the "ecology" of achieving a certain goal. I.e., does achieving your goal conflict with other areas of your life? Does it negatively affect others? Does it negatively impact the planet?

In today's high stress, cooker pressured business world, business owners and leaders often pursue goals that cost them in other areas of their life. In some cases, serious consequences - such as divorce, heart attacks, loss of friends, etc. As management guru, Steven Covey, reminds us: "It's one thing to move up the ladder. It's another thing to find out your ladder is against the wrong wall."

Always check your goal's consequences. Ask yourself: Does the goal conflict with any other area of my life? "If I achieve my goal, does it create win/win or win/lose outcomes?"

Pitfall #5: Stating the Goal in Future Tense

Stating the outcome in future tense keeps you in that hoping, wishing state. A state in which all your fears and doubts creep in. You begin to hear those nasty inner voices, eg., "you've got to be kidding". You're a loser." "Why bother? You'll fail anyway."

When you write your goal in present tense, you bypass those inner voices. Why? Because the subconscious mind does not know the difference between that which is imagined and that which is real. Writing the goal "as if it already happened" sets a strong inner intention and decision that the goal is already achieved, at least in your mind. Thus, your goal becomes more compelling and achievable.

Eg., instead of stating your goal as "I want to earn \$100,000 by December 31, 2008," use present tense language to make it more

compelling and real:
"It is now December 31, 2008. I have successfully accomplished my goal of earning \$100,000... Yay! Now your mind is cheering you on."

Pitfall #6: Lack of an "Evidence Procedure"

This one secret is worth its weight in gold! No other goal-setting technique incorporates this powerful secret. It is the difference that makes the difference between mediocre results and extraordinary outcomes.

Your evidence procedure is your "proof statement" that your goal is already achieved. How will you see, hear, feel that proves you have gotten your desired outcome? What is the last step that needs to happen to ensure your goal is achieved?

Use sensory based language to make your proof statement compelling and real. That is, what will you see, hear, feel that proves you have accomplished your goal?
Eg., your goal statement with an evidence procedure: "It is now December 31, 2008. I have successfully earned \$100,000 in income this year. I know it because proof statement! I am looking at my 2008 financial statement with a big grin on my face as I hear my partner congratulating me for a job well done." BINGO!

Pitfall #7: Not Identifying and Enrolling Your Success Team

Walt Disney said, "You can have the most beautiful dream in the world, yet it takes people to build it." Trying to accomplish your goals on your own is the hard way.

Goals, as defined above, along with a success team, give you the fuel and the leverage to achieve big audacious goals that once seemed impossible. Whether you are an executive trying to get your team to rally behind your goal or an entrepreneur wanting the support of like-minded business owners, the critical factor is to make sure you link your goals and vision with what each member on your team wants to achieve.

How can I assist my team members to self actualize through the accomplishment of my goals? How can I help them get what they really want?

In Summary: If you want to become an unstoppable force in your business, follow these top 7 principles in goal setting. When you do, invite me to your celebration party. sideroad.com