

AWARENESS IS POWER®

Insights for Business

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SUCCESS THROUGH INSIGHT!

Staying Motivated In A Struggling Economy

Fear is a very powerful emotion. When we live in fear, even of the unknown, there is a tendency to isolate, exert control and be on the defensive. It drains our energy and creates exhaustion.

The majority of coaching conversations I am having these days are about this fear generated by a struggling economy. Worry over business progress, finding a job, salary and bonus eliminations, increased job performance expectations have taken over people's mindsets thus decreasing motivation and focus for themselves and their business.

While no one has a crystal ball to know exactly what will happen with the economy, you do have the keys to move through this time by the actions you take to minimize the fear and maximize your choices. Following are three key tips on how to refocus and regain motivation during a challenging time:

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Are You Staying Focused and Motivated?

Why Do People Leave Their Job?

Experience-Based Retention

- *Is it because of money?*
- *Benefits?*
- *The fact they believe there are no real opportunities for them at the company?*

While many might argue about which of the above has more impact on whether or not a person decides to jump ship, attempting to identify the main overall culprit is probably the least productive

approach to increasing retention. Why? Because while studies may show that one factor carries more weight than another, those same studies also show that **all** of the factors have the ability to influence people to some degree.

So that means by focusing solely on the main culprit – whatever it might be – your retention plan is only as good as the number of people in your company who are primarily affected by that factor. Which means that it's nowhere close to being 100% effective.

People and Situations

Are you going to retain every person you hire? Of course not. The key is to retain those people you *want* to retain, those employees who make a difference and contribute a tremendous amount to the company in numerous ways. And in order to retain those superstar employees, you have to consider what kind of **experience** you're providing to them. Life is nothing more than a series of experiences, and people respond to them in a rather predictable fashion.

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Tip #1 Get Back to the Basics

What are the critical items you need to do to maintain positive movement forward in your career and in your life? What can you take charge of? There are critical items that you need to focus on day in and day out in whatever your work effort is about. If you are unemployed, there are critical items. If you run a business, there are critical items. What are they? Identify, simplify and take action

Key: Think of this also in your personal life. What critical items do you need to happen in order to maintain joy and relieve stress? Is it time with family? Time to golf? What critical items do you need that may have been ignored due to your focus on fear?

Key Tip #2 Define and Honor Your Genius Work

In Ernest Oriente and Judy Feld's book *Smart Match Alliances*, they describe genius work as "Genius work is the highest and best use of your time. When you do your genius work- the activities that produce the greatest results in the shortest period of time for you – the struggle ends....fast."



What is your genius work? What is the work you do that suspends time and delivers the greatest results? Define it, honor it and spend the majority of your day doing it.

Key: To define your genius work, answer the following question:

What are three areas of focus and corresponding activities that would constitute the best and most valuable use of my time today?

Key Tip #3 This Too Shall Pass

Because there is no crystal ball, we cannot predict when this economy will take a positive, sustained turn. However, history proves that it will turn. It has always done so; there is no reason to think it will not do so again.

Key: History also shows that YOU have been through challenging times in the past and moved through those times as well. Perhaps it has not been the economy but other life events.

Continued on next column –

Identify for yourself what life challenges you have faced in the past and how you have navigated the uncertainty. That should give you clues as to your ability to face this current challenge AND specific things you could do to make the process less painful.

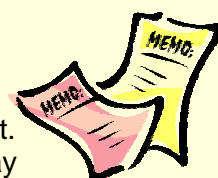
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Time Management Tips

Moving Paper

Paper...it comes in the mail, on the doorstep as news, in our 'in' baskets. We buy magazines and books. We even find paper flying from our windshield wipers as we approach our cars in the parking lot.

One way to keep paper to a minimum is to do something with it the first time you handle it. If it's not important, throw it away right now. If it's something you need to give your attention to, put a note on it, and file it in one of your four organizing files: **Immediate, This Week, Next Week, or When I Have Time**. This way you'll be sure to take action on it later. If it is to be read and passed on, move it as quickly as possible.



Make it a habit to be systematic when going through your mail. Set aside a specific time to prioritize your mail. Touch each item only once before delegating, dumping, or putting it in the appropriate 'To Do' file.

Make a decision on each piece of paper you handle. Throw things out immediately if you don't feel you have a need for them. Good examples are junk mail, catalogues, and advertising circulars. Even important papers such as meeting announcements can be discarded after you transfer the information to your daily planner and/or file system.

Source: *Time Strategies*, Resource Associates Corporation. Adapted with permission.

You may delay, but time will not.

– Benjamin Franklin

Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.

– Carl Sandburg

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They strive to avoid negative experiences, and they tend to gravitate toward positive ones. That rule certainly applies to people. After all, people provide an experience, don't they? I'm sure you could identify people in your life who provide negatives experiences and people who provide positive ones.

Which ones do you try to avoid?

The same holds true for an employment situation. If people aren't receiving a positive experience in their job, they're going to try to find a new one. The challenge is to ensure that they're receiving that positive experience. However, there are two aspects of this challenge to keep in mind:



Experiences are very **person-specific**. In other words, what one person believes is a positive experience might not be the case for another person.

Employees are not apt to come right out and tell you what constitutes a positive experience for them. Unless you have a very outgoing and highly communicative person on your team, you'll have to gather that information yourself.

Productivity and Profitability

As you might imagine, there are many different components to an experience, especially an employment experience. The good news is that there are ways to not only account for all of them, but also to ensure that you're addressing them in a way that will create positive experiences with your team and increase retention.

In future issues, we're going to identify and discuss these different components, how they affect the overall employment experience and why, and how your understanding of them can help you to maximize the productivity – not to mention the profitability – of your team.

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You will learn what Pat says are three important things leaders and successful people have in common.



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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Web Site Of The Month

Snopes.com, also known as the **Urban Legends Reference Pages**, is a website that is the most widely-known resource for validating or debunking urban legends, Internet rumors, email forwards, and other such stories of uncertain or questionable origin.

Snopes directs people to more information about various hoaxes, especially in regard to chain e-mails. The site is often referenced by news media and other sites, including CNN, FOX news, and MSNBC.

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Developing Confidence

Confidence is a critical ingredient to your growth and development. You develop self-confidence by creating success. Through your goals you can provide for frequent successes. Set short term goals in the beginning. Experience often the satisfaction of moving a 'Short Term Goal' to the 'Goal Accomplished' area of your daily planner or other tracking device. People who have well-defined goals in life develop confidence through achieving those goals. Thus, they are always better prepared to confront new situations, and achieve higher goals. As you achieve goals, and feel the satisfaction of achievement, your confidence in your abilities is enhanced as is your potential to achieve more and higher goals.

Lack of confidence also stems from our inability to visualize successfully doing whatever it is we want to do. Careful planning, specific action steps, and affirmations help you to clearly plan exactly how and why you can achieve your goals. It focuses your imagination on the positive rather than the negative.

Confidence is the key ingredient to any plan. It is part of the solution to every obstacle you have identified in your goal. Fortunately, confidence is a limitless resource; the more you use of it, the more there is to use. However, there is a price to be paid. To "use" confidence requires involvement: only through involvement (and consequent testing and confrontation) are boundaries pushed back and fears overcome. To take goal setting seriously guarantees that you will need to increase your confidence. To take goal setting seriously also guarantees that you will increase your confidence.

Reference source: Resource Associates Corporation, *Supervisory Development Program*. Copyright protected worldwide. Adapted by Sorrell Associates, LLC



Helpful Tips For Effective Computer Use

In today's environment using a computer has become an essential part of most professions. To avoid undue stress of fatigue, loss of work, or eye strain, follow these suggestions:

- ◆ Keep your monitor screen clean by using one of the many cleaning pads available. This will cut down on your eye strain.
- ◆ If you are working on your computer and start to experience visual fatigue, blink more often. As you blink your eyes you lubricate them. It may also be helpful to get up and walk around the office for a couple of minutes.
- ◆ One of the most frustrating things about using a computer is when you lose your work due to power failure or computer failure. Avoid losing the information and time spent on it by saving your work often. An easy way to remind yourself that it is time to save your work is by using an alarm. Set an alarm for about 15 minutes after you start working on your computer project. When the alarm sounds, save your work and hit the snooze button. Most alarm snooze buttons are pre-set to go off after 9 or 10 Minutes. When it goes off again, save your work, and hit the snooze again. Then if you have a power or computer failure, in the worst case scenario you may lose only the last 9 or 10 minutes of work.



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