

Special Edition – Editorial

Improving Leadership Skills in a Changing Market

Last week, I discussed why many trucking companies failed over the last several years. I indicated that;

- The economy was certainly one of the reason companies went out business, but;
- I also stated that, many businesses closed their doors because the owners did not plan for their future, nor did they set goals and objectives.
- They simply worked putting out fires and didn't focus on the "big" picture.

Marketing expert, Mark Hansen, authored a book with Robert Allen entitled "The One Minute Millionaire" in which he indicated that his goal was to inspire one million new millionaire's, this decade. In the book, he indicated that before you set off on a path of success, you need to set goals. They call it "A To-Do List for Life".

As part of this process, Mark indicated that;

- Your most important goals must be yours. Not your spouses, not your child's, but yours.
- When you let other people determine your definition of success, you're sabotaging your future.
- He also said your goals must mean something to you.

When you write down goals, you should ask yourself; what's really important to me? What am I prepared to give up to make this happen? What reasons will give you the drive and energy to get up every morning to change your life? In the book, Mark states that;

- Your goals must be specific and measurable.
- Your goals must be flexible.
- Your goals must be challenging and exciting.
- Your goals must be in alignment with your values.
- Your goals must be well balanced.
- Your goals must be realistic;
- Your goals must include contribution, and;
- Finally, your goals need to be supported.

When I review his goals, they're very compelling. A flexible plan keeps you from feeling suffocated and allows you to take advantage of genuine opportunities that may walk through your door.

At the same time, you need to force yourself to get out of your "comfort zone" to acquire the energy and edge you need to be successful. You also need to pay attention to your own gut instincts. When you set a goal that contradicts your values, you should rethink that decision. In other words, pay attention!

You need to make sure you include areas that allow time to relax, have fun and enjoy people in your closest circle. When I train sales people, I tell them that their goals must be realistic.

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April 6, 2010

You also have to have patience, and perseverance, in order to accomplish specific goals and achieve objectives. However, that doesn't mean that, if you have two left thumbs, that you're going to be a successful surgeon, but it does mean that;

- If you want to improve your financial well being;
- You must set specific goals and objectives, and;
- You must continually follow those goals and objectives; if you are to achieve those goals.

It's also important that (as you're pursuing your dreams) you also give back to the community. This is something that you need to build into your program. It's important that you open up your mind to all possibilities.

Don't ever think about restricting yourself!

I remember, as I was reading Mark Hansen's book, it made a lot of sense; what he provided was a road map to success and he provided a lot of valuable observations as to why people don't succeed. By the way, Mark Hansen has sold more than 100 million books and products in the last 10 years.

In order to be successful, an owner has to;

- **Understand that believing he/she is a good craftsman is not all that's needed to run a business.**
- **If there were 5 road blocks to any companies failure, I would say they would be;**
 1. The owner believes that he/she is smart enough to run a successful business.
 2. Lack of clear, established goals and objectives.
 3. A lack of focus and, in some instances, distractions and over commitment.
 4. Conflicting intentions, and;
 5. No standard processes.

To be successful in the trucking and logistics industry, you need to manage processes, not people. If you focus less on handling people and more on providing clearly written processes for all key tasks, you can succeed. Once you do that, then you have to make sure that the tasks have employees who have the tools, information and time necessary to complete specific goals and that the employees understand that they are accountable for finishing these tasks properly and on time.

The second tip for making your company successful; continue to automate, and last; develop a simple step by step system for completing tasks.

Next week, I will discuss the personality traits of successful people.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: Making anything a success rests with people and commitment and absolute determination. (Jergen Reed)