

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

October 2008



KEEPING BUSINESS ON TRACK

The first quarter of the year has now passed. In this time of change, performance may be at variance to expectations. The leader must now drive enthusiasm – and new ideas.

1. Managing the Business Plan

The need for every business to operate and measure performance to a plan cannot be emphasised strongly enough. However, we acknowledge that we are living in a time of particularly unpredictable change.

Markets and financial forces are taking sudden and unexpected turns.

Performance to the Business Plan may vary significantly from department to department and market to market.

The overall business objectives should remain intact but changes in specific tactics may need to be considered.

This is often a test of management leadership and the skills, integrity and effectiveness of staff and teams at lower levels.

Particularly in more difficult times, staff look to managers to be good leaders.

In this leadership role, the manager has to be aware of his own strengths and weaknesses as well as his intellectual and emotional response to varying situations. He should constantly look to his strengths but be aware of his weaknesses – using external support in the form of mentoring or coaching to help him in addressing and overcoming those weaknesses.

2. The Role of the Leader

While the vision for the business remains intact, this is the time for managers to extend their leadership skills to have staff maintain focus on the achievement of the business objectives while taking a more flexible approach on how those objectives can be achieved. Revisions to the tactics should not be made in isolation and the manager must therefore also extend his skills in maintaining an effective teamwork culture within the business.

Good leaders are driven by the need to achieve beyond expectations and always display the energy required to look for ways of doing things differently to achieve better results.

3. Staff Development

Attracting and retaining good staff is a problem for any business.

Many small to medium enterprises cannot afford to recruit “excellent” staff – however, good leaders can develop their “average” staff to the same level of excellence.

This can be done through the development of a learning culture within the business where issues are discussed openly - in teams if required - in the presence of a more experienced member of staff. Revised and improved plans can then be developed collectively for implementation through the normal channels.

Staff that are involved in searching for - and finding - the solution are usually much more committed to that solution actually delivering the desired outcomes.

This success builds the confidence, experience and knowledge of the staff member - and the team - to the ultimate benefit of both the staff member and the company.

Remember:- Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

**To discuss business performance management
– call Gordon Cadzow at due North**