



Great Lakes BUSINESS

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December 2009

Great Lakes Council and Hunter Business Centre would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous 2010

Celebrate what you want to see more of
Thomas J Peters

Networking Luncheon a Success

Around 20 women attended the December business women's luncheon held at the Box Fish, Forster. Lucky door prizes were kindly donated by Big Green Leaf, Kindermusik, Hutchinson Healthcare Group (Barclay Gardens), and Tuncurry Newsagency. 'Women Business Buddies (WBB)' has been chosen as the new name for the group, reflecting its objective of providing a network of support for women in business. The next event will take place in February.

For further information, contact Deb Tuckerman (Great Lakes Council) or Joanne Jay (President, Forster Tuncurry Chamber of Commerce).

Women in Business Event

The 2010 Australian Regional Women's Leadership Forum is an inspiring and invaluable new program designed to support the leadership aspirations of women throughout regional Australia.

This powerful event provides a platform for the women of regional Australia to connect deeply and purposefully with other women from their community. Under the guidance of nationally acclaimed leadership expert and facilitator, Kellie Mills, participants undertake a journey of self-analysis as they consider their own leadership strengths and challenges.

The Newcastle Forum will run on Wednesday 3rd March at Newcastle City Hall, and represents a powerful opportunity for networking and for planning for future career success.

The cost of attendance is just \$96 per person. Please feel free to invite friends and colleagues along to share this rewarding and thought-provoking experience.

For more information and to register go to <http://www.wla.com.au/>

Great Lakes 2030 - have input now

Great Lakes Council adopted the Draft **Great Lakes 2030** Community Strategic Plan at its meeting on Tuesday, 8 December 2009. The Draft Plan goes on public exhibition from Friday 18 December 2009 for public viewing and comment.

The consultation process undertaken to develop the draft resulted in a number of similar themes emerging across the Great Lakes communities, with a focus on improving infrastructure to meet growing populations, the need to improve employment and economic opportunities throughout the region, as well as the need to ensure the environmental sustainability of our towns and villages.

Local businesses and business groups are encouraged to read the draft and provide input. You have until 19 February 2010. To access the plan, go to

Link: <http://www.greatlakes.local-e.nsw.gov.au/community/13069/77772.html>

Analysis of future land needs completed

On 10 November, Great Lakes Council adopted the Forster Tuncurry Employment Land Implementation Strategy which provides direction as to how much land will be needed to satisfy retail, commercial and industrial demand over the next 25 years, where the land should be located and how it should be zoned.

The strategy contains a lot of useful information about employment trends in the area and also recommends a suit of mechanisms to encourage business development.

You can find the document on Council's website (<http://www.greatlakes.local-e.nsw.gov.au/planning/1430/77774.html>)

For further information contact Council's Deb Tuckerman on 6591 7390.

Renewables Generate Interest

Due to considerable interest in exploring renewable energy projects for the Great Lakes, Council has formed a community working group to explore opportunities in renewable energy for the Great Lakes.

Around 50 people listened intently to a presentation by Dr Jim Smitham of CSIRO's Division of Energy Technology held 25 November at the Joint Education Campus, Tuncurry about trends in energy supply, renewable energy technologies, potential renewable energy opportunities for the Great Lakes area and the meaning of 'green jobs'.

DVD copies of the presentation can be found at Great Lakes Library.

Dr Smitham emphasised that there would be no single solution to addressing future energy needs. The working group is likely to be working on a range of possible projects and initiatives designed to both reduce energy usage and cost and explore the use of renewable energy.

Anyone interested in joining the working group (which will meet again in early February) is encouraged to contact Deb Tuckerman deb.tuckerman@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au

Business Motivation

Motivation is one of the most powerful driving forces in the workplace. It can mean the difference between tremendous success and failure.

Motivation stems from two sources. The first part of motivation is external or extrinsic (outside the person) sources. Other motivating factors come from internal forces, which are mainly your thoughts, patterns and collective experiences.

However, humans are unique, so what motivates Jack will not necessarily motivate Jill. You -- and only you -- will be able to determine what works.

Take the time to examine what internal and external factors are motivating you as a business owner. What can you do to enhance and refine your motivation to make yourself more productive and more fulfilled?

Here are seven keys to motivation that may prove helpful.

1. INSPIRATION

Inspiration is critical to getting and staying motivated. If you are not interested in your business, your motivation level will never be high and you won't be able to sustain interest for very long.

On the flip side, if you are energized and excited about the work you are doing, you will have more persistence, energy and intensity.

Take an honest look at your inspiration level. Are you excited about going to work or is it an obligation? You would be surprised at the number of people who choose a business that looks good on paper, but in reality does not interest them in the least. These individuals will grow weary and uninterested pretty quickly because they have no inspiration or passion to sustain them during the difficult times they will encounter as a small business owner.

If you don't really enjoy your work, then think how you can re-focus your small business to better match your needs. Or consider making a change entirely. That's pretty drastic advice, but inspiration is that important.

2. SETTING GOALS

Short and long-term goal setting is vital for any business owner. If you didn't set goals, you would be adrift with nothing to strive for and no charted course to follow.

How could you possibly be motivated if you were unsure about the direction of your company?

Take the time to put your goals in writing. A business plan may sound daunting, but it is really nothing more than goals, strategies, implementation and a budget. Write your own business plan and update it at least annually. Include "mini-goals" that can be accomplished in a matter of hours, days or weeks as well as the more ambitious "grand-goals" that may take years to complete. Refer to this plan throughout the year.

But can a business plan really help motivate you? Yes! Written goals will make you feel more professional and certainly more connected to your business. It will also free you from

having to reinvent your business goals every single day.

3. NETWORKING

Another key factor in getting and staying motivated is networking with other small business owners. One person can't move huge mountains. However, when a number of people begin working together the mountains are suddenly only small hills -- simply challenges waiting to be surmounted.

In fact, the isolation of working alone is one of the most difficult parts of being an entrepreneur. Mutual support is motivating. So, make it easier on yourself by connecting with others either in your community or online. Even when businesses are not related, you will often find common ground and ways to work together.

Many successful entrepreneurs report that finding the right networking group was a turning point in the growth of the business. Working together, a networking group can help its members generate more qualified sales leads and solve problems faster and more efficiently. Sharing ideas, expertise and experience is also an invaluable aspect of networking groups. And, don't forget about sharing costs, possibly by buying in bulk or with joint marketing projects.

Your own personal team of business owners will help re-energize you when the burdens of running your own business seem too much. With your networking team to rely on, you can accomplish more in less time and probably have more fun in the process. Certainly, you will feel less alone.

4. REWARD YOURSELF

Small business owners will always have to work hard, but all work and no play is a huge mistake. Your motivation will soon begin to fall if you never take any time away from the demands of running the business.

So, plan frequent rewards for yourself. No, it doesn't need to be a trip to Hawaii (although this is a great idea). Your reward can be as simple as a lunch out with an old friend, a matinee with your significant other, an afternoon of shopping or a relaxing massage.

If your budget and time will allow, take a few days off for a short trip or simply schedule a vacation from work for a few days. Make it a real vacation -- even if you don't leave town -- so no checking email, voice mail or the fax machine. You need to get away, unwind and renew yourself. This "down" time to regenerate will help improve your attitude and perspective. It sounds corny, but you will come back to your business with a new sense of motivation.

5. EXERCISE

While it isn't always immediately apparent, there is a powerful connection between the mind and the body. It is vital for every small business owner to take breaks and exercise -- everyday. If your body isn't healthy, your motivation will certainly suffer.

These exercise breaks don't have to be huge blocks of time, and you needn't spend money joining a gym or hiring a personal trainer. Start by walking briskly for 30 minutes before, during or after work. After you have incorporated a walk each day, then try doubling the time or doing two walks each day.

Whatever works for you is best, but the important thing is to start. You will begin to feel

better.

After the walking is part of your routine, add some basic light weights. Buy a tape or go online to find out how to properly use the weights so you won't injure yourself.

You can keep the weights under your desk, and use them for just a few minutes at a time. Buy a timer the next time you are at the grocery store. Set the timer for for three minutes to start and then add a minute or two until you're up to 10 or 15 minutes each day.

Some small business owners have a television at work and they schedule a CNN break along with their weights. This way, they are catching up with world and local news while simultaneously getting some moderate exercise.

8. ORGANIZE

Organization is critical to motivation. How can you feel good about your work, when you can't find important papers or you are constantly late returning messages? Your business will falter and your motivation will suffer.

Some people just can't get organized. If you are one of them, then consider bringing in someone -- a business friend, family member or professional -- to help you get the clutter and mess cleaned up. You will be amazed at how this one important step will help you get back on the organizational track. Don't stop there. Now really get organized by creating business systems that will help you streamline your operations.

The real challenge will be keeping yourself on track by maintaining these systems. For many, it is a daily challenge, but if you use your organizational systems you'll be free to think about other important issues.

7. MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS AND AUTHORS

As small business owners, it seems we are bombarded with motivational ideas and materials-- tapes, books, CD's, seminars, workbooks, videos and more. Why are there so many different motivational products, authors and speakers? Because people are buying these materials. Used effectively, they are effective and therefore they sell!

However, there are so many different motivational gurus that it is often difficult to see through the clutter to find someone that makes sense for you -- someone who can get you "fired up" about working and improving your business.

Try talking to your mentor or networking group members to see who they might recommend. Start being aware of the motivational industry and how it might help you become more enthused and positive about your business. Do some light research of your own to find some authors and speakers that interest you.

Before you invest in motivational materials, you can probably find some inexpensive ways to obtain the materials. Check out your local library, tune into your local PBS station, buy materials with a networking friend, visit used bookstores or buy used materials online. Don't make a huge investment, because you will probably want to sample many different viewpoints.

But do these materials really work? Yes, but only if you make the effort. Just like exercise, you have to work the muscles -- in this case your mind muscles.

It is up to you to take that information and apply it to your own life and business. Really use the motivational ideas over a period of time and you will begin to see results.

KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING

Motivation is what moves us forward in our daily and business lives. Take the time to examine your motivating factors and use some of these keys to improve your focus and renew your enthusiasm. If you keep on track, the motivation momentum can't help but carry you forward.

Nancy Wurtzel

http://www.sideroad.com/consultants/Entrepreneur-Consultant-nancy_wurtzel.html

Useful contacts

Comments and feedback on the Newsletter's content is always appreciated. You might also like to suggest a topic or share some ideas or tips for future editions - good news stories are also welcome - email Sue Druce with anything you think would suit.

For past editions of the newsletter please visit www.greatlakesbusiness.com.au

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