

# Small Business Success

August 2014



Community  
Futures Newsask



## Success is Understanding the Zeitgeist

*Following last month's 20 Things You Can Do to Increase Your Chances of Success here are another six ways you can improve your odds of being successful.*

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

The better you understand your business, and the place it occupies in the current zeitgeist - the defining spirit or mood of our time - the better prepared you will be for all eventualities. But, what about the unexpected curve ball that comes from outside? We live in a world where fraudulent activities in another country can affect our market here at home, or the ripples from a terrorist act, or fighting between two countries several thousand miles away, can cause an economic downturn that affects our business.

### Develop early warning systems

Create ways that you can see trouble before it becomes serious. I used to work with a Chairman of a group of companies that kept a little black book, which contained the daily revenues of each of his companies. No matter where in the world he was at any given time, he would call or email his office to find out that particular day's total revenues. These figures would be duly noted in his little book. When I asked him why, he took me on a journey through the last ten years of his companies showing me the exact day an economic



downtown started to affect his business - often this was several days before newspapers started squawking about market troubles. In this way he could feel the pulse of his business and act accordingly if it started to weaken.

### Develop crisis strategies

If you can dream it, it may happen. Consider all the things that might happen in your business that could cause problems and come up with an emergency strategy that you can enact - if and when the time comes. What might happen? Lots of things - what if a key employee becomes seriously ill and leaves without notice? What if a

## Index

Success is Understanding the Zeitgeist.....	1-2
20 Days – 20 Habits – Super Sales Part 1 ...	2-3
Business Rage – How to Avoid It .....	3-4
Cartoon .....	5

customer who owes you a substantial amount of money files for bankruptcy? What if you lose a major client? I know of a marketing company that lost six major clients in the space of four months and never recovered from the loss. Planning ahead for a crisis might buy you valuable time, and potentially indicate that you change the way you operate now, to avoid serious ramifications later.

### **You are part of the local economy - watch it carefully**

We are all part of a larger picture - we do not operate in isolation. If the local economy takes a hit, then so might you. Keep your ear to the ground and understand how your local economy operates, who are the key players, and what makes it tick? Ensure you know about negative situations long before your competition.

### **Be aware of your market**

Markets are never static, new competitors come and go and you need to be aware of the dynamic of your market. In the town in which I live, a new grocery store recently opened and caught many of its competitors off balance. This new store had a fresh new approach, keen pricing, and unique offerings. Few of the existing grocery stores enacted any strategies to fend off this newcomer and as a result are having to make do with a smaller piece of the local grocery market pie, as they see their previously loyal customers shopping at the new store.

### **Watch your industry carefully**

Industries are changing all the time - new technology is introduced - foreign competition appears suddenly - there is a shortage of raw materials - the list goes on. Read trade journals, listen to your industry's pundits and be aware of the direction your industry is heading.

### **Be a trend watcher**

The world is changing and changing fast. Fashions come and go and if you are going to be successful it might be a good idea to become a futurist (definition: a person who studies the future and makes predictions about it based on current trends). In recent years, the book publishing industry was caught somewhat with their pants down when eReaders took off in a big way. They had to cut back their operations dramatically, and move into the world of eBooks. However, as the eBook trend starts to level off they are once again being caught off-guard as people turn back to print versions. Playing catch-up is not an effective operational strategy.

Being aware of general consumer trends is vital to the success of your business. There is a big difference between being too early and failing to experience the wave, being too late and being swamped by a tsunami of competition, and catching the wave just right and getting the ride of a lifetime!

Next month we'll take a look at some financial success strategies.

## **20 Days – 20 Habits – Super Sales Part 1**

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

- 1. Start and finish the day with a positive attitude** - Top performers are on their 'A-game' from the first minute they get out of bed, until they leave the last prospect, or customer, of the day. Being positive makes your prospect positive - about buying.
- 2. Be an enthusiast** - People are generally drawn to enthusiastic people. Genuine enthusiasm is catching; it's like a tidal wave that will carry your prospect along to the sale.
- 3. Plan every call like a military campaign** - Understand what it is you expect out of each interaction with a prospect, and how you are going to handle it. Consider whether the objective is to get the sale today, or whether this is a step along the way to a sale.
- 4. Use the power of knowledge** - If enthusiasm is catching, so is someone who truly knows his or her stuff. We are drawn to people who possess knowledge about something we are interested in,

whether it's a particular sport, art, food, or more importantly something we are considering purchasing. Become an expert in what you sell, the industry behind it and the market you are selling to.

5. **Demonstrate Your Expertise** - Find opportunities to show people that you're an expert. Offer free seminars to prospects, or existing customers; produce a newsletter or write a book; record a podcast, or create a Facebook page. Whatever you do become the guru in your field and people will find their way to you and buy what you sell.
6. **Research interesting anecdotes, information, jokes** - Every time I open my email browser there are messages from friends, business acquaintances and others that contain jokes and other useless detritus, but occasionally a snippet of fascinating information appears that I can't wait to share. When this happens I am grateful to the person who sent it, because they are making me look good in the eyes of the people I in turn share it with. This is why jokes have been a staple of top performers since the dawn of selling.
7. **Spend more time prospecting for companies and people that need, want and can afford what you are selling** - Nice and simple this habit - don't waste your valuable selling time and energy selling to people who are not highly likely to buy what you are selling. Think long and hard about your target market. Top performers spend less time with prospects than the average salesperson because they have pre-qualified them.
8. **Set yourself goals and targets** - Super salespeople don't wait for their sales managers to give them targets, they set their own. It's a winning habit to set yourself targets based on the number: of leads generated; calls per day, appointments made, presentations made, sales achieved. If you can measure success by it - target it!
9. **Identify your prospect's behavioral style within 60 seconds** - One of the keys to successful selling is to become a chameleon. We can all sell to people that have the same personality as ourselves, the trick to super sales is to relate well to people that are not like you, or even have the opposite personality, or social style.
10. **Sell yourself first** - Once you recognize the prospect's behavioral style then it's a whole lot easier to react to them in a way that will make them feel comfortable. The key to selling to anyone is the ability to make them like you. People don't buy from people they don't like - it's that simple.



Next month we'll look at the next ten days and ten new habits.

## Business Rage – How to Avoid It

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Have you ever been enjoying a good day and something completely derails you? One minute you're in a good mood, you're getting through your to-do list and then BAM! - you get a phone call from the tax office, a difficult client, or a supplier telling you the order you were expecting today has been delayed. Suddenly your good mood has evaporated and you are in a foul temper. From there, everything goes wrong and everyone becomes irritating. It's akin to road rage - you are angry at every idiot you come across in your business!

We all have our hot buttons - those things that really tick us off and get us off track and into the weeds. The problem is, a little thing going wrong can spiral out of control and put us into a mood that can actually make other things go wrong BECAUSE of our attitude.

So, what can we do to avoid having one or two negative things turn into an avalanche of disasters that have no relationship whatsoever to bad luck or the original event, and everything to do with our own attitude and anger?

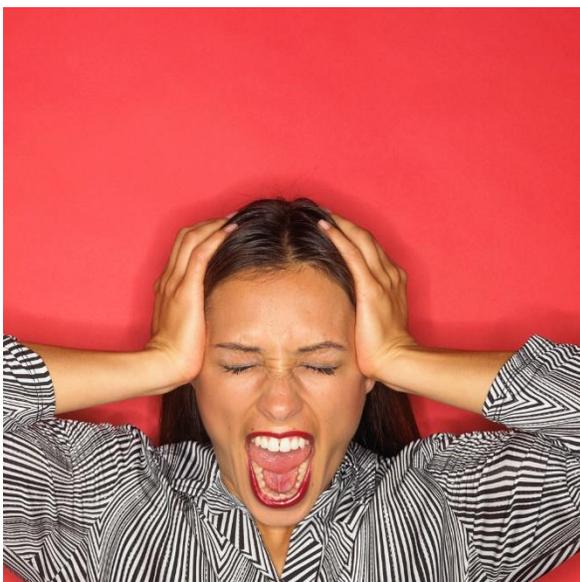
### **Identify what makes you lose control**

Get to know your hot buttons and why they trigger negative emotions. Why does the mere sight of Fred from Shipping & Receiving make your blood boil? Why can you receive constructive criticism from Jenny, but get hostile and defensive when it comes from George? How can you be so patient with difficult customers, and then get angry at someone else for a completely ridiculous reason? How can one negative thought lead to another, so that one bad sale leads to your business going bankrupt (in your mind, of course)? Knowing and understanding the triggers that make us get off track is the first step in helping us to stop them from happening. Sometimes it's easy to identify them, but it's another thing to understand them. If business rage is a problem for you, it can be helpful to talk to a professional counselor or psychologist who can help you get to the root of what triggers the anger (and often despair), so you can be more effective in controlling your response.

### **Do what you can to stop losing your positive attitude**

Once you've identified and can understand the things that make you lose it, develop strategies to help you head off the anger. If a certain type of personality sets you off, figure out how you can approach that type of person with a different perspective. If it's their attitude, find ways of coping so that you don't end up in a downward spiral. If you do find yourself responding to a trigger and are in the first few turns of a downward spiral, come up with a STOP strategy. Some people find it helpful to simply say the word STOP out loud, or simply walk away, others go quiet and just listen before walking away. Others use distraction, or positive affirmations. Figure out what works best for you. When all else fails and you find yourself at the bottom of the spiral, try to see how self-defeating it is. Most of the time our spirals take us to the edge of our fears, but where our thoughts end up may be irrational, or even comical. Being able to see that, may help you avoid ending up there again.

### **Keep yourself physically and emotionally healthy**



If you are run down, or emotionally exhausted, you will be less able to cope with Business Rage. Eating healthily, getting enough sleep and exercise, maintaining happy, healthy relationships, having balance in your life - all will contribute to your ability to keep yourself out of negative space. Our physical and emotional states are never very far from each other, and work hand in glove with each other. The healthier you are physically, the better your ability to deal with difficult emotional situations.

Getting angry is inevitable in business, but recognizing that you are heading in that direction, acknowledging it and strategizing about how to deal with the negativity you are feeling, will help you stay on top of it rather than letting it damage your business and your health.

## Cartoon

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)



"You have seven phone messages  
telling you to check your e-mail,  
and thirteen e-mails telling you to  
answer your phone."



PO Box 357 903-99<sup>th</sup> Avenue West Tisdale, Saskatchewan S0E 1T0  
Phone: 306-873-4449 Fax: 306-873-4645 [admin@newsaskcfdc.ca](mailto:admin@newsaskcfdc.ca) [www.newsaskcfdc.ca](http://www.newsaskcfdc.ca)

Supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada



Western Economic  
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie  
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)