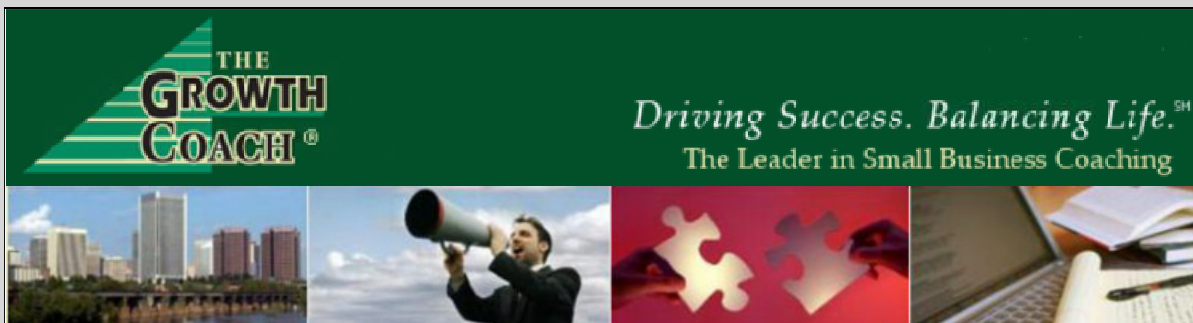


Harry Garmon

From: Mark James <connie@hearthandhomeshoppe.ccsend.com> on behalf of Mark James <mark@thegrowthcoachrichmond.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2015 2:01 PM
To: Harry Garmon
Subject: Vision = Why ... Are we doing this?



For Your Business to Grow and Improve You Must Grow and Improve

The Coach's Corner Newsletter is a monthly growth resource for small/mid-size business owners, entrepreneurs and private practice professionals.

Your success is our objective. That is to enhance your success to attract and retain quality customers and referral resources. With that goal in mind, we will deliver helpful, timely, valuable information that will enhance your work-life balance as you strive to improve your professional and personal growth.

We'll be respectful of your time with a concise, focused editorial style. Of course, your comments and suggestions to increase the value of the Coach's Corner Newsletter are strongly encouraged.

This month's article is all about your vision for your company. Truly, your vision is your North Star that guides your leadership in setting direction, priorities, strategies and tactics.

If you have one, re-examine it in light of the article below. If you don't have one, invest 4 minutes in digesting a blueprint to create a compelling vision statement.

Sincerely,

Mark W. James



JANUARY 2015

BUILDING A CATHEDRAL?

Word Count: 1,043
Reading Time: 4.2 minutes

Building a Cathedral or Beating a Rock?



"A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral." ~Antoine De Saint-Exupery

This story has been around for years and every so often it deserves repeating.

A man came across three masons who were working at chipping chunks of granite from large blocks. The first seemed unhappy at his job, chipping away and frequently looking at his watch. When the man asked what it was that he was doing, the first mason responded, rather curtly, "I'm hammering this stupid

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rock, and I can't wait 'til 5 when I can go home."

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A second mason, seemingly more interested in his work, was hammering diligently and when asked what it was that he was doing, answered, "Well, I'm molding this block of rock so that it can be used with others to construct a wall. It's not bad work, but I'll sure be glad when it's done."

A third mason was hammering at his block fervently, taking time to stand back and admire his work. He chipped off small pieces until he was satisfied that it was the best he could do. When he was questioned about his work he stopped, gazed skyward and proudly proclaimed, "I...am building a cathedral!"

Three men, three different attitudes, all doing the same job.

What's the distinguishing characteristic between the first two workers and the third? The lack of a clear compelling vision of what successes look like is the missing element. Only one was able to imagine what the purpose of his daily work ultimately meant.

Purpose or vision transitions attitudes about work and contributes to the quality of the work product as well. Vision often exists in the mind of the business founder and senior management team. Regrettably, it often lives a hermit's existence by not being shared with, and hopefully embraced by, others in the organization. Unless vision is expressed in a way that is communicated and clearly understood, its power to drive superior performance and employee engagement is neutered.

Simon Sinek in a speech he delivered to a TEDx audience began with a question. Paraphrased: How do you explain successes of people/organizations that succeed when others had more going for them in resources of money, time and education?

He goes on to present his discovery, the "Golden Circle". Sinek's Circle is really three concentric circles with the words "Why" at the center, "How" in the middle circle and finally "What" in the outer circle. His point is that most business leaders think from the outside, in. In contrast, inspired leaders, regardless of size or industry, think from the inside out.

Thinking from the outside, focuses first on *what* you do, followed by *how* you do it and finally with *why* you do it. And it's this final step that often goes unanswered. Few leaders know their purpose, their cause ... their *vision* of why their organization exists. And if they don't know, then their management team, employees, customers, prospects and other key stakeholders don't know either.

Again, inspired leaders think from the inside out. First and foremost they know *why* they get up every morning to do what they do, and are able to communicate that sense of purpose with clarity. Important! People, including employees, don't buy *what* you do; they buy *why* you do it.

You are urged to view at least the first 6 minutes of [Sineks excellent 18 minute presentation.](#)

Your vision ultimately becomes your company's direction, objectives, priorities,

strategies, and tactics. OK. So vision is not only important; it is essential to create a climate of excellence. If you have one, it may be worthwhile to re-examine it in light of the following. If you don't have one, here's a blueprint to create a compelling vision statement. Allow yourself a month: two weeks as Chief Listening Officer, and two weeks in your "CEO Cave".

First of all recognize that all of us will support what we help to create. So infuse that fact into the process to create a vision statement that will inspire and resonate throughout your organization. That applies to solo-preneurs as well as organizations of any size.

Remember, employees want purpose and passion to lift and propel them. The vision statement is to express where you want to be in a specific time-frame, say 5 - 10 years. Caution! In seeking the "Why" of what you do, *profit is not the reason* ... it is a result. So leave profit to your business plan in quantifying goals and objectives.

As Chief Listening Officer, include your employees and key stakeholders in the process. Start with a meeting in small groups, say 4 to 6 participants each. Define "vision" and its importance. Then ask each group to brainstorm how they see your company's direction, purpose, and current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis).

Urge them to be bold in their thinking, to help create **an exciting destiny and future state for your business**, say in 5 or 10 years, or appropriate timeline. This process could require several sessions to distill thinking.

It is likely that some results will be quantitative in nature (i.e. revenues, market share, etc), top-of-the-heap / competitive, possibly with social causes / community involvement. Study your industry trends and your current and emerging competitors. On all fronts, do your homework.

In the final two weeks, be certain to listen to your inner voice and gut. You are ultimately responsible for the vision of your business. Therefore, schedule several times get away from the daily interruptions and go into your CEO Cave. Dream big while building from a foundation of realism. See the business in your heart that you truly want to create. After listening to others for two weeks and thinking deeply yourself for two weeks, a powerful vision statement should come into focus for your company.

Now with your vision statement in hand, it is time to do the hard work of being sure that you "walk the walk" by bringing management decision-making, strategic direction and tactical planning into clear alignment with your adopted vision for your organization.

As Dan Murphy, developer of the **Strategic Mindset® Process**, says, **"Facts do not flame faith. A compelling vision (business story) will stoke the fires of faith and passion"**.

[Click here for your free E-Book "Becoming a Strategic Business Owner" by Dan Murphy](#)

A Client Speaks ...



BandyWorks delivers critical information to owners and managers that insist on quantifiable measurements of performance to drive their business. We provide dashboards, reports and information using business intelligence technology so our clients spend less time searching data and more time acting on it. Our clients are typically convenience store operators, data centers, call centers or manufacturers. The common thread is an abundance of data that requires technology so that objective decisions are made and action implemented.

As our company evolved, we were successful in delivering consulting, web marketing and software development to our customers. The work was challenging as we were constantly taking on diverse projects managed by a lot of new managers.

The tight focus evolved over a decade of hard work. Prior to the recent organization and focus, the company extracted a huge toll on the owner - working 80+ hours a week with little satisfaction in either my work or home life.

Three years ago, we sought guidance from **Mark James**, owner of [The Growth Coach Richmond](#). With Mark as my coach, I learned **The Growth Coach® cost and time-effective solution - [the Strategic Mindset® Process](#)**.

That process resulted in a professional metamorphosis as I re-examined the realities of both my personal and professional life. The follow-on was some extraordinary strategic work in re-engineering my priorities to enhance our corporate work product while elevating the quality of life for my family and myself. In short, I embraced what it means to be a Strategic Business Owner and execute accordingly every day.

Happily, our progress is significant. While we continue to pursue perfection, [BandyWorks](#) now enjoys productivity increases of 20%, enhanced employee engagement and excellent quality of our work product. And with all that success, my hours are down 30%!

We continue to succeed in expanding implementation of the **Strategic Mindset® Process** at [BandyWorks](#) ! I encourage you to share your business situation with [Mark](#) to learn how he can help you drive greater success in less time!

Tom Bandy, CEO
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