



## *Building A Business That Works For You*

Have you ever thought about why people entrust you with their money? Why 3000 investment management consultants are guiding the safety of one half trillion dollars? Is it really about your client's money? I suggest that it's not about the money, it's about your client's life. It's about their getting what they want for themselves and those they love. Your fee-based advisory service affects much more than your client's financial future, it affects their life. Whatever "life" means to them, you and your business play a crucial role in helping clients achieve their life goals.

Every day you promise those around you that you are the best of the best. You speak with prospects, clients, and others and demonstrate your competence in protecting client assets. As you go about the work of the business, you react to what comes at you, continually breaking, changing or adjusting your schedule to meet the demands of the business. You're not sure why, but you just wish a day, any day, could go as planned. What if you could really have one day, just one, where you could honor your own schedule. What would you feel like? How would your employees, clients, family or friends react? Could it be possible? Could you really think about your own life?

Some stumbled into this business, some planned it, and some followed a circuitous route that couldn't possibly be duplicated. Many entered the business as the technician. You use processes, probabilities, education and your wits to succeed where many have failed. You know the technical nature of this business, you do it everyday; over and over again. You get up every morning, go to the office, and know exactly what the day will look like. You will answer the same question and give the same direction to your employees or co-workers. You will do the same thing as yesterday, but now it's today. You wish that someone would listen so you wouldn't have to say the same thing over and over again. Gotta do it again, say it again, do it again, say it again. Why don't they get it!

Some of you entered the business as the manager. You plan, you quantify, and you implement it with and through others. You know how to keep the office running, how to pick the next consultant, how to juggle more clients, more deals and more responsibility. You came up the hard way. The others didn't listen to you. If they did, you wouldn't have lost that client. You know there's a better way to do this, if only they would listen. You've told them a hundred times. Then you sit the new hire down and tell them not to make a mistake. We have our reputation! If you have any questions, just ask me. In the meantime, you're off to the next crisis; gotta go, busy, busy, busy.

Some of you entered the business as an entrepreneur. You know how to do it. You know the technical work. You know how to manage, certainly better than the manager you worked for! But you want it different. You have this wonderful idea, an idea that will bring true value, honor and integrity to you, your industry, your clients and your employees. You're an innovator. Your idea is different. It will make a difference. How do I get others to see it, to feel it, to breathe it? They say they understand what I want, but it's not happening. How do I motivate and guide them to embrace and live my vision, my dream?

Is this familiar to you? It should be, there is an entrepreneur, manager and technician in all of us. We need all three to have a successful business. However, since business is a reflection of the owner, your business operates as you operate. You and most everyone in your office is either doing it, or saying it, or questioning it. However it doesn't have to be that way, there is a predictable process for you to grow, expand and improve each of these qualities within you and therefore within your business. The process begins with you.

The starting point for building a business that works begins with why you do what you do. Whatever you do, how you do it, and why you do it should be focused on providing what you truly want in life. The reason to create a business, to build a business, or to work on or in a business is to give you more life, more happiness, more profound appreciation for what you do. The challenge facing most business owners is the understanding of what they want for their life. It's not the cars, the money, or the house. It is the essence, the purpose of their life. It's the source of their passion and their vitality. It gives them clarity and purpose. It is their guiding light. It is what we call their Spiritual Objective. It can be elusive, but we all have a higher purpose. We just need to be willing to spend the structured time thinking about it in order to identify it. Do you know your Spiritual Objective?

Once you understand your Spiritual Objective, you can begin the process of building a business that works; one that works for you, one that will give you what you want in your life. You begin by creating a Strategic Vision for your business. An Objective that is so clear and precise that any question you have about the business can be answered by reading it. The Strategic Vision is the source of bringing balance to the entrepreneur, the manager and the technician. The entrepreneur creates the vision in the Strategic Vision, the manager plans, quantifies and implements the vision, and the technician does the work of the work. The business is designed and built to give you what you want, because it's your life we're talking about.

A Strategic Vision describes what your business will look like when it is complete. It is your vision for the future. Before you begin the process of writing your future, reflect on how you arrived at where you are today. Write your Company Story. What was the idea behind your company; how did the dream come about; is there something you believe or hold sacred; what is the passion behind the dream - was there some experience that made you want to manifest this idea? Your Company Story is a great way to both inspire and attract prospects and quality employees.

Once you have identified what you want (your Spiritual Objective), how you arrived at this point in your life and your business (the Company Story), create the vision of where you are going (the Strategic Vision).

The Strategic Vision is your description of what the business will look like, act like, feel like and how it will perform when it is completely developed. It will define your products and services and how those products and services will be delivered. It will identify your customers and how those customers will be located, cared for and served. It will quantify your sales and profit goals. It will describe your culture; employee behavior, operational philosophy and the unique characteristics that will allow your company to fulfill your entrepreneurial vision.

Spend the quality time to think through your dream. This is not about the details; it is about your vision and the spirit for fulfilling the vision. It's how you see it. It will be your action plan. Your Strategic Vision is one of the most effective ways to share your dream with employees and identify how employees will participate in realizing your dream. It gives them an understanding, a focal point. It provides the logic for their accountabilities. It is their guide of how they do it and why they do it.

When clearly written, your Strategic Vision will answer any tactical question. It's where you go when you're not sure where to go. As you change, the Strategic Vision may need to change. Review it quarterly; take measurements of how you are performing to the objectives. Hold yourself accountable. It is your blueprint of what you want for your business. It's one of the vehicles to your Spiritual Objective. Take it seriously. Honor it.