

# INTERESTING STUFF

- The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time TV were Fred and Wilma Flintstone.
- Every day more money is printed for Monopoly than the U.S. Treasury.
- Men can read smaller print than women can; women can hear better.
- Coca-Cola was originally green.
- It is impossible to lick your elbow.
- The average number of people airborne over the U.S. in any given hour: 61,000
- Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.
- $111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321$
- The first novel ever written on a typewriter was Tom Sawyer.
- Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history:  
Spades - King David  
Hearts - Charlemagne  
Clubs - Alexander the Great  
Diamonds - Julius Caesar
- In 1945 a computer at Harvard malfunctioned and Grace Hopper, who was working on the computer, investigated, found a moth in one of the circuits and removed it. Ever since, when something goes wrong with a computer, it is said to have a bug in it.
- The word 'news' did not come about because it was the plural of 'new.' It came from the first letters of the words North, East, West and South. This was because information was being gathered from all different directions.
- At least 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbow!

# USE TALENT OR LOOSE IT !!!

It doesn't show up on a balance sheet or a profit and loss statement, but one of a company's most valuable assets is the talent of the staff. Yet, unless that talent is properly managed, it can be underutilised, undeveloped and unappreciated, which creates dissatisfaction and eventually high turnover.

If the goal is to build a talented staff there must be a culture in place or created. That culture makes it important to first elevate the talents of the current staff and then, as more people are needed, hire highly talented people, train them to understand their part in an environment that honours and respects them, motivates them, and illustrates a career path as a long term part of a company where they can utilize their talents to the benefit of themselves, the company, and of each individual within the company.

That talent rich culture must come from the top of the company and, when it is properly driven, there are few restrictions on growth and company-wide energy. Creating a culture that manages talent well is important throughout every aspect of staff development and company development. Identifying talent is (or should be) a company-wide activity. When talented staffers are identified, they should be challenged and encouraged to stretch their boundaries, seek larger goals and perform at a higher capacity or to take on more responsibility faster. It may take the creation of a mentoring programme with a high degree of personal feedback to make that fast track career advancement successful. When it works well it accelerates growth, focus, teamwork and company spirit. The whole company profits from a culture that creates an environment where talent can grow and flourish.

If a talent-centric culture is not created, the results are just the opposite. Talented people become de-motivated, frustrated and either look for more challenging positions elsewhere or become inculcated with the culture of mediocrity and ease off. The whole company languishes, becomes a less competitive follower instead of the hard-driving, cutting edge leader- so create a company wide culture to manage your talent well or lose it.

## PASSION Dr John Maxwell writes

"In the early 1970's I realised that my talents would be maximised and my potential realised only if I matched my passion with my priorities. I was spending too much of my time doing tasks for which I possessed neither the talent nor passion. I had to make a change – to align what I felt strongly about with what I was doing. It made a huge difference in my life. It didn't eliminate my troubles or remove my obstacles, but it empowered me to face them with greater energy and enthusiasm. For more than 30 years I have worked to maintain that alignment of priorities and passion. As I have, I've kept these words near to keep me on track:

**"There are many things that will catch my eye, but there are only a few that catch my heart. It is those that I consider to pursue"**

If your priorities are not aligned with your passion, start making some changes right away!

Making More Possible

Business Results Limited

## better BUSINESS

SEPTEMBER 2008

### DEAR FRIENDS

The Olympics have come and gone and we have all enjoyed some wonderful moments – didn't the Evers – Swindell twins do well? Exultation and despair – and the athletes were not afraid to show it!

In my youth, particularly at boarding school, the show of any emotion was considered to be unmanly – whatever that means! So we were taught to suppress our emotions, mainly by peer pressure – let any new third former who was home sick and cried beware!

In some ways this was good learning as it taught us to be steadfast and not to yield to the opposition, in other ways, of course, it was a poor introduction to adult life.

Of course, lack of emotion now days is taken to mean that the person is cold and calculating and male crying is almost seen as a badge of honour!

I guess this spectrum of learning is like most things in life – if there was a perfect way to do something, which could be learnt, then everyone would be doing it! Think of thousands of Tiger Woods prowling the golf courses of the world!

However, I can tell you, after studying lots of pro golfers' swings, that there are as many different swings as there are pro golfers. Think of Tiger Woods power and grunt and muscle versus Jim Furyk and his egg beater swing which has control and precision! **and on and on!**

So we must find our own path to be the best we can! The first step is to try and get to know ourselves very well! What are our likes and dislikes? What excites us or bores us to tears? What are we passionate about and what do we dislike the most?

As Microsoft's Bill Gates says 'Life isn't fair – get used to it!'

Lastly, we were very proud recently when one of our clients, Jeremy and Rebecca Rameka and their restaurant Pacifica, on Marine Parade Napier, was highly commended in the Cuisine Magazine survey of New Zealand restaurants. Well done you two!

We can highly recommend it!

PS: Sabi and Lee have both had additions to their families – congratulations!

Don, Cheryl, Sally, Jeanette, Heather, Anna, Lee & Sabi

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ACCOUNTING & BUSINESS EXPERTS

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## IF IT'S TOUGH FINANCIALLY . . .

### THEN IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO BASICS

Below are **ten tips** for homeowners in the current economic climate:

1. Review your budget and if you don't have one, develop one. This will help give a better understanding of where your money is going.
2. Think twice about buying on, or increasing credit card debt. Your home is your biggest asset and you want to ensure you can afford to keep it. Do not take on extra debt as you want to have as much cash available for rising mortgage payments and cost of living.
3. Reduce your expenses, especially on items that are nice to have, but not necessarily essential.
4. As the cost of living increases, reducing or stopping an insurance policy is **NOT** the best way to save money. Insurance will be just as important today, and in the future, as when you first took it out.
5. Increase your income. Are you able to work extra hours or get a part-time job to ride you through the tough times?
6. Get a flat mate, boarder or student to help with expenses.
7. Go through your garage or cupboards and sell items that you don't use or need anymore.
8. Always have an emergency account. This should be approximately three to six months worth of your expenses set aside in a separate account.
9. Make it a priority to pay your mortgage so you are not forced to sell your property.
10. Get help. If you are finding it difficult to pay your mortgage see us! Review your goals and keep positive.

Remember that economic slowdowns and bad times do not last forever. The markets are cyclic – **the bad times are always followed by the good times.**

## TAKING ACTION

If you're a business owner, there is good news and bad news in the current economic environment. The bad news is that for most businesses, trading conditions are challenging – more challenging than they have been for some time. The good news is that how you react to these conditions is up to you.

The difference between those who prosper and those who don't in this environment will be largely one of attitude. While the current environment is difficult, it is far from insurmountable - *you can do something about it.*

Taking action is the key. Action creates reaction. By taking action you can control your own destiny.

Running a small business is never easy. There's always too much to do, and a small business owner doesn't often have the luxury of being able to employ specialists to help them run their business. But in many ways today's issues are the same, whether you are a one-person business or a large corporation. When things are tighter, you need to focus on running your business smarter.

In our experience, many small business owners are more comfortable working in their business rather than on it. But that's not enough. In the current environment, the need to focus more of your attention on managing your business simply can't be ignored. Here are some important areas you need to think about:-

### 1. KNOW WHERE THE MONEY GOES

When things are tighter, large and small businesses alike need to really understand the costs in their business. You need to know how every cent is spent – and be sure it is well spent.

Review all your costs. Are they producing a result? Do they contribute to your bottom line? Are you sure? For example, advertising and marketing is often a major expense. Do you know your advertising is working? Is it driving business? Does it pay for itself? If not, don't go on blindly throwing money at it. If you don't know whether it's effective, find out. Run your business based on information – not emotion.

### 2. FOCUS ON PROFIT – NOT TURNOVER

Most businesses have a pretty good understanding of their turnover – for example, when a shop owner closes their tills at the end of every day they know exactly how much they have turned over. But they are less likely to know how much money they have made. You can have great turnover but not be making any money. It is your profit that ultimately determines the health of your business.

*By Stephen Caunter, Specialist Business Manager, The National Bank*

If you find it hard to work out your profit, review your systems. Many business owners don't know they are in trouble until it's too late, because they don't have the systems in place to tell them.

### 3. REDUCE YOUR PRICES ONLY AS A LAST RESORT

Once again, don't focus on turnover at the expense of profit. Lowering your prices may help your turnover, but for most small businesses it's not a sustainable strategy in the long term. If your turnover drops, restoring it at all costs may not be the answer. You need to keep one eye on your profit margin. By restructuring or doing things differently, you may be able to do less, but make more.

### 4. DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

To succeed in difficult times means standing out from the crowd. If you don't offer something different, why should people buy from you? Being clear on this can be hard work, but it's vital. To help you, think about the problems your customers face. How can you help overcome these? Can you package up different products or partner with another business to offer a package that adds value to your customers? They don't have to be related products, either – if you're a local bookshop, why not join up with a local restaurant to offer discounted meals for your customers to encourage people to shop locally? Can you offer a guarantee that will give your customers more reason to deal with you? Being seen to add value is the key to building loyalty and preserving your profit margin – so don't be afraid to try something different.

### 5. GET A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

When times are tough it's easy for the focus to turn inward – but that's exactly when it's important to reach out and get an independent perspective. Networking is one way to share ideas and experiences with others who may be having exactly the same issues as you – and they may have some great ideas about how to overcome them. Your professional advisers – for example your accountant or lawyer – can also be a good source of information and ideas. Don't forget that your Business Banking Manager can also be a good source of information and provide an external perspective on your financial arrangements.

These are just a few of the things you can do to help you in today's market. Taking action is the key. Taking action helps to keep you motivated and positive about your business because you are looking ahead, not dwelling on the past. There's little point worrying about the economic environment. You can't change it. Instead, use your energy thinking about how you can make the most of the resources you have at hand.

## KIDS CAN JOIN KIWISAVER TOO!

With no minimum age to join, the savings incentives attached to KiwiSaver NZ make it a great way to put aside money for your kids' future. The funds will be locked in until age 65 but some amounts can be accessed earlier in certain circumstances, such as buying a first home.

They'll need an IRD number before joining. You can apply for one using an IR594 form, downloadable from the Inland Revenue website.

**An early start works wonders  
- and \$1,000 for joining  
doesn't hurt either -**

KiwiSaver members under 18 can still receive the \$1,000 kick start to savings provided by the Government. They'll also receive the subsidy towards scheme fees of \$40 per year. Once they turn 18 they'll be eligible for tax credits matching contributions made to their account.

Starting early, compound interest and regular savings can do more than you think. The table shows how an account balance could grow with different contribution amounts.

Years	No Contributions	\$20 month	\$40 month
5	1,338	2,728	4,118
10	1,791	5,040	8,290
15	2,397	8,135	13,873
20	3,207	12,276	21,345

\* Assumes savings earn 6%p.a. net of fees and tax

### (THE LOST DR. SEUSS POEM)



## I LOVE MY JOB

I love my job, I love the pay!

I love it more and more each day.

I love my boss, he is the best!

I love his boss and all the rest.

I love my office and its location,  
I hate to have to go on vacation.

I love my furniture, drab and grey,  
and piles of paper that grow each day!

I think my job is really swell, there's nothing else I love so well.

I love to work among my peers, I love their leers,  
and jeers, and sneers.

I love my computer and its software;

I hug it often though it won't care.

I love each program and every file.

I'd love them more if they worked a while.

I'm happy to be here. I am. I am.

I'm the happiest slave of the firm, I am.

I love this work, I love these chores.

I love the meetings with deadly bores.

I love my job – I'll say it again – I even love those friendly men.

Those friendly men who've come today,

In clean white coats to take me away!