



THE WILKINS GROUP

Tool Kit

Providing Tools for
Productive Workplaces

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Sheila Scanlon Wilkins

If I lead, will you follow?

By Sheila Wilkins

In our summer newsletter, we said leadership is something one provides to a group to meet certain needs. Leaders must provide their groups with what they need and will use to achieve targeted goals.

Leadership is also dynamic relationship between leaders and followers. Leaders must present themselves in certain ways to their followers. Followers expect certain behaviors from their leaders.

Besides a well-articulated vision and a clear sense of direction, followers want leaders to be role models. Leaders must understand what it means to set an example, that is to be a role model. They must become aware of their current personal actions which set a positive example and those which set a negative example. They must become aware of their individual leadership style of relating to others.

In the end, leaders must walk their talk and let their actions speak for themselves.

- Leaders must hold themselves accountable to the same standards as everyone else.
- Leaders must have the courage to do what needs to be done.
- Leaders must stay in touch and be generally accessible.
- Leaders must listen well all the time.

Leaders must understand the importance of building appropriate relationships with their followers and they must work at building effective relationships. They must assess their individual approach and ability to motivate their work group.

Followers expect their leaders to build productive relationships with them. Leaders must shift the focus from themselves to others. They must be supporters, partners, and obstacle removers. Leaders must be tuned in to their followers' needs, values, goals and aspirations.

That means:

- They must reach out and pay attention to their followers.
- They must take time to cultivate relationships with their followers.
- They must appreciate and recognize the contributions their followers make.

Some signs of effective leadership are among the followers:

- Are they reaching their potential?
- Are they learning?
- Are they achieving the targeted business goals?
- Are they managing change gracefully?

- Are they managing conflict well?

Leaders must foster upbeat attitudes, which in turn, lead to success and more challenging goals and achievements. The more open and accessible the leader is, the more followers will disclose their ideas, thoughts, conclusions, reactions and feelings about what is going on in their organization.

If and when followers are acknowledged and accepted and challenged, they will put forth their very best efforts.

It's not too early to plan for next year

The 4th quarter signals the end of the year and the beginning of the strategic planning process for next year.

Leaders ask:

- What results have we achieved this year?



- What goals did we accomplish?
- What goals fell by the wayside?
- What projects must we really finish this year?
- What skill gaps must we close for next year?

Leaders rarely have down time. They must always go first, balancing the present with its upsides and downsides, keeping cool, calm and collected in the face of an uncertain future, while making decisions with integrity and courage. Leaders must walk the talk and let their actions speak for themselves.

This issue offers some tips for leaders on how to be a role model and how to build relationships with followers.

I am very pleased to introduce a colleague and mentor, Cindy Turner, of Turner & Associates. Cindy coached and mentored me in building my consulting practice and developing my business plan. Cindy offers tips for flexible and adaptable strategic planning.

— Sheila Scanlon Wilkins

Strategic planning: flexible yet adaptable

By **Cindy Turner**

In today's environment, working a long-term strategic business plan couldn't be more important.

And, while no one strategy is optimal for all companies, one must have determined what makes the most sense in light of their objectives, opportunities and resources.

Keeping to the budgets and adjusting to a long-term strategy that fits the environment is the challenge. Identifying a strategy that is flexible and adaptable to the company's structure is essential.

Companies that have created effective long-term strategies might have implemented the Boston Consulting Group's Growth-Share Matrix. The matrix guides a company's decisions around their strategic business units. A strategic business unit ideally has its own mission, competitors, a responsible manager, can be planned independently of the other businesses, and is a single business or collection of related businesses.

Using the growth-share matrix, the first step is to determine what cell a strategic business unit falls into. Here are the four choices:

Question marks: Businesses that operate at high-growth markets but have low relative market shares. These enterprises require high cash inflows to compete with a standing market leader.

Stars: Businesses that grow from question marks become stars. While this group still requires cash inflows, they are profitable. A business needs a least one star.

Cash cows: Businesses that produce a lot of cash while holding the largest relative market share. These enterprises support budding question marks and stars.

Dogs: Businesses that have weak market shares in low-growth markets. Typically generate low profits or losses, but may throw off some cash. They tend to take up a lot of management's time and will eventually be phased out.

Once the business classifies its strategic business unit by cell, it can



effectively form its objectives. The Boston Consulting Group's Growth-Share Matrix includes the following objectives relative the each cell above:

Build: Increase market share, even forgoing short-term earnings to achieve it.

Hold: Preserve market share

Harvest: Increase short-term cash flow regardless of the long-term effect.

Divest: Sell or liquidate because resources can be better utilized elsewhere.

Plotting past, current and future information into the matrix on an annual basis allows a business manager to communicate and justify its

strategy to corporate. Or corporate will use the share-growth matrix as a planning framework for their strategic planners.

The final strategic decisions might not feel very comfortable, particularly if one is divesting or holding. The consolation is the business manager's validation that they are trying to get a business to perform as well as possible in the current environment.

Skillful managers know where to find the balance between their commitment to their plans and the need to create flexible and adaptable strategies.

— *Cindy Turner owns Turner & Associates, which specializes in marketing and business planning for small businesses. She leads workshops on these topics, as past adjunct faculty member of U.C. Berkeley, and through a variety of other organizations across the Bay Area. Cindy has helped her clients increase their sales from 20 to 75 percent. She has guided thousands of existing and prospective small business owners through workshops, teaching, coaching and consulting. She provides small business coaching services for her private clients, as well as the Small Business Development Centers in Oakland and Concord, CA*

**"There are no secrets to success.
It is the result of preparation,
hard work and learning from failure."**

Colin L. Powell, Secretary of State



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