



THE WILKINS GROUP

Tool Kit

Providing Tools for
Productive Workplaces

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*“The Spirit of
Infinite Life,
Love, Wisdom,
Peace, Power,
and Plenty
guide, keep,
protect, and
lead you.”*

*Ralph Waldo
Emerson*

Refocusing in the new year



Happy new year. We begin

the second year of the millennium with fear and confusion in the world and a downturned economy in the United States. It's not a great way to start a new year.

We prefer to start anew with resolutions to become better persons, personally and professionally. When events of the world don't support our goals, it is easy to forget them and just go along for the ride.

As individuals and leaders who are formulating strategies and tactics to stay engaged, viable and customer focused in a depressed economy, we must be anchored personally and professionally,

attuned to what's going on inside and around us. While we must be flexible and able to bend as the wind blows, we also must work within our principles.

What has meaning for us as individuals? As individuals, what do we stand for? Do we take a stand? Do we know what it is we cannot stand? As leaders, do we manage from the heart as well as the head? Are our leadership practices supportive? Do our business practices promote creativity and innovation?

Being able to respond honestly to these questions requires an awareness and insight into ourselves and a solid understanding of the challenges and opportunities the marketplace presents.

This issue addresses some aspects of leadership important in a depressed economy.

I am pleased to introduce a colleague, Tom Leal, of The Synergy Group, who presents marketing tips for surviving in the current marketplace.

Leading in times of adversity

One of the greatest challenges leaders have is to understand human behavior in the workplace.

It is the human factor in organizations that oversees, manages and implements the technical functions of the work. Understanding and working within the dynamics of human behavior can contribute to a leader's effectiveness, as well as the organization's results.

The success of any organization lies in the ability of its workforce to be creative, adaptive and innovative on an ongoing basis, especially in a sluggish economy.

Effective leaders must provide direction and mobilize people. Leaders provide direction by developing a vision of the future; then they align people by communicating the vision and inspiring employees to become engaged in achieving it.

How does a leader do this?

UNDERSTAND THE MARKETPLACE. The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. In business, the marketplace changes constantly. Leaders must be cognizant of the changes and know what is causing them. They must have access to

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Stay in your clients' minds to survive the current market

By Tom Leal

In these economic times it's important to stay in your clients' minds to keep your pipeline flowing. The U.S. economy is overwhelmingly based on services rather than goods, so we continually face the challenge of marketing ourselves effectively.

Here are a few ideas you can use right away.

SURVEYS

- Create a simple survey that asks about your clients' current and expected conditions. Ask about their next steps, industry predictions, and services they are likely to want in the coming year.

- Ask colleagues to poll their clients so you have a larger sampling and more interesting results.

- Contact your clients and ask the questions. As an incentive, offer copies of the results so they can compare themselves with others.

- Compile the responses into a report that you present in person to your clients. Talk about the findings and about the client's next action steps. You may create some new business for yourself.

Workbooks

- Even in bad times, clients need results. Perhaps you have some handouts from a project. Use a desktop publishing program to make your materials look professional, put them into binders, and offer the workbooks to your clients as cost-effective



ways to address issues. Your clients will get an important and affordable business resource. They may decide to have you facilitate the use of the materials.

- If you

already provide workbooks to your clients, create updates that provide new information and skills clients can use right away.

- Create a binder manual for your key decision-makers that has some sheets on specific issues your clients face. Each sheet has tips and tools for handling an issue.

- Create an index and use dividers to separate topics. Present the binder

and some of the sheets. Tell your clients they will be getting more sheets in the future.

- Add a sheet now and then. Your clients will appreciate having a ready reference guide to being more effective on the job. Call to ask how well the sheets are serving them.

- **Variation (E-manuals):** Send your sheets as e-mail attachments. E-mail one to clients periodically to stay in their minds.

The more tangible you make your work and the more often you appear in front of your clients, the easier it is for them to work with you again.

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Leading in times of adversity

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relevant and accurate information, and be open to accepting it.

Leaders must understand the challenges and opportunities in their particular environment so that they are in touch with, and make decisions based on, reality.

COMMUNICATE AND SHARE THE VISION:

A vision is a shared image of where the organization is and where it intends to go.

A vision gives certainty and purpose,

and provides the framework for making decisions, determining priorities and allocating budget dollars. A shared vision galvanizes the energy needed to motivate employees into action.

A vision must be worked at all levels of the organization. It's the people who implement the vision. Leaders must convey to each person the valuable role he/she plays in the organization. Each employee must see what the vision means to him/her.

BE A ROLE MODEL: Leaders walk their talk and let their actions speak for

themselves. Their challenge is how to keep calm, cool and collected in the face of uncertainty, and how to make decisions with integrity and courage.

Understanding who they are and what they stand for provides leaders with an internal compass; it's what helps them to be effective, and clear and sane in difficult times. Leaders pay attention to what is going on

around them, manage their stress and maintain their emotional balance. They don't get distracted,

"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality."

Sheila Scanlon Wilkins

become overly reactive or lose the ability to have perspective.

Leaders make decisions constantly. They make decisions based on their values (what is important to them) and what the current situation is. Knowing what is really important and what the current situation is aids their decision making, particularly in difficult times.

Followers know what their leader stands for and, in different situations, they know where their leader is coming from and what he/she is most likely to do. Followers respect and trust a leader who has the courage to do what needs to be done.



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