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Be Strategic to More Quickly Achieve Your Goals

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Millard MacAdam

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Being strategic by having the right strategy in place for achieving each of your vital goals increases your odds of enjoying a successful outcome. Using a wrong or outdated strategy to try to achieve a goal wastes valuable physical, emotional, time and financial resources and deters the quickest and easiest achievement of the results you desire. The objective is to select the right strategy for achieving each of your goals or having the ability to create it. Implementing right strategies will help make you and your enterprise more successful.

Hard work, commitment, effort, dedication and integrity continue to be attributes that lead to stellar, long-term careers and enterprises. These attributes remain of high and worthwhile value today, but the complexity of things calls for you to also be strategic to avoid depleting your physical, emotional, time and financial reserves and burning out.

You need to know about as many relevant strategies as possible that can contribute to the high integrity achievement of your vision, mission and goals. You need to learn how to develop, adapt and synthesize strategies to fit your situation and your enterprise. Developing a strategy is a skill that you will benefit from in your personal life, career, and enterprise. Here are some coaching tips that will help you gain the most from developing a strategy:

CAREFULLY DEFINE THE MEANING OF STRATEGY WITH YOUR STAFF. Strategy is the "how" of getting something accomplished through the work of people, machines or technology. Being clear on the meaning of strategies, plans, goals, outcomes or objectives as you work with your staff is critical to reduce confusion, breakdowns in communication and wasted time. A plan is what you develop in order to identify, organize and schedule your time and resources. A plan consists of a list of resources needed, actions steps to take, and a timeline of events and benchmarks of successful progress. Your purpose is why you are doing what you are doing and why you are focusing on particular outcomes. Vision is a word picture of a preferred future. Goals are broad, general targets. Objectives or outcomes are each of the measurable steps that lead to the achieving of your goal. The outcome includes the results, and also the benefits of those results, both tangible and intangible.

UNDERSTAND THAT RIGHT STRATEGIES LEAD TO OPTIMUM SUCCESS. There is not a single type of enterprise where a strategy of some kind isn't needed to grow or manage that type of enterprise. Are you using the best strategy to get the best results most easily and in the quickest time? Are you using the most current, proven strategy being used by your competition? Are you customizing it to fit your own unique needs and those of your enterprise?

KNOW HOW A STRATEGY WILL SAVE YOU TIME, EFFORT AND MONEY. When you have a strategy in place, you and your staff are freed up to use your intelligence and creativity to innovate and initiate what it takes to improve things and achieve your goal more quickly and

easily. Anyone can lock in on a recommended set of action steps, but it's the proactive leader who always custom tailors a strategy before initiating the action steps.

REMEMBER THAT YOUR STRATEGY IS HOW SOMETHING GETS DONE. A strategy is your approach to reaching your goal with the least amount of wasted effort, time or cost. With a strategy, you aren't always working directly on the goal itself, but also on improving the environment in which the goal is being achieved, relationships, resource allocation, and people's knowledge, skills and attitudes.

RECOGNIZE THAT A STRATEGY WILL EXPAND YOUR OUTCOMES. Using the right strategy always leads to an expanded goal and outcomes. An example of this is Amazon.com. Their original goal was to be the largest seller of books and their strategy to achieve that goal was to use the Internet as their storefront. However, the strategy of using the Internet proved so excellent, they now offer music, videos, gifts, and software. Their strategy became more important than their original goal.

EXAMINE VIABLE STRATEGIES. Lots of strategies are being used daily to achieve most every kind of goal. Identify your broad goals in areas such as improving staff skills, financial processes, manufacturing processes, marketing, advertising, sales, and customer relations. Begin examining and collecting some of the dozens of distinct strategies others are successfully using to achieve goals related to these and almost any other area needed in your enterprise. Check trade journals, training magazines, business magazines. Your local library and the Internet are also excellent resources for finding books and articles about successful strategies being used by others. Consultants and coaches are also an excellent resource because they can bring ideas to you that they have seen others use successfully.

HAVE A CREATIVE STRATEGY FOR EVERY GOAL. Goal-setting, without an accompanying strategy, is fairly impotent and usually expensive. Lists of goals are found in annual planning documents that have been created at leadership retreats. The problem is most of these documents find dust sitting on shelves rather than people's finger prints because they have been used as reference guides while implementing a strategy. Goals can be accomplished without having a strategy, but why neglect the energy-saving power of a strategy that can be used to help you and your staff reach your goals more quickly and easily?

CREATE STRATEGIES BY THINKING STRATEGICALLY. Brainstorm with your staff. This is a really smart, creative and easy way to make your goal a reality. List some better or unconventional ways to do things. One of the most motivating aspects of strategy is that the process of developing strategies is a highly creative one. You can use the strategies developed by others, but it's also important to be able to design and customize your own strategies. You do this by first learning about as many basic strategies for personal and business success as possible. This will give you enough raw materials to begin thinking strategically and inventing new strategies that fit the goals you wish to achieve in your enterprise.

If you need help in mastering and implementing any of the skills and tactics mentioned, I'm

here for you! Please visit the Call-A-Coach section of my web site for more information.

About the author:

Dr. Mac shares with business owners the practical knowledge and insights he gained as a small company CEO. He founded Sycamore Ranch, Inc. when 27 and as CEO led his partners and a staff of 100 for 16 years in developing and operating the 50 acre recreational facility. Years later, he integrated what he learned from his Doctoral program at USC with his practical business experiences and began consulting. For four decades Mac's coached business owners in mastering and applying "how to" leadership and managerial skills for: Hiring and retaining only the top ten percent producers; Optimally deploying and supervising staff to maximize their personal motivation; Developing high integrity leadership teams; Facilitating mutual performance accountability and peer coaching processes; and, Integrating his Intentional Business Integrity Process into their company operations. Mac has served leaders in manufacturing and high tech companies; accounting, banking and insurance enterprises; medical and health care organizations; service and retail oriented businesses; as well as educational, governmental and non profit organizations. Q&A ProActive Leadership 888-648-5552 or MacAdam@PALConsulting

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