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A tip of the hat
Positive Posts

by [Marc Chinoy](#)
Regis Group President

At a time when so many of the Blogs on the web are used as bashing grounds for the offended and disaffected, we have the hope that our Regis Group Blog might offer an alternative...

Here is the challenge: we are soliciting posts focused on individual opinions as to services, products and corporate cultures that have WORKED, one in which the event triggered a positive response from our friends.

Please Post

If you have encountered a circumstance that highlights a product or means of delivery which you would like to share, please post it on our blog page.

Countering opinions are welcome, but we ask that the initial post be positive in nature.

First Post: AAA

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Here's the July Agenda!

July 2010
Adversity Planning
The Tough Side of Planning

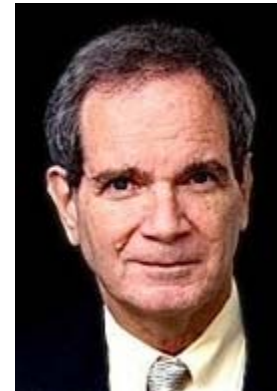
by [Marc Chinoy](#)
Regis Group President

Plans take a lot of forms. The annual budget is in fact a plan that can be (and generally is) most strategic in nature. The setting of ongoing group policy is in fact a significant planning step that is often not seen as that.

One of the overarching aspects of such "rolling" planning is the calendar, which generally is viewed in terms of a "typical" year. Unfortunately, this can be a trap in itself... one by which the "strategic plan" is seen as outside the practical life of the institution, since atypical events are often the norm.

Planning should be a solid "health maintenance program" of an organization. Organizational "planning to be healthy" should be the equivalent of taking certain diet and exercise steps even when it does not feel essential.

By the same token, on a cyclical basis the planning team should consider potential adversities based on 1) what has occurred to the group in the past and 2) what the team has observed from similarly situated groups beyond themselves. All organizations should



Marc Chinoy

President's Letter
Beyond the Plan

As we watch the pace of everything accelerate, and at time disastrous, unexpected events seem to rule the day, it might be easy to fall into the trap of conventional wisdom seemingly expressed in the quote of Robert Burns, "The best laid plans of mice and men oft go astray." In fact the frequency with which events do not run as planned is even greater reason for the diligence and discipline of planning to become pervasive in our business lives.

To say that there is little point to planning in light of the prospect of disruptive events is to push ourselves one step closer to chaos at the get-go.

Our first post under the "Positive" policy recounts my recent assistance by AAA.

Anyone else have a similar (or other event) not just with AAA but in general? They can be easily posted by clicking on our 'Comments' button directly under the post. Comments can be typed in the box that opens from that link.

Other uses

If your comment is entirely different from the post, feel free to email it to Regis to cbarrientos@regisgroup.com or to Richard Earle at rearle@regisgroup.com and we'll post it immediately. If we receive enough of them we might begin to use them in some other way.

The Regis blog may be visited by [clicking here](#)

Share the Agenda on your favorite Social Media

A second reminder that thanks to our friends at Emma (the distributor of this newsletter), you can share this edition with your friends at Facebook or Twitter or LinkedIn.

See something here you think a friend or colleague would like?

Simply click on the appropriate tab at the upper right hand corner of this page, and follow your Social Network's normal procedure for a post. It's that easy!

have a properly configured planning team in place at all times, not just on the rare occasions when the leadership wants to be able to point to the plan and say, "of course we have one, somewhere."

Setting the cycle

Setting the planning cycle is in itself a discipline that can be practiced by answering the following basic questions:

1. "What are the mandatory intervals of events that must be understood?"
Examples: The tax cycle, finance necessities, social events which impact the operation, such as an annual or multi-year regional gathering.
2. "Who will be automatically impacted by outside or 'perpetual' events?"
Examples: The office of the CFO, public relations groups, grounds, transportation management, or possibly a division of Human Resources
3. "What is the logical time-frame for considering new approaches and evaluating both competitive forces and historic lead times for change?"

Business areas such as the coordination of marketing, operations, and finance should always have a formal and cyclical timing aspect, generally connected to the budget cycle.

As a next step, what might be a shift for some groups might be setting a calendar for considering the range of adverse events that could or worse yet have been known to occur and setting both a likelihood scale and a resource scale behind them. Included in this should always be a set of responses to potential catastrophic failure considered when all is calm.

A set of self testing questions should be devised by the team and followed at a specific time with well understood resources.

So what is the solution?

Solutions

Positive intentions should be balanced with the challenge of considering the tough options we might be forced to face. Running the traps of adversity planning is not in itself negative thinking, while in a weird reversal of the obvious, planning only for smooth sailing can in fact be a trouble magnet.

If there is one overarching lesson to be learned, it is to plan thoroughly, both in front of trouble and best yet on a calendar basis, so that when trouble shows its face we can proceed with calm and deliberation knowing that we have considered its appearance as a possibility.

Until later,

Marc



BizSpeak: "Float the Question"

Definition:

To assure that the subject at hand is as close to understandable as it needs to be without actually saying anything.

Related Terms:

Trial Balloon
Get in sync
Get with the Program

How it Sounds:

These could (should) include:

1. "What types of events might fully disrupt our ability to operate?"
 - a. "Are there degrees we can set to those?"
2. "Under what conditions might we find it difficult to impossible to communicate internally? With our key outside constituency?"
3. Are there preset protocols we can put in place for these occurrences including:
 - a. Definitions of disruption
 - b. Preset assignments of special roles
 - c. The sequence and timing for setting, measuring and training for these.

If your group cannot point to a set of written answers to these questions (at the minimum) and to a time sequence for setting and reviewing them, this is not an automatic invitation for trouble... you may coast along for years without needing them... but that is the trap. The door is then open to that sad moment when the answer is... "Why didn't we consider that?"

"After three hours of noise and debate, George decided to float the question as to whether it was time to break for dinner."

For More BizSpeak, check out the Book. [Click here.](#)

Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: Deb Adams

Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions questions that affect us all.

Deb Adams launched JustCause marketing inc. in 1996, The result was a new model for a marketing agency that harnessed the then fledgling Internet and had a "green" mission long before the concept of environmental consciousness and socially responsible business practices became en vogue.

Today Deb is CEO of Domo Domo International Marketing Group, Inc., a Cincinnati and Connecticut based branding and design agency. Domo Domo builds upon the core values of JustCause, and renews the company's focus on generating big ideas that add new value and life to brands via an interweaving of high-level strategic and creative talent.

In addition to her award-winning work with fortune 100 and 500 companies, Deb founded LegaSeaS International, a non-profit marine conservation organization, and serves on the boards of international organizations involved in ocean



Deb Adams

conservation and the preservation of whales and dolphins.

Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?

A:

Two areas of the greatest benefit are a blend of the intangible and tangible:

The intangible aspect included a re-positioning of our business and leadership thinking to focus energy on innovation and taking calculated risks. In these uncertain times, when the natural tendency is to be more cautious, we proactively seized this as an opportunity to transform our business practices and adapt to today's challenges. We call this *diving in* - and *~ doing more™*.

The second key factor is early adoption of tangible new technologies (like Skype, WebEx®, FTP and others) that enable us to service our client base, as well as work together as a virtual team, quickly and easily. This has reduced our overhead, increased our efficiencies and enabled us to enhance our client services, locally and globally.

Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?

A:

The economic climate has created a very competitive environment characterized by a risk-averse mode of operation, which ironically makes some companies unable to take advantage of real opportunities. From an agency perspective, we have shifted our deliverables to focus energy on assisting brands and businesses in reviewing their current equities to reveal untapped potential that may expand their business without traditional capital investment approach used in the past.

Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?

A:

We now approach all of our projects framed within a global context to ensure we present options not only for US markets but also include potential global implications and applications. In the past clients would focus on each region separately and we are encouraging them to bundle, where appropriate, concepts for expansion into other regions.

Secondly, out of necessity we have adapted to working with manufacturing operations in the third world with

a key focus on how creative (consumer packaging, print, etc.) are produced at overseas operations where traditional hands-on quality assurance is not feasible. There are inherent risks associated with sending highly secure materials overseas, and beyond that the mechanics of artwork file preparation require significantly more time and care to ensure that intentions are resulting in desirable outcomes and brand assets are properly secured so that a new brand, or work in progress, is *not* being exposed to competitors pre-maturely.

Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?

A:

The economic recovery is going to be slow and take time. To be successful, we believe, our clients need to adopt a more proactive stance and view these challenging times as real opportunities to invest in their businesses and get ahead of curve. While this may appear counter-intuitive to the natural response to challenging times of taking a risk-averse, conservative approach, the reality is many highly successful products and initiatives were launched in times of economic strife.

Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?

A:

It is increasingly difficult to be effective in business without a global perspective. In addition, our expectations of young professionals require this emerging group to invest the time and energy necessary to complement their educational background with experiential knowledge. We look for professionals that are willing to start at the bottom, garner varied experiences from all aspects of our business, including global perspective, and come armed with a positive attitude characterized by a natural curiosity and flexibility. On a strong positive note, young women have even more opportunities in the global economy and are poised to take on leadership roles in business categories that were traditionally male dominated industries in the past.

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