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Best practices for companies moving to the next level

January 9, 2009

7 Synergies of Business Success

1. Grow from the inside out.
2. Develop a brand promise and live it daily.
3. Put people first.
4. Hire leaders and managers.
5. Lead to create wealth.
6. Values validate valuation.
7. Monitor, monitor, monitor...what ever you measure will improve.

Intangible...the quality of the company is directly proportional to the quality of the CEO.

For an assessment to see how you stack up on these issues, [click here](#)

For the **Recommended Reading List** from SmartGrowth, Inc., [click here](#).

Click here for an order form for Pam Watson Korbel's book **More Money, Less Work, More Fun! 123 ideas for smart growth in today's business environment** - <http://www.smartgrowth.com>

SmartGrowth provides business coaching for CEOs

Quit Telling Me I Need a Plan

As CEO of a California software firm, my business coach always nagged me about our lack of a strategic plan. The conversation created shivers in my spine because of the strategic planning process used during my Enron days, and you now know how effective those were.

Then, a recession hit California and my executive team and I had to roll up our sleeves and figure out how the company made money. So I converted.

And in the face of a recession that could be the longest in a century, my question to you is "how do you make money?" Here's my tips on how to answer the question:

1. **Take Time to Think** - You can not figure out where to take your business if you spend all your waking time working in your business. Get your yellow pad and go to the local coffee house for an hour twice every week to just think and make a couple notes about how the company will change.
2. **Do the Easy Market Research** - Two constituences in your business know exactly what the market wants...your customers and your employees. Take time to have meaningful conversations with individual leaders within each group.
3. **Do More Easy Market Research** - Ask all your stake holders three questions...what should the company stop doing? what should we start doing? what should we keep doing? Consolidate the lists and look for the trends. We call this the Stop, Start, Keep program.
4. **Economic Driver** - Take a tip from Jim Collins, business guru who wrote **Good to Great** and **Built to Last**. You need to know the one ratio that drives your success. Is your critical number profit/client? revenue/employee? cost per visit? etc.
5. **Know Where You Are Going** - What is your big hairy audacious goal?...another Collin-ism.
6. **Themes** - Get everyone focused around an annual theme for

and executives; facilitation of strategy; and management development training to entrepreneurial companies.

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Interested in becoming a business coach for entrepreneurs? Check out the SmartCoach program at <http://www.smartcoach.biz>

2009...the one driver that you want everyone to live and understand. Here are some themes I have heard for this year...Profit is King, Business Growth through Personal Balance, Abundantly Change.

7. **Drill Down the Theme** - What is the 'one thing' the company needs to accomplish within each function to achieve the theme? Write an objective that fits the theme for sales, marketing, product development, human resources, operations, finance, accounting.

8. **Align** - Ask each employee to write his or her Scorecard based contribution to the annual theme and economic driver. Every employee should readily know how s/he contributes to profit.

9. **Keep Score** - Measure the economic driver and theme weekly and report to all stakeholders.

10. **Attend the SmartGrowth free webinar on the One Hour Business Plan** on Thursday, Jan. 29, noon to 1 pm MST. We will give you our one-page business plan template and tell you how to complete it. RSVP to office@smartgrowth.com to receive the connection details.

Read my blog at <http://blog.smartgrowth.com> for more.

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SmartGrowth, Inc., Englewood, Colorado
More Money, Less Work, More Fun! (tm)
CEO & Publisher: Pam Watson Korbel
Tel: 303-790-9131 Fax: 303-790-9356
www.smartgrowth.com

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SmartGrowth, Inc.

88 Inverness Circle East Ste. F108, Englewood, CO 80112
303.790.9131 Fax: 303.790.9356 info@smartgrowth.com
CEO & Publisher: Pam Watson Korbel
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