

**SC GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
SMALL & MINORITY
BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**

MARCH 6, 2009

WELCOME TO SC BIZWIZ!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**"CREATIVITY
CURRENCY" 2**
TOM PEYTON

**"SURVIVAL
STRATEGIES
FOR SMALL-
BUSINESSES" 4**
**LASONYA
BERRY "**

**"DEVELOPING
TOMORROW'S
ENTREPRE-
NEURS" 6**

As Director of the South Carolina Governor's Office of Small and Minority Business Assistance (OSMBA), I welcome you to our first edition of *SC BizWiz!* This e-publication brings to South Carolina's entrepreneurial community relevant business articles and tips for your personal life from experts in their respective fields. OSMBA staff and our featured contributors are men and women who are passionate about developing South Carolina's entrepreneurs and their global competitiveness. The Governor's Office of Small and Minority Business Assistance is the State's advocate for South Carolina's small, minority and women-owned businesses, championing your interests in the procurement process.

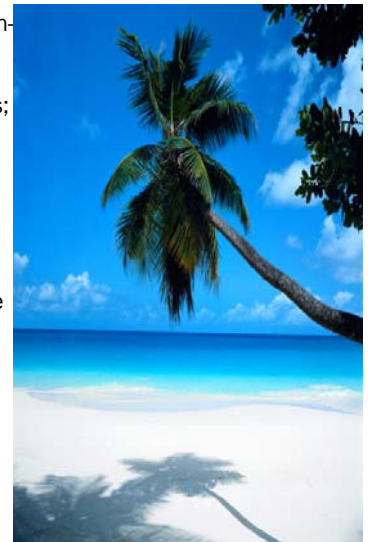
We all have many demands in our lives. However, in order to maintain our professional competitive edge, we must engage in continuous learning. There are many options for us to choose from when selecting the right method of learning. Your options include: attending a traditional class at your local college or university; registering for on-line programs; participating in professional development programs and seminars; or simply making the commitment to read professional books and magazines on a regular basis.

Providing community service and volunteering not only expands your networking circle but also are an opportunity for you to give back to the communities that have supported your business. Dress for Success is a national program that provides suits to women who, for a variety of reasons, need a suit for job interviews or a new job. Contact your local Dress Barn for store locations that are collecting donated suits during the month of March. Planning to plant a garden this spring? Why not plant an extra row and donate it to elderly neighbors, a local shelter or food bank. They will appreciate the fruits of your labor!

We applaud the efforts of South Carolina's entrepreneurs!

Margaret Woodson, OSMBA Director

You are invited to attend the Governor's Office of Small and Minority



A typical day in Carolina!

OSMBA STAFF

- MARGARET WOODSON
- SYLVIA SHINGLER
- DERWIN BRANNON
- 1205 Pendleton St.
- Suite 440
- Columbia, SC 29201
- (803) 734-0507
- (803) 734-5010
- www.oep.sc.gov/osmba

**BUSINESS FORUM AND TRADE FAIR MARCH 25, 2009
COLUMBIA CONFERENCE CENTER**

Business Assistance Business Forum and Trade Fair March 25 in Columbia. This event offers an unparalleled opportunity to network, allowing small business owners an opportunity to showcase their company to hundreds of procurement officials from state, local and federal agencies, plus major corporations.

Workshops will be conducted by the State Procurement Office, City of Columbia, the US Small Business Administration and the General Services Administration. SCORE will provide on-site free, confidential business counseling by appointment. During the afternoon, the SC Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulations will conduct a workshop on the new Immigration Reform Act.

Registration forms and agenda information are available on our website www.oep.sc.gov/osmba.

CREATIVITY CURRENCY

BY: TOM PEYTON

Chances are in this economy you're thinking, being creative is too expensive. You're thinking, I'm losing revenue, my costs are going up and I can barely make it through the year. How can creativity help? **Isn't creativity just for painters, writers and actors?**

The truth is without creative people there would be no iphone, MP3 player, hybrid-car etc. The truth is there would be no business at all. Now, most people think its money that makes the world go round, it's just simply not true. Creativity is **what makes** the world go round.

The most important thing to understand is all businesses starts with a creative idea. Imagine the world today if Henry Ford didn't think, "Gee, I bet I could create the Horseless Carriage". At the time he was looked upon a bit left of center, but he was determined to create his idea. Yes, it took money to develop and nurture the manifesting of the Henry Fords idea. Ford built a car empire on one simple idea □ an idea that changed the world. What if he didn't make the time to pursue it?

Now, you may not be thinking of changing the world. But are you making time to pursue interesting ideas to solve problems? Or are you always in band-aid mode simply seeing the leaks and putting your fingers in the dike.



It all starts with an idea.

HOW CAN CREATIVITY HELP?

The question for you and all business is? Do you embrace creativity as a normal part of the developing of your business? Or do you feel it is a waste of time and expense to encourage yourself and employees to dream? If you answered **yes to the first question and no to the second**, well good for you. I would assume you could tell a few stories of the importance of creativity.

If you answered no to the first and yes to the second question then read on, your business future will depend on it.

Investigating your creativity practices:

When was the last time you ran a brainstorming session for your business when a problem arose?

Do you think, if you want it done right do it yourself?

Do you think, all workers are only there for the paycheck?

Do you believe only some "unique" people are creativity?

How well do you listen to your own "crazy" ideas?

Creativity: The power or ability to invent; ingeniousness, ingenuity, invention, inventiveness, originality.

KNOW WHERE EVERYONE'S CREATIVE GIFTS LIVE.

These are general questions with one simple answer.

All the people that are working for you are creative, including you.

Some may be creative with numbers, some with marketing, some with human relationships and some are just doodling up inventions worth millions of dollars all day long.

Your job as the boss, or the manager, is to know where everyone's creative gifts live. What are their hobbies and interests outside of work? Do they paint, play tennis, sail, garden, cook, remodel homes; the point is to know your employees.

One example of this is years ago I had a very grumpy graphic artist, who only produced maps at a publication I worked for in the Midwest. She had a long history of negativity



FIND WAYS TO UNBLOCK CREATIVITY.

in the department and working with others. The problem was for all her damaging views of the company and the people she worked with, she was always on time and professional with her assignments.

Now, negativity affects the flow of creativity, so I was very concerned about the long-term management of this person.

I decide to take her to lunch and find out what was up. At first she was very cautious about the lunch idea and asked why? I said, doesn't everyone deserve a lunch every now and again? She replied no manager in the twenty years of working there had ever taken her to lunch. I thought to myself, as negative as she is, that didn't surprise me.

The lunch was an eye opening experience; she was pleasant to say the least. I asked her about her ambitions, hobbies and her history at the publication, I was looking for why she was so negative. Half way through the hour lunch she told me she had always wanted to be a page designer, not just a mapmaker. That, in fact, she had a 4-year degree in the Arts from a major university in the area. She was tired of doing the same thing everyday for twenty years.

All her creativity was blocked. Please note this, I'll repeat this, **her creativity was blocked,**

she had stop growing. You know anyone like this in your business?

Blocked creativity is like debt on credit card, the more you use the card more you have to pay for it in the long run. Blocked creative energy in a business, builds on itself until the currency, the creativity, flows like mud.

By the end of the lunch I realized I had to move her forward, if I didn't, her negativity would spread like a cancer in the department and affect my ability to manage the rest of the employees.

So I asked, "What are your hobbies? What do you do for free?"

She smiled ear to ear, "Oh, I love to garden. I'm in my garden and yard every weekend as soon as the weather warms. As soon as I can start planting, I plant." I thought to myself, she loves to garden, remember that.

"Oh yes, you really should see our house," She continued, "I love remodeling, fine furniture and I read at least one book a week.

Fine furniture, remodeling and reading, I see a trend starting here, I thought to myself

PUT PEOPLE IN PLACES FOR THEM TO SUCCEED.

again. I smiling as I watched a real cumbersome employee turn soft, approachable and open.

"What if?" I said slowly, "I started you out designing one page a week, say maybe, the Books page in the Home and Garden section? Nothing big, just a little black and white inside page? How would you feel about that?"

"Are you serious?" She looked at me as if she had won the lottery." Books, is one of the most important pages we produce. I would be honored."

Honored, I thought, how ironic, the current designer would be relieved he didn't have to do it anymore. I just kill two birds with one stone. It's basics management 101 to put people in places for them to succeed. It's is one of my laws to allow people to own their position.

As a side note, the designer went on to design every page in the Home and Garden section and was a tremendous asset to the department. Her demeanor and attitude changed



Re-think how you approach a problem.

Discover: To obtain knowledge or awareness of something not known before, as through observation or study.



to the point she was an inspiration instead of a deep dark hole of draining negativity. And she always did maps with a smile.

Here are some practical ways to increase your creative currency.

1. Practice being open to your own creativity. The more open you are the more open people around you will be. Journal your ideas on a daily basis or regularly set aside time to do nothing but **dream about your company's future.**
2. Build your creativity currency by knowing your employees. Either you or your managers should know some of the **hobbies, dreams and talents** of your workers.
3. Put people in places where they want to succeed. Let them own their growth process.

Tom Peyton has been an awarding Art director, illustrator and designer for newspapers for over 20 years. He is also the vice-president of the international family dive adventure company called Kidsseacamp.com. Mr. Peyton is an active, writer, painter and creative coach in the midlands and the southeast.



SURVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

BY: LASONYA BERRY

Turbulent times are here. Small business enterprises can maintain their buoyancy. Much like how major organizations have to review the internal operations and financial status, small businesses are no exception. As you consider ways to streamline and keep the operations going, it is also the time to look at how to be innovative. There are some key strategies to consider when maintaining through the economic challenges.

Do Not Panic

As the commander and chief, you must remain focus and recommit for the long haul. Ups and downs are not surprising in the financial arena. Ensure your demeanor is calm and maintain professionalism at all times. You want to ensure you have the posture to make sound decisions. Panic is not an option for survival.

We may not have experienced this extent of challenges in two decades but tough times have occurred. How did other small businesses survive? What can you do to gain insight to give you the knowledge to respond within your organization? Consider seeking the assistance of SCORE counselors in your area.

Buoyancy: The ability to recover quickly from depression or discouragement; bounce, elasticity, resilience, resiliency.

PANIC IS NOT AN OPTION FOR SURVIVAL.

They are retired and experienced successful corporate executives and small business owners that are available to act as an advisory committee to provide suggestions to aid in making the best of the current situation. Seeking a business coach can also provide great benefits. You are a major integral part of your business. It is important to position yourself to maintain the level of optimism that is needed to maintain success.

Check Your Financial Gauge

Review your income and expense statements. Look at ways to reduce expenses when revenue has been adjusted. Making payroll and maintaining cash flow has always been a focus of the small business enterprises. Hopefully you have done your due diligence of maintaining a relationship with your banker as re-evaluating your line of credit is of the essence. Increase the focus on reducing your spending to minimize the need for credit. Provide the same focus on your customer's credit. Spend time meeting with them to work out a more aggressive pay schedule.



Increase Innovation

Open your eyes to the possibilities. Re-evaluate your offerings and products. Is it time to start over or do you have the capability to readjust to provide what customers want or will need in the near future. Solving short term needs during challenging times can keep you in business. Consider focusing more on sales rather than long term growth. Solving customer's problems is the reason why you are in business.

Review Internal Operations

Get back to the basics, the fundamentals, and tighten your processes. Before you reduce your human capital capacity ensure you have documented processes to operate if that skill is not there. It is not uncommon for small businesses to forego the operations manual to meet the demands of providing the services or products. Are you doing things the most cost efficient way? Small businesses can learn from the current large organizations' crisis of unnecessary spending. Look at ways to make your operation leaner. Don't forget to review your business plan to adjust with your current strategies.

Market on a Shoestring Budget

GET BACK TO THE BASICS.

Take steps to increase your presence with your customers. Now is not the time to reduce your marketing. At the same time, that does not mean you need to stress over spending more money than you should. There are cost-effective, even free, ways to advertise and promote your business. Blogs, online video, and the tried and true method of "Word of Mouth" are possible solutions. Social networking offers another wave of options such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. The key is to capitalize on present relationships to draw new ones.

Survival is possible and will happen for those taking the time to make the right decisions after doing your homework. Here are some resources to consider: www.us.smetoolkit.org, www.score.org, www.sba.gov.

LaSonya Berry is the CEO of McPherson, Berry & Associates, Inc. The firm is noted for

NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO REDUCE YOUR MARKETING.



"Securing Your Invest in Human Capital" through talent management and organizational development. She is an author, coach, performance consultant, and has served as an adjunct faculty member for major universities. She has an exceptional track record of helping businesses and individuals achieve their full potential. She has received such award as the Trailblazer Award and named one of the 25 Most Powerful Minority Women in Business. Contact LaSonya at 800-325-5269 or via email at lasonya@mcphersonberry.com



Six degrees of separation is the theory that anyone on the planet can be connected to any other person on the planet through a chain of acquaintances that has no more than five intermediaries.



We are on the web:

www.oepp.sc.gov/osmba

SC BIZWIZ

Governor's Office of Small & Minority
Business Assistance

1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 440

Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Phone: (803) 734-0507

Fax: (803) 734-2498

osmba@oepp.sc.gov



The Governor's Office of Small and Minority Business Assistance was established in 1979.

The mission of OSMBA is to promote the growth and development of small and minority businesses as a part of the free enterprise system; thereby enhancing economic growth and development in South Carolina.

OSMBA is the State's advocate for South Carolina's small, minority and women-owned businesses, championing your interests in the procurement process.

OSMBA certifies that a South Carolina business is owned, controlled and operated by a socially and economically disadvantaged minority who is a citizen.

OSMBA provides training and networking forums for businesses to increase their participation in the State's procurement process.

We also provide assistance for agencies and corporations in the development and implementation of their supplier diversity strategies into the procurement and subcontracting process.

M A K I N G I T W O R K W I T H Y O U I N M I N D !

DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S ENTREPRENEURS

I have a personal passion for the development of South Carolina's young entrepreneurs. They love to constantly re-invent themselves, their lifestyle and way of communicating. And no, I don't understand their texting slang!

We can all help develop our future inventors, scientists, artists and entrepreneurs. Contact your local school to see if they have a job shadowing or career day programs. Students will enjoy meeting members of the Women in Science, Engineering or Construction organizations.

We are all familiar with the

lemonade stand concept, one of the first business endeavors for many of us. There are new variations of that tried and true idea.

Why not sponsor a young entrepreneur art show or business expo allowing them an opportunity to sell their wares, display their talent, learn how to start a business and the importance of financial literacy?

How about sponsoring a science essay contest, or a chess club www.uschess.org to help develop thinking skills? Consider donating to the school library an annual subscription for a business newspaper or magazine.

Your effort does not need to be an elaborate affair in or-

der to plant the business seed in their mind.

The National Federation for the Teaching of Entrepreneurship (www.nfte.org) has available through your local middle and high schools programs taught by teachers certified by yesCarolina to teach NFTE classes.

The Future Farmers of America, Boys Scouts, and Girls Scouts have entrepreneurship programs for their members.

The SBA website has several links that can foster the development of tomorrow's business leaders.
www.sba.gov

M.A.W.



Lemonade anyone?