

Business Bullet ~ The Bamboo Principle

I learn from many people that are experts in their field. I get regular emails packed with information from Dave Lavinsky, of GrowThink University. In a recent column, he shared this interesting information:

“After being planted, timber bamboo plants are hardly noticeable above the ground for nearly four years. But once their roots are fully formed around the four-year mark, they can grow a remarkable 80 feet in just six weeks.

The key to their amazing growth is their extremely solid foundation. To learn about how emerging companies can create a solid foundation for their businesses, the other day, I interviewed Ken Lodi , creator of The Bamboo Principle.

What Ken explained to me is that the solid foundation of a company is rooted around its employees. But, importantly, Ken explained that a company's greatest resource is NOT its employees.

Rather, the greatest resource is the TALENT of its employees.

The fact is this - most companies have some great employees that are underutilized. Conversely, great entrepreneurs and business owners are able to figure out what their employees like to do. Interestingly, what they like to do is oftentimes what employees are best at, and what they will achieve the best results at.

Ken equated this to sports. Players on your team, he explained, don't necessarily have to be great at everything. For example, on a football team, the quarterback doesn't need to be a great punter. And the punter doesn't need to be a great quarterback. The problem arises when your quarterback is spending his days punting. The business owner must figure this out and make the requisite changes.

The best way to figure this out is to mentor and coach your employees. You need to figure out what their values and goals are, and modify their roles as needed to leverage them. When meeting with employees ask open ended questions (not just "yes" and "no" questions). For example, ask "if you could spend the majority of your work day doing just one thing, what would it be?"

Employees too must figure out what they value and enjoy and make sure their job roles are in line with this. This is the key to improving employee productivity, satisfaction and performance. It's called "making a vacation out of your vocation."

Both employees and entrepreneurs/business owners should develop a fresh assessment of themselves. What do you/they like to do most in their jobs? What makes you/they say "cool?" And, ask yourself, "if money wasn't an issue and you could do one thing with your work life, what would it be?"

Success requires a solid foundation. Six minute abs don't work. Nothing is fast and easy. You need to work hard to build a solid foundation from which you can build success. And this foundation is your employees. And making sure you are leveraging your employees to their best potential.

So make sure you quarterback is not playing defense. Talk to your employees. Find out what they value and enjoy doing. And create a workplace that supports their values, leverages their talents, and achieves massive and successful growth - just like the timber bamboo. “

I was curious, so I went to www.kenlodi.com, to check out more information. And he offers a course in this theory. Here is what I found on his website:

Course Description:

Timber Bamboo is a miracle grass that has housed, fed and clothed people for centuries. It remains a small shoot for four years before growing a remarkable 80 feet in six weeks. The lesson: sustainable success occurs only after you lay a solid foundation.

The Bamboo Principle illustrates the virtues shared by great companies, high achievers and Timber Bamboo. The mission of *The Bamboo Principle* is simple and significant: change the way we perceive achievement, make time for activities that ensure lasting success, and achieve the strength and versatility of bamboo. Learn how to succeed in the broader context of *responsible achievement* -- individually, and in the *colonies* in which you work.

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This workshop details the virtues of strength and versatility, made possible by a "root system" each participant creates through an interactive workshop. Participants will be able to leverage their strengths, remain versatile through productive and trying times, and enabled to make the greatest contributions in their work and with their teams.

Topics Include:

- The Bamboo Principle
- The Three Virtues of Bamboo
- The Three Myths about Your Potential
- Who has Talent?
- With Whom Should We Communicate?
- Living and Working with Purpose
- Value-based Productivity
- Following Productive Patterns
- Why Bamboo Colonizes
- The Reinvention Gene
- Are You Bamboo?

Outcomes :

Participants have a systematic process for leveraging their talents, remaining versatile, and making the best contribution to their organization, fellow employees, and customers.

Well, there you have it. Another way to think of building a solid foundation for your company that will help you sustain and grow. I know many business consultants, and many of them say the same thing, just taking a different approach. I have to admit, this one got my attention, probably because of my trips to Japan, where there is a lot of bamboo. And bamboo is indeed a fast-growing, sustainable plant. Many thanks to Dave Lavinsky and Ken Lodi, for this interesting information.

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