

# Improving Results

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*By Facing Our Challenges, We Discover Our Potential*

STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS 510-432-7596

## *Measure Your Activity*

*'When Performance Gets Measured,  
Performance Improves'*

This old adage remains true year after year. The question is will you do the measuring that can get you the improved performance that you desire this year? We see time and time again in the sports world how records are broken. They constantly measure past performance in order to set new levels of expectation.



During the year, if you want to achieve improved performance, set up a system to measure all your activities that will insure success for yourself and your organization. It is much like a dashboard on your car.

The dashboard measures the activity of the car to insure that it is performing at its expected levels. So if you want to perform at the levels that will achieve success, set up a dashboard that will measure how you are doing.

The first step in setting up your dashboard is to determine what is important to measure. What sort of activities should you be measuring? The answer is every significant activity that will help you achieve your goal.

*Continued on page two – Measure*

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

- ◆ *Measure Your Activity*
- ◆ *When the going gets tough...*
- ◆ *One Minute Ideas*
- ◆ *Troubleshooting a Stagnant Meeting*

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## *When the going gets tough, the tough do something about it...*

I can assume by now that you have heard that the economy is not doing well. Based on the news, you can probably expect that this will be a difficult financial year for you and your business. So the question remains what you are going to do differently in order to make this the best year you can?



*Let's look at the facts:*

- The Dow is over 40% less than the same time last year
- Car sales are at their lowest in decades
- Housing prices have fallen dramatically
- Unemployment is the highest in 20 years
- **BUSINESS CONTINUES TO BE DONE EVERY DAY IN THESE AND EVERY OTHER MARKET**

It is the last fact that you should concentrate on. Business continues to be done even in the toughest times. The only question is will you be doing the business or will it be someone else? If it is going to be you then you have to change what you have been doing.

Remember, "Keep doing what you have always done and expect a better or different result is clearly the definition of insanity."

Decide to do something different and you will get a different result. If you do not know what to do then seek help. Get a mentor, join a business association, read a business book, take a class at a college, learn a new skill, get creative, hire a business coach or do them all.

***You can be successful in 2009 if you decide to make it successful!***



# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## Where is Your Comfort Zone?

Does the following cartoon speak to you?



### The Choice Question

Are you making choices because they are in your comfort zone or are you making choices to take you where you need and desire to go?

*Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.*

– John F. Kennedy

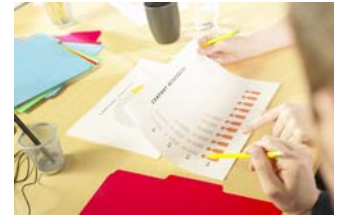


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Continued from page one – *Measure*

As an example, if you are in sales and you make cold calls to generate prospects, then you would want to track the number of phone calls made, the number of times contact was made and the number of appointments generated.



Once you have determined the activities to measure set up your dashboard using a simple form to track your progress. You can use an electronic spreadsheet or simply make tic marks manually. Don't get hung up on what type of method to use, just use a method that works for you. Keep it simple and easy.

Remember, the purpose of maintaining the dashboard is to improve performance. So you'll need to set benchmarks to measure your actual activity. If you need to make four sales appointments a day, then measure it every day and keep track daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually. On a regular basis, review your results to determine if you are performing at the level necessary to achieve your goal.

So in summary, if you want to be your best, begin today by keeping track of those activities that will get you there.

*When people get caught up with that which is right and they are willing to sacrifice for it, there is no stopping point short of victory.*

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

*The art of leadership is saying no, not yes. It is very easy to say yes.*

– Tony Blair

## Troubleshooting a Stagnant Meeting

Be ready to propel a meeting forward when it hits trouble spots. Here are three classic meeting problems and how to solve them:

✓ Problem: *"We always peter out."* Solution: End the meeting on a high note. If 17 minutes into the meeting, you reach the climax of the gathering, stop the meeting there. That way everyone walks out revved up – and more productive.

✓ Problem: *"Everyone's bored out of their minds."* Solution: Make attendees laugh. Here's a trick from Sheldon Arora, CEO of



Esoftsolutions in Plano, Texas: The last person into the room at the monthly companywide meeting has to tell a joke. It loosens up the room and fills the seats on time.

✓ Problem: *"No one retains a thing."* Solution: Do a five-minute recap at the end. You want everyone to leave knowing exactly what they're supposed to do. Clarify potential outcomes, outline next steps and make assignments.

– Adapted from *Escape From Meeting Hell*, Patrick J. Sauer, Inc., [www.inc.com](http://www.inc.com)

