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(D.I.Y.) SMART MARKETING STRATEGIES

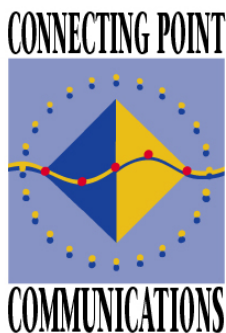
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Plan B — An Entrepreneur Reality: Deal with Challenge, Obstacles

How gaining perspective helps manage change

*“Customer-
friendly. It
reaches every
type audience.”*

Jonics Toyar-
Torres, Generic
OTC Meds



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Do you have a contingency plan for accidents, acts of god or circumstances beyond your control? I had no such thing.

In the blink of an eye my life changed. At 4:30 pm, the sun glinted off my road bike. Twenty miles per hour seemed slow, an easy ride. Life was good.

Two hours later, per hospital regulation, the wheelchair delivered a bruised and battered rider to the curb. Recovery began. Life was still good, just different.

The obstacle presented by my broken humerus bone illustrates what happens when any entrepreneur encounters something that stands in the way or opposes progress. This newsletter shares strategies I used when the unexpected impacted my consulting practice. Everything—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual—changed.

Physical impact

Healing a humerus bone takes time. The treatment involves immobilizing the arm with a sling. Pain, swelling and numbness prevent overuse.

Try typing, putting on a headset, or driving with one hand. Try focusing on your plan when pain seems to be the

only message getting through. The three “R’s” served me well.

Regroup. The physicality of any injury forces an entrepreneur to re-think strategies. Pain creates “now” focus. Instead of worrying about yesterday or imagining tomorrow, the reality of the moment dictates productivity.

Review. Priorities shift as non-essential tasks fall by the wayside. I responded to fewer emails. I stopped creating typed agendas for meetings. The alternative, a few jotted notes, forced me to better summarize my messages.

Rearrange. Once I realized my 140 wpm typing could barely meet a 40 wpm standard, I developed the 30-percenter system. Three of 10 tasks (30%) could get done. The rest could be delegated (contracted out), dropped or delayed.

Mental impact

Until I began what I now refer to as the ‘humerus’ journey, I thought I responded well to adversity. Experience revealed a different reality.

Like many entrepreneurs, I’m impatient. In this situation, I am cranky with myself and those around me because I’ve been forced to slow down. By week three

A project sheet made a visual difference, listing each piece of the task, the time involved for completion, and a due date for every segment.

(forever, in my previous play book), I realized there was no time for pity parties. Each time I moved, or talked with friends about the experience, I fell into the “past” trap.

In order to publish my blog, complete marketing campaigns for clients or think about strategic marketing elements, I had to clear my mind.

I made a project sheet. Looking forward, I established tasks pending for a class I teach in 30 days. Every element, from outlining participant activities to planning slides for the presentation, to writing, typing and proofing handouts went on the list. I estimated the time for each job and gave it a due date. Then, I scheduled it on my calendar.

The immediate clarity was gratifying. I could now see how much time could be allocated to meetings or other projects. The visual calendar solidified my concerns, forcing a more specific overview of my situation.

Emotional impact

I deliberately and strategically took control of my attitude. Instead of bemoaning my fate, I began to visualize the success of my strategy.

Add humor. My friend Jane let me glimpse the value of tall tales for emotional cheer. I happened to be with her when someone asked me what happened. With no hesitation Jane piped up, “She fought an alligator...and won! We’re looking forward to some great handbags.” Laughing, I forgot my arm and realized I felt like a million bucks. Changing my view made all the difference in my frame of mind.

Spiritual Impact

When things seem darkest, it’s important to take another look. Revisit your source of inspiration. One way of doing this is to make a gratitude list. I began to focus on the good. I gave thanks for the fact that I wore a helmet. As a right-hander, I rejoiced in the fact my right side was spared. Above all, I was/am grateful for an incident that caused me to realign my perspective.

Conclusion

All of us have challenges. In the words of Shakespeare, “Sweet are the uses of adversity.”

I found a way to revisit the impact from my accident—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual—and you can too. Adversity is a fact of life. It can’t be controlled. What we can control is how we react to it. Good luck with the smart marketing strategies that you discover as you confront your challenge.

To Learn More

Mary Ellen consults with business owners about do-it-yourself smart marketing strategies.

As a result of her time in reflection, she developed an e-course, “Seven ways to keep customers coming back for more: 30-days to eight smart marketing strategies.” For more information, e-mail maryellen@profitmeister.com.

If this story could be helpful to someone you know, please forward this newsletter to a friend, or encourage them to see more do-it-yourself smart marketing strategies at profitmeister.com.



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