

Communication is the Key to Success

In our business consulting practice, we work with a diversity of types of businesses, as well as the extremes from new entrepreneurs to seasoned C-level executives. I strongly believe in entrepreneurship as well as have faith that the combination of entrepreneurship and technology breakthroughs will lead to a new and better economy, and a better world. Therefore, we offer all parties a free scheduled phone consultation to determine i) we can help raise capital to accomplish their goals and make those dreams come true and ii) in developing a business plan to make that happen if a quality transparent business plan doesn't exist. .

In today's world, communication has most often been reduced to snippets of information where most of Generation X or Generation Y have moved away from email and are stuck in 140 characters for texting. The world is also more random like atoms colliding, with the fact that 90% of people are too busy to answer a phone...myself included. Hence, like I have for a generation, if something is worth doing, it is worth scheduling via email, including calls. Since texting and brevity in our busy lives has become the norm, good communication habits are slowly disappearing. Therefore, I am not fond of texting to say the least and save texting for family and friends when calls and emails are not an option.

I am aware I need more patience, and as a born again Christian, I have become even more aware as being patient in one on one relationships is the right thing to do. Nonetheless, I believe in my big picture and the Lord has plans for me in his big picture (with clients and four renewable/green companies I have a stake, as well as the mysterious unknown). I also believe that time is at least as precious as money, and giving back is more important than both. Hence, my patience in communicating politely, in detail or in a sugar coated manor versus directly when responding to incommunicative emails is and will always be limited and impatient. I have written about time and time management, and still feel that ineffective, incomplete and poor communication wastes more time than anything, and wasting my time takes away from helping others, the ability to achieve and therefore give back.

Sometimes I get dozens of inquiries in a day or week regarding a business plan and/or funding, and the overwhelming majority ask a one sentence question that doesn't position me to be able to help. Many times this is due to a lack of experience, but most of the time it is about poor communication skills that are often a result from a life that has become texts and snippets. Very often, when faced with so many email inquiries that do not allow me to help, but rather ask what is in effect a virtually worthless question to accomplish what may be a worthy goal, I tend to lose my patience and my answers are answered without enough appropriate thought. That said, I apologize to those I might offend in reading this blog as well.

Below are questions that I receive all the time:

1. Can you send me a sample business plan?

There are a few large companies that you can Google and then purchase a template if you want to do a business plan yourself. Unfortunately, I have never seen a template that wasn't extremely flawed. Logically, would a company with a revolutionary technology breakthrough that would serve many market segments require a business plan that would look like one for a coffee shop and fit in the same template? Of course it wouldn't! Hence, we only do custom business plan that each are different in order to meet different goals and therefore contain somewhat similar but different information. Plus, we can't send clients' business plans as examples since that would breach confidentiality with our client.

2. How much will it cost?

Again, all our business plans are custom and clients are not well served when anyone uses a template. There are plenty of people that claim they are experts yet put every business venture within the same box. They complete the same research and spend the same amount of time on each plan and, therefore, can charge the same price. However, they do their customers a great disservice and take advantage of so many entrepreneurs.

3. How can you help me?

I actually do get this question regularly and on my busier days in combination with patience issues, my answer is "I don't know because I'm not a psychic." There are many circumstances that determine if we can help anyone, i.e. what has been invested in the business, the type of business, the background and so many others. The answers will help determine if a client should seek SBA, bank, angel investor or even strategic or venture capital partners.

Many suggest they need a "business plan writer," as in a lone wolf or individual. That thought process diminishes the value of the business plan itself, which is critically important to launching businesses from providing an operational road map to obtaining capital. We have a deep team with team members that have varied experience in different business segments, plus we always have different team members complete the market analysis/business plan than the CPA or MBA that complete our very detailed forecasts. The Super Bowl just ended yesterday, and how many players mentioned in the postgame about it being about the team. Yes, there is no I in team, and there are not many success stories that do not involve a team either.

I understand if this information is not for everyone, as seasoned executives know that you need to establish a scope of work in order to have a deep and professional team complete a highly transparent business plan to achieve their goals.

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