



November 23, 2022

Your People

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

Written by: Kirk Hoaglund, Chief Executive Officer

A business strategy outlines a planned course of action to achieve the vision of the organization as defined through well-formed objectives. Traditionally your written business plan expresses financial goals over a defined timeline. This kind of organizational planning is important. Even more important is when you often refer to the plan: checking your progress, adjusting the plan and objectives to match reality. I'd like to offer another point of view to the business plan.

There are no businesses that succeed without people. Engaged, dedicated, skilled people. That is even more important at Clientek. We are a professional services provider. Our only product is the work output of our people. Our only inventory items are hours waiting to be spent by great people doing great work. That inventory is perishable in the extreme. An hour passed can never be revisited, can never be returned to inventory.

We cannot develop a strategy without understanding, at a minimum, or facilitating, even better, the individual strategies of our people. They are our most important resource, our only source of inventory, our only path to success. Here are a few things we pay attention to.

1. **Your organization has specific financial goals. So do your people.** They have specific, personal goals. Buying a home. Supporting aging parents. Growing a family. Paying for college. Taking a special vacation. You need to know about and care about those things. Huge organizations find that challenging, of course, but have resources to apply general solutions that help their people meet their financial goals. They use demographical data to understand the likely needs of their people. Clientek is small, so we make a point of understanding those needs one-on-one. Caring about their objectives and, when possible, finding ways to help them meet those objectives.

2. **You want to be admired by your customers. Your people want to admire the firm they work for.** Clientek's best marketing is praise from our clients. We work hard to make sure our clients receive great value from a company they can admire. That they can tell others about. You want your people to admire your company. They should love telling others about their job and about the place they work. Their personal strategy includes "love my job". Your job is to make that happen. You need to pay attention to the things your people are looking for in their everyday work. While removing barriers to productivity will help achieve your firm's financial goals, it will also improve job satisfaction among your employees.

3. **Your people need to understand your organization's mission in order to contribute.** "That's above my paygrade" someone might say. "I just do what I'm told" from another. Not good. Your fault. The military uses a great concept called "command intent": a concise expression of the purpose of the campaign, the desired results and expected team progress towards achieving the desired end-state. It is not a list of specific actions each assigned to a specific person. Make sure you regularly and routinely deliver this information, then confirm that it is understood by everyone. Write this into your business plan. Do it, track it, plan it.

We usually spend a good portion of November and December working on plans for the upcoming year. With holidays and extended vacations, these months offer far fewer productive weeks. For our company and for our clients. That's the time to update/rewrite/extend/repair your business strategy. This year, ask your people if they've achieved their goals this year and what they have in mind for next year.

CONTACT US

