



# Tips FROM THE Top<sup>®</sup>

Business insights  
from those at the top  
for those at the top

Published by The Alternative Board<sup>®</sup>

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- **Achieving Your Goals in 2008**
- **Are You Using the 80/20 Rule for Results?**
- **Twin to My Star**
- **Watch Out For Credit Card Purchases**
- **A Focus on Prioritization**
- **Calendar of Events**

## A WORD FROM THE TOP

### Achieving Your Goals in 2008

A stark irony of our Western calendar is that we ring in the year smack dab in the middle of winter – the one time of the year when most people can't rouse themselves to clean their bathrooms, much less make an ambitious, life-changing, behavioral change. Here are some tips to help you achieve your goals and maintain those resolutions:

- **Specify your goal** - don't set open-ended resolutions (e.g. I am going to get healthier) – instead set S.M.A.R.T. goals – Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Responsible and with an associated Timeline
- **Tell others** – your friends, family and business colleagues – they can and will be a tremendously powerful support group.
- **Reward yourself** throughout the process, having set rewards already in mind that are associated with milestones. For instance, if you've set delegating non-essential tasks as a goal for yourself, treat yourself when you reach 10% of that goal.

To learn more about how to attain your business goals for achieving success in 2008, we invite you to attend a complimentary 1 hour online/virtual seminar on “**6 Critical Keys to Business Success.**” Advance registration is required; [click here](#) to learn more.

## HUMAN RESOURCES



THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD<sup>®</sup>

*Achieve Success with Peer Advice and Coaching*



Marcy Turkington

President

Achieve Business Solutions

The Alternative Board NW Jersey & Poconos

[www.AchieveNextLevel.com](http://www.AchieveNextLevel.com)

O 973.940.2020

M 201.370.6031

[MTurkington@TAB-NWJerseyPoconos.com](mailto:MTurkington@TAB-NWJerseyPoconos.com)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Business to Business Board  
Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 8, 2008**

## Are You Using the 80/20 Rule for Results?

Most of us have heard of the 80/20 rule, but few have considered how to use it. Examples of the 80/20 rule include:

- 80 percent of our business comes from 20 percent of our customers.
- 80 percent of our revenue comes from 20 percent of our products or services.
- 80 percent of our complaints come from 20 percent of our customers.
- 80 percent of our sales are generated by 20 percent of the people who do the selling.

It is important for business owners to understand what their 20 percent areas are. It is also important that they help their employees define the 20 percent areas that generate 80 percent of their results. These 20 percent areas are their key result areas.

Key result areas are the priorities on which employees should be concentrating the majority of their time and resources. These are areas of accountability in which each of us must excel to add value to the rest of the organization.

*Bob Heavers, Priority Management, Denver, CO*

### HUMAN RESOURCES

## Twin to My Star

The recent growth of my business has once again made me think about expanding, which means hiring more employees. The nature of my business—search engine optimization—requires a substantial investment in training. Identifying candidates that fit the optimal profile is critical to successful hiring. I prefer to hire search optimizers and account managers that exhibit the qualifications, motivators and personalities similar to those of my most successful employees currently working in those positions. By better understanding my current employees through surveys and work-style assessments, I have a benchmark for evaluating job applicants. When interviewing, I then pursue applicants that match my best employees.

*Larry Stopa, E-Power Marketing, Oshkosh, WI*

### SALES

#### CEO & Business Owner Development Online Seminars 6 Critical Keys to Business Success

**Monday, January 14, 2008**

**4:00 PM**

**Monday, January 28, 2008**

**4:00 PM**

(repeat seminar)

For more information, or to register, please visit our [Events Calendar](#)

#### Business to Consumer Board Meeting

**Wednesday, January 16, 2008**

### QUICK TIPS

#### A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

At my company, we want our operating procedures to be as clear and concise as possible. We're finding that including photographs to show the correct way versus the wrong way saves a lot of time whether it is at the beginning of the process when writing the operating procedures, or answering questions after the fact. The pictures allow us to communicate more clearly than just a word document would.

*Bob Kleszics*

*Harvest Market*

*Hockessin, DE*

## Watch Out For Credit Card Purchases

Watch out for credit card customers. The web-based portion of my business has grown considerably in the last couple of years. In our business, we continuously see new customers purchasing new tools and others sending us tools to sharpen/re-make.

With their continued satisfaction regarding our work, they give us more business. However, at the end of one year I found that I need to exercise more caution when dealing with first-time purchasers.

When I received an order for a small number of new tools/blades, I charged the transaction to what I thought was the purchaser's credit card. Immediately following their first transaction, they began sending us bigger orders, which I also put on the credit card.

During one transaction, he told me he had maxed out his credit and had to use his wife's credit card. I did as instructed and charged his wife's credit card. After \$16,000 in purchases, I was notified by the credit card company that all the cards had been stolen, leaving me out \$16,000! Needless to say, this has led our company to install new policies (extensive background checks, etc.) for all new customers.

*Rick Mand, Integrity Saw and Tool, Fond du Lac, WI*

### MANAGEMENT

## A Focus on Prioritization

My new service manager instituted a prioritization program that speeds up follow through on his technicians' suggestions for needed equipment, new techniques, etc. If it is a "fire issue," he immediately takes care of it.

A "fire issue" is defined as an immediate need which will substantially affect a customer's order. Other ideas, suggestions and requests are placed on the parking lot bulletin board in his office. These ideas are in full sight of everyone, allowing the employees to see that they haven't been ignored.

Items on the board are taken care of as opportunities, budget dollars or time allows. Anyone who suggests an idea that won't be pursued gets a personal response, and if needed, an explanation as to why not. This has been an efficient way to handle suggestions and improve communications—two long standing problems in my shop.

*Heath Brabazon, Brabazon Pump & Equipment, Green Bay, WI*

## Value Proposition

Sometimes the difference between what you and your customer perceive as a value can be very different. Be prepared to discuss your value proposition from your customers' perspectives and make sure you can get the message across in a clear and concise manner.

*Michael Berg*

*Nemo-Q*

*McKinney, TX*

### LINKS OF INTEREST

#### Help us improve our Website!

Complete the survey and get a FREE 14 day subscription to [achievenextlevel.com](http://achievenextlevel.com), including any upcoming eSeminars, and a chance to win a year's subscription to the Premium Content section of site including access to eLearning/webinars: [Click Here!](#)

---

[AchieveNextLevel is going to give a portion of their proceeds to one of 7 great causes.](#)

You can vote for free from now until the end of the year (as many times as you want, but no more than 1 per day). Please forward to friends/colleagues/family and spread the word – it's for some GREAT causes. [Click Here to Vote!](#)

---

[Tips from the Top are now available in a searchable online format to registered AchieveNextLevel users](#), allowing readers to now search for best practices in hiring, marketing, growing and leading their companies

To access the free resource portion of the website, you must [register first](#). Once you are logged in, simply [Click here](#), or go to My Community (from the right hand side of the

**The Alternative Board® brings business owners, CEOs and presidents of non-competing businesses together in boards, where members can present challenges and opportunities to the board for seasoned, practical advice from other owners who understand one another's perspective and contribute meaningful solutions. The boards consist of up to 10 members, meeting monthly under the guidance of a TAB-Certified Facilitator. Over 300 TAB Boards are operating each month across the United States, Canada and South America. Since its inception, thousands of businesses have benefited from membership in The Alternative Board®. For more information on The Alternative Board®, visit [www.TABBoards.com](http://www.TABBoards.com)**

screen) and then My Documents and you can view the Archive of Tips from the Top.



**THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD®**

*Achieve Success with Peer Advice and Coaching*

[www.TAB-NWJerseyPoconos.com](http://www.TAB-NWJerseyPoconos.com)

**Achieve Success with Peer Advice and Coaching**

The Alternative Board® • 110 Birch Drive • Newton • NJ • 07860 • 973.940.2020

If you no longer wish to receive these emails please [click here](#).