



Tips FROM THE Top[®]

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

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Welcome to Our Newest Member!

Please welcome our newest member to area TABBoards—**Steffen Hoffman** of **Cinch Creative Media**. Cinch's branding solutions make use of the latest technologies, media, eMarketing and custom-designed widgets and content systems. Learn more by visiting the website. [Click Here!](#)

HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Growth

Every year during reviews, I pull out the job description and ask the employee to write down on the job description what they started doing that is not on the job description. I then ask them what they stopped doing. This helps me, as the owner, update expectations and job descriptions as we grow and need employees' jobs to adjust to the changing needs of the company. Not only does this set the tone with my employees that their job responsibilities may be altered, but it lets me know what changes may be happening in the company I am not aware of.

Lu Cotta, Annapolis Accommodations, Annapolis, MD

HUMAN RESOURCES



THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD[®]

Achieve Success with Peer Advice and Coaching



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Continuity Bonuses Cut Costs of Staff Turnover

Our labor-intensive competitive business relies on relatively low staffing costs, making it difficult to keep employees who may be attracted by other jobs which pay more— regardless of other aspects of job satisfaction. One way we address this over other motivational techniques is to operate with a continuity and wellness bonus. Our bonus is accumulated and “banked” over each six months of employment, and paid out three months later (i.e., month nine, 15, etc.).

Al Gauthier, Poop Patrol, Toronto, ON

OPERATIONS

Urgent and Important Grid

I was at the Member Conference in Las Vegas, NV, and was introduced to the Dr. Stephen Covey “urgent and important” grid. It divides tasks into four different categories:

- urgent and important (top left)
- urgent and unimportant (top right)
- non-urgent and important (bottom right)
- non-urgent and unimportant (bottom left)

What I have done is to create the “grid” on my desk. I write out my outstanding tasks and projects on cards and then “deal” them out on the appropriate square of the grid. Not only does it help me prioritize, but it also helps me identify what I should be delegating to others or simply not doing at all.

Mark Rickard, Rickard List Marketing, Melville, NY

HUMAN RESOURCES

Getting Honest Interview Answers

Getting honest, unfiltered answers in the interview process is always a challenge. Ask this question to see if the candidate is a right fit for the position: “Visualize that you are in a grocery store with a shopping cart. Think about the shopping cart, what it looks like, the size, color, even the wheels and the basket. Now that you're in the store with your cart, you realize that instead of groceries on the shelves, the shelves are stacked with different types of responsibilities and duties. What do you put in your cart? What stays on the shelf? Why?”

Eileen M. Levitt, The HR Team Inc., Columbia, MD

OPERATIONS

CEO/Business Owner Peer Meetings –

Open to Business Owners, Presidents & CEOs

June 4th, 2008

Lafayette Village

Lafayette, NJ

8:00 am – 9:30 am

June 5th, 2008

Centenary College

Hackettstown, NJ

8:00 am – 9:30 am

[REGISTER NOW](#)

TABBoard Meeting – Board 410

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

Newton, NJ

Exclusive TAB Member Dinner Event

Thursday, June 12, 2008

Sussex, NJ

TABBoard Meeting – Board 411

Monday, June 16, 2008

Sparta, NJ

eSeminar

Beyond the eMyth – Lessons from Michael Gerber

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

[LEARN MORE](#)

QUICK TIPS

A Hidden Source of Low Cost Advertising

I had responded to a bid on eBay for a product. The product was not quite what I wanted so I called the number to discuss my needs. After a short discussion, I asked how much of their product they sold on eBay in a month's time. The gentleman replied, "Virtually none." He went on to say, "I know most customers want more features. So we place a bare bones, low-cost product on the site. They see our number and call us. We sell a lot of product this way. Where else can you place a national ad for \$100 per month?" He believes that a good portion of bids on eBay are probably just advertising.

Heath Brabazon, Brabazon Pump & Compressor, Green Bay, WI

A FINAL WORD FROM THE TOP

Leveraging Your Business Relationships

Most of us work hard to develop good business connections, but how often do you reevaluate them? Business owners should regularly revisit strategic relationships – including banking, legal, accounting/financial and other “supporting” services you may use – to ensure you are getting the attention and support you need. Is this a one way or a two way relationship and if the former – how can you change the balance to better support both sides? One way to do this is to hold an annual meeting during which you review all aspects of your relationship, learn more about the services each of you provides and look for ways to help each other grow. And if you find you're not getting the support you need, look elsewhere, including Peer Support organizations. To learn more about local Peer Boards and The Alternative Board/TAB, join us for an upcoming complimentary business owner breakfast meeting, **June 4th** in Lafayette, NJ or **June 5th** in Hackettstown, NJ.

Marcy Turkington, Achieve Business Solutions, Newton, NJ

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

Headache Tax

We all have customers that demand extra time and attention. Instead of firing them, I levy what I think of as a “headache tax” to compensate for the issues that they raise. If they leave they leave; if they stay at least we are being compensated.

Frank Kelly

Kelair, Inc.

Port Chester, NY

A Personal Touch

Handwritten ‘thank you’ notes are a great way to differentiate yourself from the barrage of e-mails that customers receive. It's all about getting back to the basics of personal touch. It's so easy to do and yet so easy to forget.

Kevin O'Brien

PetRelocation.com

Austin, TX

Business Without Tracking is Like Golf Without Scoring

When I play golf, I keep score as I go, adding up the cumulative stroke total at the end of each hole. I would never wait until the end of the round to tally up my score. So why would a business be any different? I measure progress as often as is practical— how can I change anything if I don't know the score?

Monroe Diefendorf Jr.

Diefendorf Capital Planning Associates

Locust Valley, NY

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



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