



Developing a winning strategy



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Here we are, coming to the end of 2015. Are you where you want to be? What are your roadblocks? How will you know when you have a breakthrough? Here is a summary of some of the things you should be thinking about and acting on:

Your vision statement

- A vision is a statement about what you and your organization wants to become. It is the core of your inspiration and motivation.
- A vision should stretch you and your organization's capabilities and image of itself. It gives shape and direction to the future and answers the question: "Where do we want to go?"

Your mission statement

- The difference between a mission statement and a vision statement is that a mission statement focuses on the present state while a vision statement focuses on the future.
- All mission statements broadly describe an organization's present capabilities, customer focus, activities and business makeup.
- A mission statement serves as a baseline for effective business planning.

Strategy development questions

- Where are we now?
- What do we do well?
- Where do we need improvement?
- Where do we want to be?
- What can we offer to the market to differentiate ourselves?
- How can we add customer value?

- What alternative growth directions should be considered? How should they be pursued?

Personal branding

- Create a personal brand that reflects your genuine strengths.
- Being yourself will not only ensure that you are seen as genuine and trustworthy, but it will ensure that others can access your knowledge and skills because they are comfortable engaging you.
- Each person has unique strengths and talents that set them apart from others in their professional field. The key to a successful personal brand is to identify what differentiates you, to develop these skills and attributes and market them in a way that is authentic.
- Famous American actress and singer Judy Garland once gave this wise advice: "Always be a first rate version of yourself, instead of a second-rate version of someone else."

Marketing/PR

- Write your personal strategy. Write a short and crisp elevator pitch and describe how you want to be known. Define your target market and know its needs.
- Build your network. It's all about building relationships. Build a loyal group of followers.
- Become visible. Attend networking events; use social media. Build a website that is congruent with what you say you provide.
- Start listening. Keep track and up to date on the topic(s) you want to build a profile around and see what other people are talking about and try to differentiate yourself from them. **CPB**