Preparing Your Business for Growth
February 2016
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Being a Business Owner/Leader you realize that operating a business is only part of what it takes to stay in business, preparing your business for growth in the direction you want your business to go is a major and critical aspect of being and staying successful.

We will discuss several avenues that can enhance your maintaining your business momentum by looking forward even as you focus on the present. It is important that you recognize that business forecasting and planning are critical to your maintaining a stable and successful business.

The first thing we must realize is that we are a leader or we must become a leader. In the business environment for us to be effective as a leader, we have to understand and develop our abilities in the area of strategic thinking. Business strategic thinking has been defined as the procedure in which you learn how to make your business vision a reality by developing your abilities in teamwork, problem solving and critical thinking. Strategic thinking is also a process and ability that can enable you to handle change, develop and make transitions, and to actively forecast new business growth possibilities and opportunities.

Once you develop a strategic posture for your business, the Small Business Administration (SBA) in an 18 February 2014 online article entitled, “Forecasting for Growth”, suggested five strategic thinking areas that business owners/leaders should focus on in defining their continued business outcome; those being organization, observation, views, driving forces and the ideal position.

The following paragraphs are how each of those strategic thinking areas were explained by the SBA and how they pertain to forecasting your business growth.

First; the organization of your business involves your employees, the organizational structure of your business and the resources necessary to make it all work. What will your organization look like? What type of structure will support your vision? How will you combine people, resources and structure together to achieve your ideal outcome?

Second; when you are looking down at the world from an airplane, you can see much more than when you are on the ground. The observation area of strategic thinking is much the same in that it allows you to see things from “higher up.” By increasing your powers of observation, you will begin to become more aware of what motivates people, how to solve problems more effectively and how to distinguish between alternatives.

Third, how we see or the views we determine are simply different ways of how we think about something. In strategic thinking, there are four viewpoints to take into consideration when forming your business strategy: the environmental view, the marketplace view, the project view, and the measurement view. Views can be used as avenues to enhance how you think about outcomes, identify critical elements and adjust your actions to achieve your planned outcome.

Fourth; as in all plans there are what are called driving forces that will make your ideal/plan outcome happen? You need to know what is your company's vision and mission. As the primary developer and leader of your business plan, at this time driving forces usually lay the foundation for what you want people to focus on in your business (such as what you will use to motivate others to perform). Some examples of those driving forces might include: individual and organizational incentives; empowerment and alignment; qualitative factors such as a defined vision, values and goals;
productive factors like a mission or function; quantitative factors such as results or experience; and others such as commitment, coherent action, effectiveness, productivity and value.

Having read and worked through the four previous discussed areas of the strategic thinking process, you should now be able to define your forecasting growth position. Now, the fifth and final area of strategic thinking in your developed forecasting plan should include: the conditions you have found to be necessary if your business is to be productive; the niche in the marketplace that your business will fill; any opportunities that may exist either currently or in the future for your business; the core competencies or skills required in your business; and the strategies and tactics you will use to pull it all together.

As a business owner and leader with a continuing effort to be and stay competitive in business, you must develop this strategic thinking ability! Based on information from the previous paragraphs, we paraphrase: businesses using good strategic thinking have a competitive advantage over businesses using less skilled forecasting of growth decision making procedures; it’s the only way to think at work—because it helps you get the best possible results.

If you have a true desire to be a successful government contractor, then you need to decide what is important for your company and prioritize accordingly. Taking the information from this article can be the first step in your journey to be more successful in forecasting your business growth as strategic thinking helps you step back, examine your thought processes and make them more effective. You’ll ask the right questions, challenge assumptions and see and understand others’ viewpoints with clarity.

Remember; the best opportunity for success in any market comes from a deep understanding of what you know and how that knowledge is used.

We at APAC sincerely hope this article provides you with some information and guidance. If you truly desire to be a successful business, then it is up to you to decide what is important for your company and prioritize accordingly.