

# McCarthy Strategies May 2009 Newsletter

## Driving Revenue

Memorial Day marks the start of the summer driving season with all that entails - vacations, family reunions, moving our college kids out of dorms and later back into their dorms, and moving our recent grads (hopefully) into their new digs. America hits the road! Along with the traditional Memorial Day fun come traditional headaches: higher gas prices, highway congestion, and concerns for driving safety.

After some thought it has occurred to me that driving our cars safely and driving revenue growth in our businesses actually have some principles in common. Smith System, a global leader in driver safety training for many years, offers the following guidelines for driver safety. They refer to these as The Five Keys:

- **“Aim** high in steering” - avoid collisions by seeing, evaluating and acting upon all the information available. Keep the focus above the traffic immediately in front and above the internal dashboard.
- **“Get** the big picture” - fewer mistakes are made when you have the big picture.
- **“Keep** your eyes moving” - proper scanning techniques separate safe drivers from those who make costly and daily errors.
- **“Leave** yourself an out” - all that separates drivers from a collision is space. Use space to your advantage.
- **“Make** sure they see you” - seek eye contact with others and use your warning devices at the proper time.

Interestingly, in South America the word “to drive” is *manejar* from the same Latin root as manage. We can easily use the words managing and driving interchangeably when we talk about driving revenue growth. Great managing and driving skill is required to increase revenue and profits while maneuvering through our current economic gridlock.

Lessons learned from Smith System’s Five Keys can be reapplied as the Five Keys to Driving Revenue:

- **Aim** high - plan for profitable top-line growth by carefully evaluating all available data.
- **Get** the big picture - understand what the market place is looking for and offer it. Or better yet, figure out what the market doesn’t realize it needs yet, and offer that!!
- **Keep** your eyes moving - be aware of external competition and trends in your industry along with your dashboard on internal metrics.
- **Leave** yourself an out - offer multiple products or services, drop poor performers, grow profitable ones, and always have a backup plan! Develop a “plan B” to cover the risks you foresee in hitting your goals.

- **Make** sure “they” see you - if you don’t have your sights firmly set on your customers, they won’t be able to see you ! And if they don’t know you’re there, they can’t buy from you.

Some hard questions to ponder as we drive our businesses:

- \*How do we insure that our customers can rely on us to deliver the goods?
- \*What are competitors doing? What other suppliers are your customers using?
- \*Are we successfully avoiding distractions by focusing on the most important tasks?
- \*Where are we going and are we getting there in the most efficient manner?
- \*Have we considered risk management and what could go wrong along the way?

Driving is fun. So as you safely navigate the summer driving season, let the experience remind you of ways to profitably grow your business. Let’s get out in front of our customers as the economy improves. Commit to exploring new areas of opportunity instead of remaining in a safe protected environment. Have a clear destination in mind, map your route, keep your eyes wide open and make sure people know you are out there. Above all, move forward with confidence!

These can be guiding principles as we manage our businesses throughout the hectic, summer driving season.