



January 2015 - Issue #107

Welcome from Lisa

This has been one of the busiest Januarys I've had in a long time although I cannot complain:

- My parents are hanging in there, and I've been able to see them every 3 weeks or so
- I've partnered with several clients on exciting projects which have achieved bottom line results
- My APICS chapter has had some great success with tours of Amazon and partnering with CSUSB to offer a SAP bootcamp (thanks to our wonderful Board of Directors)
- I'm leading the APICS West Coast student case competition (with a BIG thanks to Ellen Kane for her much-appreciated expertise and unrelenting support)
- Dr. Kash Gokli and I facilitated our 3rd Harvey Mudd executive roundtable and had engaging discussions on the skills gap.
- And, I taught my first APICS CSCP (Certified Supply Chain Professional) class earlier this month (thanks to Sue Franks for all her support).

Now you see why I slept in this morning....



I wanted to highlight the West Coast Student Case Competition, as we already have a full house of teams competing from not only our Southwest district but also from Northern California, Houston, Utah, Oregon, Mexico and Hong Kong. I'd like to invite you to attend the presentations on Fri, Feb 20th from 6-10pm in Claremont. If you are interested, learn more and register [here](#).

The day prior to this event, I am thrilled that I will be a panelist at the Manufacturers Summit on "Channel Disruption & Marketing: Same Day Delivery and How the Changing Distribution Systems Will Impact Business".

IN THE NEWS

Please check out my latest speeches, articles & quotes:

- Featured in another **tED Magazine's** article "Succession Planning Takes Talent" - check it out!
- Quoted in *PMI's* article, "Rethink Talent Retention", in *The Customer Experience Report's* "The Killer KPIs that Every Contact Center Executive Should Watch Closely" and *SAC's* "2015 Expected to be Year of Ongoing Opportunities for Business Growth".
- Published "Project Priorities for the New Year" in *Project Times*.

Also, mark your calendars for May 2nd - my APICS chapter's spring executive panel and networking symposium on "Innovation: A Must for Manufacturing and Distribution Success" will be at Eagle Glen in Corona.

Enjoy,
Lisa

Email
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P.S. Please think of me if you should know anyone who would like to connect business objectives with results.

Profit through People

Are You Planning for Failure?

Are you planning for failure? I imagine no one thinks they plan for failure; however, I see it happen more than you'd think. Instead, plan for success, and success will follow.

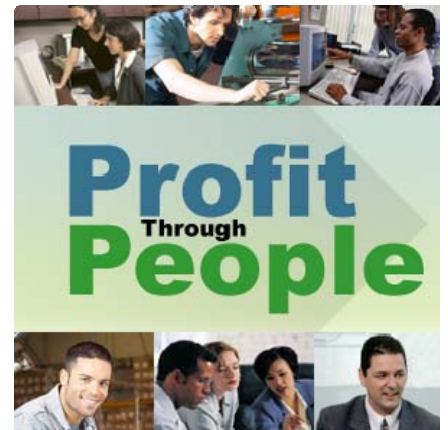
Have you ever called an important contact and were surprised when he/she answered the phone - and you didn't know what to say? Don't despair...we have all been there. This is an example of planning for failure on a small scale. As easy as it is to do with this, unfortunately, I also see countless examples of this in everyday work situations.

For example, if you are planning an important meeting, do you plan for success or failure? Do you expect your sponsor to show up to support you? Plan as though he or she will! Even if he doesn't, run the meeting as though he did. You'll be surprised how this type of simple action will contribute to success.

The same holds true for if you are planning an event. Do you expect to "fill the house"? Or are you worried if there will be only a handful of people in attendance? Be willing to plan for success. Guarantee food for a full house. Bring the best speakers. Assume you will find a way to achieve success, and you will. What you think will affect whether you plan for success or failure. At my APICS Inland Empire's first executive panel and networking symposium, we were not sure if we would find enough panelists, fill the audience etc. It was scary as we had to commit funds - and, worse yet, we were concerned as to whether we'd lose face if the event wasn't successful. Instead, we planned for success, and were thrilled that we had 80 people (four times our previously typical program audience) turn up for an amazing panel discussion.

In another example, if you have a recommendation you feel strongly will help your company, will you plan for success to gain approval? Or, will you not ask to meet with the CEO or Board of Directors because you think he/she is too busy or not interested? Think about your idea. Is it worth-while? If so, plan for success. Be persistent. Bring your peers and manager in the loop. Present why it is a "win" for them - put it in their best interest. Be willing to push for your recommendation, even if you risk hearing "no". If you do not ask, you will definitely not succeed.

Lastly, in another example, if you know you have a good chance to "win" new business; however, in order to keep it, you have to maintain service levels over 98% which would require spending money not currently approved in your budget, will you? Or will you hold off to try to make both work (win the business and maintain service without spending money), even though the chances are slim? Plan for success. Go to the appropriate people to gain budget approval. Clearly communicate the potential return



on investment. Be willing to go to your Board of Directors if required to gain upfront approval. Assume compelling logic will be sufficient. The worse that could happen is that you hear "no".

it is easy to unintentionally plan for failure. The main way to ensure you plan for success instead of failure is to maintain focused on the end goal. What do you want to achieve? Why? How can you make sure it's achieved? Develop plans and stick to them. Be persistent. Be bold. Be willing to invest in success. Be willing to ask for help. Plan for success. Success will follow.

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Eagle Eye

Benchmarking for Success

How do you know whether you are reaching your company's potential? Is \$2 million dollars profit good? Well, it sounds good..... However, the key is really in comparison to what should be achievable. One way to understand these objectives is through benchmarking.

Benchmarking helps put your performance in perspective with other companies in your industry - and ones that can provide a reasonable comparison. How well do you perform vs. others? How well do you perform vs. other sites in your company? Internal benchmarking can result in a goldmine. Gather this information and put it to good use.

Find areas of opportunity. What are your strengths? Can you build upon them? In which areas are you in the "middle of the pack"? How can you find ways to improve? Go to trade organizations. Read industry journals. Ask communities.

If you don't know where you stand, how do you know where to focus? Benchmarking can be a critical component. I've recently incorporated this type of focus into my *Profit Chain Accelerator Program* as it is repeatedly proven cornerstone to success. [Email me](#) for more information.

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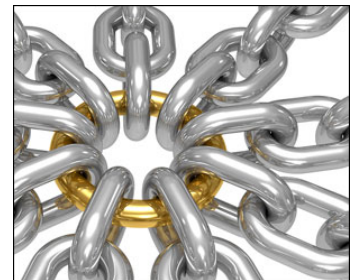


The Strongest Link in Your Supply Chain

Often Overlooked Value of Production Planning

Production planning is often overlooked as to its true value. Perhaps it is because it is often delegated to lower-skilled resources? Or perhaps it is because it is in the center of competing priorities and there are so few expert communicators who can explain it's significance? Whatever the reason, consider increasing it's priority.

I've found that the best production planners can have a HUGE impact on the key results of the business - service levels (and ability to grow the business), inventory levels (and resulting cash flow), and margins. Since I've been involved with planning since my first job at Coca-Cola Enterprises to the vast majority of my client projects, I have worked with more planners than most will meet in a lifetime. It always seems to be the best planners who are overlooked. After much observation, I've found that if a planner is able to seamlessly manage customer needs, sales expectations and inventory goals while also optimizing manufacturing efficiencies, they are overlooked because they are not solving a crisis. Instead, it looks



"easy". And, they are probably quite focused and busy keeping all these balls in the air, and so they are less likely to be skilled at politics.

Think about an area that seems to run smoothly without a lot of drama of missing materials, upset supervisors, and the like. You might just have one of these gems in your midst. Find out what can contribute to their success and supply it. I am working with one of these folks currently, and her needs are simple - she wants to learn, have her ideas listened to, feedback provided and to be appreciated. Talk about an easy win!

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[The \\$1 Million Dollar Planner](#)

The Systems Pragmatist The Power of Dashboards

I've been working with a rapidly growing, smaller client that sees the power of dashboards. I have to tip my hat to them as most \$50 and \$100 million dollar companies miss the true value in dashboards. They think ahead and results follow.

In today's information overloaded society, leveraging dashboards to make sense of data for rapid decision-making can be priceless. What trends are emerging? Are you 75% through the quarter, and a key customer has only placed 30% of his typical orders? You better be on top of this to be proactive! Which items are profitable? I find that many clients have "A" customers with "C" margins; however, without easy-to-access dashboards with this type of information, the vast majority spend 80% of their effort to gain pennies of profit.

Imagine what you could do if you leveraged strengths and knew which items were most profitable and which customers were most profitable? How would re-focusing a top performing employee on one of these customers or product lines affect your business performance?

Consider implementing simple dashboards for your business. Start by determining what is important. Identify which data is relevant. Present it in a dashboard. And, dig in.

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[Watching Metrics Trends](#)



Connections

Connections and relationships are the 80/20 of success!

THIS MONTH'S REQUESTS:

- My APICS Inland Empire Chapter is hosting our Spring Executive Panel & Networking Symposium on "Innovation: A Must for Manufacturing and Distribution Success" on May 2nd. We are looking for exceptional panelists. Please [contact us](#) with ideas.
- My Ontario ProVisors group of trusted advisors is looking for an labor attorney, a real estate attorney and a commercial real estate broker. Please [email me](#) with your referrals.



- An excellent Supply Chain Manager with expertise in inventory management, systems, business processes, and project management with a specialty in aerospace in the Wichita area is looking for her next career opportunity. Please contact [her](#) with referrals and ideas.
- One of my colleagues is looking for a consultant to implement Accounting, Inventory and ERP Software, plus other productivity and reporting technology. Position requires minimum of three years experience with software implementation/training projects involving inventory transactions. The ideal candidate will have solid understanding of modern office technology and basic understanding of bookkeeping debits and credits. Hands-on experience with ERP software from Sage, Microsoft or QuickBooks add-ons for inventory management a plus. Open to discussion of full-time or part-time. If interested, please email resume or equivalent summary of experience to Bob Michlin, bmichlin@mbsg.net. Emails only please.

NOTE: To submit an item for this section, please send me an email with a short description of your needs and an email address. Please note that NOT all requests will be published as it must fit the guidelines and align with the Profit through People brand.

What is *Profit through People*?

I've used the Profit through People brand since my newsletter's inception in 2006 as it resonated with me. Although I consult on topics within each of my service lines--Eagle Eye Strategic Focus, The Strongest Link in Your Supply Chain, the Systems Pragmatist & Profit through People--I find that people are key to success in every situation. If you are interested in elevating your business performance, please [contact us](#).



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