

SPARKING IDEAS AND ACTION IN YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS
HARMONY COACHING & CONSULTING

The Interview Process is a Two-Way Street

While marketing your company during a recession is just as important as doing so during good economic times, so is taking the correct approach to the interview process.

At no time is the interview process a one-way street. In other words, at no time should a candidate's time be considered less valuable than yours, especially if the candidates you seek are the best in the industry. Remember, the candidate is interviewing the company at the same time that company officials are interviewing the candidate.

Making a connection

A common mistake in a down economy is to assume that there's urgency on the part of the candidate, that they'll be grateful for whatever time you can give them. That might be true of those candidates who are unemployed. However, the true superstars—the candidates you're **really** seeking—are more than likely gainfully employed at the moment, no doubt because of the very skills that you covet.

Continued on page three – Interview Process



Do Your Employees Have Opportunities to Become Engaged?

Providing Opportunities for Employee Engagement

Employees who have a passion for what they do are practically self-engaging. In other words, they seek out reasons to stay engaged in their job and with the company. But what about those employees who aren't quite as passionate, for whatever reason? The fact of the matter is that you can lead them down the road to engagement just by providing *opportunities* for them to do so.

Many times, employees don't need a reason to become engaged. What they really need is the chance to become engaged. Below are five ways in which you can provide opportunities to do just that.

- **Recognize the accomplishments of employees and celebrate them** – Both parts of this initiative are important. By both recognizing *and* celebrating, you not only increase engagement and retention, you also build a greater sense of camaraderie among the members of your team.
- **Celebrate traditions within the organization** – This is another way in which to increase both engagement and camaraderie. This could be an annual awards dinner, or it might be something as simple as a summer picnic or Christmas party.
- **Initiate a mentoring program** – Once again, you're accomplishing two goals at the same time. With this initiative, you're facilitating a knowledge transfer between employees, in addition to bolstering engagement and retention.
- **Create a cross-training program** – Most employees want to sharpen their skill set and increase their abilities.

Continued on page two – Opportunities

Inside This Issue

1. *The Interview Process is a Two-Way Street*
2. *Providing Opportunities for Employee Engagement*
3. *How Important are Small Businesses to the U.S. Economy?*
4. *Business Process Improvement for Better Results*

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Continued from page one – *Opportunities*

They also want to know that they have room for advancement within the company. This will accomplish both objectives.

- **Involve employees in decisions (whenever possible)** – Of course, this might not be feasible in all situations. However, by involving them in the decision-making process, they'll feel more a part of the company.

Evaluate your company and the culture that it offers. Are you providing opportunities like the ones listed above? Are there areas in which you should improve or make a more concerted effort? By simply providing opportunities for your employees to become engaged, you might be surprised by how readily and easily they do so—with no further prompting from you.

If you have any questions about this article, or about how we can help you with your current performance, leadership, and/or hiring needs, send an email to bburtch@harmonycc.net.

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How Important are Small Businesses to the U.S. Economy?

Small firms –

- Represent 99.7 percent of all employers
- Employ half of all private sector employees
- Pay 44.3 percent of total U.S. private payroll
- Generate 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually over the last decade
- Create more than 50 percent of non-farm private gross domestic product (GDP)
- Are employers of 39 percent of high tech workers (such as scientists, engineers, and computer workers)
- Are 53 percent home-based and 3 percent franchises

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration

Business, more than any other occupation, is a continual dealing with the future; it is a continual calculation, an instinctive exercise in foresight.
~ Henry R. Luce

Business Process Improvement for Better Results

Business Process Improvement (BPI) is a structure which allows companies to know the process to getting better and more efficient results to make money. This is a business dream to always know the best method to increase your bottom line. When a business wants to increase revenue, a business process improvement strategy is very important to research. There are many companies who have tried this in the past and have succeeded. The basic elements in the business process improvement plan are:

1. Understand your company's business current process –

This is what you need to know before even thinking to change or modify any business process improvement plan that has already been implemented. Knowing what the current situation of your business is right now is very important for the success of the plan. If you don't have an idea of what they are, then your planning will not succeed. Always know this before by looking into your company's archives. This could be achieved very easily if you know where to look.



2. Road map – Having a plan of action, or “road map” to what is going to happen is vital to any business process improvement that you might have for your company. When you have a plan, the process will go a lot smoother and you won't have to explain yourself over and over again. Having a structured road map of your plans is very important if you want your plans to succeed. It can be difficult to get the right plan at first. Remember to always look to other avenues as well.

3. Organized structure – Organization is important to any business process improvement strategy. If you are not organized in your thoughts or plans then you are in danger of losing your business. Organization is the cornerstone of business operations and should be already implemented in your business before thinking of having business process improvement strategies in your mind. Have your ideas organized or you cannot run a correct improvement plan.

Continued on page four – *Process Improvement*

Continued from page one – *Interview Process*

Remember that in times such as these, candidates (including superstars) assume a “hunker down” mentality. That is, they become more adverse to risk, and this mentality most certainly applies to their employment situation and their career. That’s why attention to the interview process is crucial to securing the talent of the very best employees.

When you interview a superstar candidate, you should strive to do more than just accurately assess their skill set and their potential for fitting into the company culture. You should also strive to **make a connection** with the candidate and build a sort of camaraderie or rapport with them. The reason? The candidate needs a *very good reason* to make the jump to a new company.



Giving them a good reason

As mentioned above, all candidates – including superstars – are avoiding risk at the moment. There’s a mental block that exists, no matter how good the opportunity is or might seem to them. Candidates are looking for reasons **not** to make a move. That’s why it’s critical for companies seeking to stock their teams with the best talent available to give that talent a **good reason** for doing so.

Analyze your interview process. Are you marketing yourself to each person interviewed? Are you giving tours of your facility to those candidates who stand out from the rest? What reasons are you giving to superstar candidates to convince them to take advantage of your opportunity?

Your answers to these questions might just be the deciding factor in how prepared you are to take advantage of the good times that ultimately lie beyond today’s challenging economic environment.

If you have any questions about this article, or about how we can help you with your current performance, leadership, and/or hiring needs, send an email to bburtch@harmonycc.net.

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Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal. ~ Henry Ford

FREE Software Program: *The Reading Log*

The Reading Log software program allows you to keep track of all of the books you read and can be used for other tracking applications.

I created this to track my son's summer reading and decided to offer it for **FREE**.

The Reading Log is simple and easy-to-use! You'll be up-and-running before you know it.

Your Kids Will Love IT! [Click Here](#)

Or copy & paste http://newsletterville.com/software/software_solutions.htm into your internet browser to download the software



One Minute Ideas

Web Site of the Month



Using Picasa and Picasa Web Albums together, you can now organize, edit, and upload your photos to the web from your computer in quick, simple steps. Arrange your photos into folders and albums and erase their blemishes using powerful editing tools in Picasa. Then use Picasa Web Albums to share those perfected photos online with family, friends, and the world.

Check it out at

<http://picasa.google.com/>

THE JOKE'S ON YOU by Phil Ryder & YOU



"That depends. If you are pouring it, it's half full. If you are drinking it, it's half empty."

- Tracy Gillespie • Elmira, Ontario, Canada

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Continued from page two – *Process Improvement*

4. **A list of stakeholder's strategies** – Get to know what the people who are in charge of the money are thinking. Whenever a business needs to change or modify a current business process improvement plan, it is best to determine where your money is coming from and where it is going to. Stakeholders to your company are very important and need to be treated as an important asset to your company. Informing them of any changes or modifications is always appreciated.



When you have understood all there is about business process improvement, then you are ready to get started. There are many aspects to how this can benefit your company. With higher revenue each month and stronger clientele, you can advance into the next year without any problems. It is very hard to find a plan that works without hard work. Always remember this when you are ready to throw in the towel. Be confident that you are making a beneficial investment into your company, and you will be able to reap the benefits when you get started with the business process improvement plan.

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*In the absence of clearly defined goals, we become strangely loyal to performing daily acts of trivia.
~ Unknown source*

Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
The Coaching Clinic® is a two-day workshop for executives, managers and leaders to experience and learn coaching skills and competencies.	Sept 16 & 17	8:30am – 5:00pm	www.harmonycc.net/coachingclinic.asp
Essentials of Human Resources Certification	Oct 2 & 9	8:30am – 4:30pm	http://umce.memphis.edu/
Leading at the Speed of Trust™ is a two-day workshop for anyone interested in increasing revenues, decreasing costs, enhancing/repairing relationships, or improving their credibility with employees or customers.	Oct 20 & 21	8:30am – 5:00pm	Email: info@harmonycc.net

