

the white space

Issue No. 1



the monthly newsletter of
momentum

Feature Article

Slow Down, You'll Get There
Faster

Question of the Month

What Planning Practices Have
You Benefited From?

Upcoming Workshops

How to Have Your Best Year Yet
Oct. 21 - Marina Bay

Momentum Services

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welcome!

Welcome to MOMENTUM's inaugural issue of **The White Space!**

Establishing a monthly newsletter has been a long-term goal of mine, and I am pleased to present you with the first edition. My hope is to offer solid business advice, thought provoking articles, and information on upcoming events in a monthly format. My plan is to keep the newsletter brief, entertaining and informative. I hope you enjoy them.

The name of my newsletter comes from a favorite story of mine about a young man who interviewed the classical pianist Arthur Rubinstein. The interviewer asked Mr. Rubinstein how he played the notes so well. He answered, "lots of people play the notes as well as I do. It's how I play the space in between, the White Space."

The black space contains the things that we know, and the gray space holds the things we don't know that we don't know. This newsletter is committed to uncovering the white space—the space in which nuance, leverage and value live.

I invite you to join me in creating a community of people interested in expanding the white space. Your comments on what I publish and your suggestions about things to publish are welcomed. And if you like what you see, feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues and associates by clicking in the **Forward Email** link at the bottom of the newsletter.

You have received this first issue because you are a part of my database. If you wish to continue receiving this newsletter, you do not need to do a thing—each issue will arrive in your inbox every month. If at any time you wish to be removed from my list permanently, please click on the **SafeUnsubscribe™** link at the bottom of this email.

- Paul Cooperstein

feature article

Slow Down, You'll Get There Faster

*Alice came to the fork in the road.
"Which road do I take?" she asked.
"Where do you want to go?" responded the Cheshire cat.
"I don't know," Alice answered.
"Then," said the cat, "it doesn't matter."*

- Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

Do you know where you want to go? Do you make the best choices when you find yourself at strategic crossroads? When you face those moments in which the future holds significant risk, opportunity, or both, do you make the wisest decisions?

Is sorting out what tomorrow will look like and how you will get there a part of your business activities? As we draw to the end of another year that has passed at the speed of light, I am here to tell you to Slow Down, You'll Get There Faster! There are many practices in which we can engage to achieve better results. The focus of this article is the practice of planning.

WHAT IS PLANNING?

Effective strategic planning is a process that produces an answer to the questions: Where are we now? Where are we going? How will we know when we get there? Embedded in these three core questions lies a deeper question:

"Who do we need to become in order to succeed?"

Shifting the emphasis from creating a plan of steps to take or things to do, to *creating a new way of being*, creates the foundation for clarity, alignment and resourcefulness. These combined forces produce leverage for the organization. (Remember Archimedes who said, "Give me a lever long enough and I can lift the world".)

HOW CAN PLANNING BE EFFECTIVE?

To be truly effective the planning process needs to be simple, trackable, repeatable, and incorporate a strong sense of accountability.

The last piece of this, the accountability, is what will determine the overall success and must be felt by all involved. All members of the team must be fully committed to the plan, and ultimately it's success.

Many companies fall prey to one of two classic traps. They create a vision or mission statement that, within a short period of time, is totally forgotten and thus has no lasting impact on their organization's direction. Or, they spend time producing "strategic plans" that consist merely of lists of things to do. World-class, cutting edge companies take the time to engage in planning regularly. They value their planning time, and they don't view it as an expense.

THE WHITE SPACE

Strategic planning begins with understanding that great results (profits, growth, reputation, etc.) come from a process consisting of four separate parts. The first part is where we review our concerns and decide to do something (the "start" phase), the second part is the production (the "doing" phase), the third part is getting things finished (the "completion" phase), and the fourth part, which is all too often overlooked, is the acknowledgment (the "planning" phase). All too often we go through steps 1, 2, 3 and omit the fourth step.

Regularly engaging in reviewing, learning and planning produces unparalleled ROI. It is here that we unleash the power of the "white space".

Of the minority of business people who take time to plan, even fewer take the time to revisit the plan to ensure it is on track. We have become so busy *doing things* to make money that we have become blind to the value of regularly stepping back from our every day business to appreciate all of what we've done, learn the lessons, and grow from them.

Too many of our organizations go straight from finishing a project to starting the next one, without taking the time to incorporate a period of acknowledgment, feedback, review and learning—they overlook brainstorming new possibilities as a result of these insights. In the midst of our hectic lives, it doesn't surprise me that we are so BUSY that we aren't as SUCCESSFUL as we could be if we SLOWED DOWN and took the time to plan. We are so smart that we outsmart ourselves. Imagine what you could accomplish if you were smart enough to take the time to plan, review, and plan again.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

If the idea of planning and follow-through is uncomfortable, you are not alone. Remember when you first began to use a word processor or a spreadsheet. New practices that can produce profitability are often the things we resist. We think they "take too much time" and "aren't worth the cost" when the opposite is the case.

Take some steps in this direction and see if, with some regular practice, you don't find the profitability.

question of the month

Each month, I will pose a question to you, and ask that you participate in creating a learning community by contributing a response when and if you have something of value to share with the 2,000 people that will be receiving this newsletter. I will publish responses in next month's newsletter. This month's question is:

What planning practices have you benefited from?

Remember, I welcome your thoughts and comments on this and any subject of interest to you. Please feel free to contact me at paul@businessmomentum.org or call me at 617.328.7333.

upcoming workshops

How to Have Your Best Year Yet

Join us on Thursday, October 21, at Marina Bay for a special Lunch & Learn Presentation presented by Paul Cooperstein of MOMENTUM: **How to Have Your Best Year Yet**. In this luncheon seminar you will learn to identify what you really want to accomplish over the next twelve months, and begin to create a path for achieving those goals.

Best Year Yet is an annual planning and implementation system that produces RESULTS year after year. The *Best Year Yet* system teaches companies and the people within them to generate their best year yet, year after year. We create an atmosphere where each member of the team is encouraged to participate in an environment of open, honest cooperation and communication. Together we develop a plan, which is original and personally crafted by your employees; and we work together to bring the plan to life over the next twelve months. Clearly stated, we work together to accomplish all of the goals the group sets for the forthcoming year. Get ready for your Best Year Yet!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The workshop will begin promptly at 12:30 pm. There is a \$25 charge to attend, and lunch will be served. MOMENTUM is located at Marina Bay, 500 Victory Road, 2nd floor, North Quincy, MA 02171. Upon arrival, please check-in on the second floor at the Amity Insurance reception area. Parking is available onsite at no cost. Please RSVP to Valerie McSorley at Avant Garde Events at 617.935.9040 or via e-mail at Valerie@AvantGardeEvents.com.

momentum services

MOMENTUM is a business development firm that produces breakthroughs in profitability, results and organizational well being, helping you to create

power, passion and profitability in your organization. Services include operational planning, executive coaching, facilitation and reconstructive mediation.

Our Corporate headquarters are located at Marina Bay, 500 Victory Road, Quincy, MA. 02171. For additional information call 617.328.7333, email paul@businessmomentum.org, or visit our Web site at www.businessmomentum.org.

next month

As we start to head into the holiday season and focus on giving THANKS, next month we will be talking about APPRECIATION. Start appreciating yourself and those around you right now and stay tuned.

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