

Our Turnaround Story in the Crisis

We all might consider turning to a higher power to teach, guide and inspire us in this formidable economic crisis. This may seem obvious to some but may not be put into action. My business has dropped 50% since March 2008 and we were headed for closure. In September 2008, I received some help from a Spiritual Advisor, Bishop Dominic. He gave me the task of turning my business over to the Holy Spirit. In time, we transformed from a Pyramid management structure to a Circular structure with God and myself in the middle of the Circle.

With a simple story, I was changed forever and so was my management style. Bishop Dominic asked me, "If your home is on fire do your neighbors see it." I said yes. He then asked me, "What actions will your neighbors take to help you put out the fire" I responded some will bring water, others food, blankets, and strong arms to remove heavy items, and all will most likely pray for a rapid recovery. He said did you have to ask any of them to perform their God given abilities. I said no they do it out of the goodness in their hearts.

"Exactly," Bishop Dominic said. He then asked, "Do your CEOS (customers, employees, owners and suppliers) know your business is on fire?" My answer was a direct NO. "Then make it so," he said, "and you will see miraculous changes in your business."

He was right! Through transparency, genuine honesty, trust, collaboration, burden sharing, and other ongoing transforming processes, we have retained all our employees, grew on average 7% per month and generated a profit for the past four months. My management style has transformed from the waste in life-style capital to the investment in Human Capital. As a family we are eating out less, have not purchased unneeded items, car pooled to work and reduced travel all for the investment in human capital (our employees). It is the human capital that I believe will sling shot us out of this temporary crisis into a global firm. And yes, we did it with some struggles of course but we did it as a team coming together. Our CEOS (Customers, Employees, Owners and Suppliers) made sacrifices for something bigger: human concern.

How have we done it? All our employees volunteered up to 85% in pay cuts, they came to the office earlier and stayed later, and worked on Saturdays. In return, we accrued their wages, paid out 75% of the profits to repay the obligation and gave employees one stock option for every \$1000 in revenues everyday. Moral is high, the peace and joy in our office is at an all time high, and stress has declined measurably.

All this being said, the good news is that we have all been to this dance before and things will eventually turn around. Your burning business and mine will see people use every gift God gave them to put out the fire and rebuild. And you as the owner will marvel at the results.

May God Bless,

Tom Markel