President’s Corner

CTC-welcome to our second edition of the CTC newsletter! A special thanks to Scott for making this newsletter a reality and for putting so much time and effort into it!

I look forward to continued efforts to make our club better as we get further into the year. We will be rolling out a scorecard in the coming weeks that will help with our tracking of club performance and ultimately making us all more accountable to our by-laws. Matt has some great plans with membership activities as well as new member recruitment. If you have ideas for new members or new member categories-please get with Matt so he can incorporate those ideas in his planning.

Hopefully everyone’s 2014 is off to a great start. From my perspective, business activity has increased significantly in the last 6-12 months. I continue to meet with companies who are looking to make significant changes to their companies -many of which are changes to their operations, equipment or personnel. I attended a conference last week where the economic outlook for SC was very positive. Most of the key metrics typically used (unemployment, capital investment, education, etc) were all trending in a positive direction.

I hope you all enjoy this newsletter and we welcome any feedback that you may have on how to improve it (or the club).

Growing Your Business in 2014

Here are some thoughts in going into the New Year from an article that we recently read....

When trying to grow a business, a common misstep is to focus on gaining new business, but the secret may actually be right before your eyes. Focusing on what you already have – internal staff and external customers – may be the key to success.

To achieve business growth and development this year, consider practicing:

1. Customer service is king. Reality is, everyone doesn’t have a nice demeanor and not everyone cares about how they or their company are perceived. It’s crucial to teach and stress the importance of client relationships, and the value of treating them with respect. Gaining business from new customers is nice, but retaining current customers is more important. Establishing a loyal customer base ensures steady, reliable business.

2. Hire slow, fire fast. Take the time to find and hire the right people...people that are a culture fit, and don’t be afraid to part ways with the bad hires who impact productivity, moral and culture. To ensure a candidate is the right fit for the company, and vice versa, each candidate should meet with four or five different staff members individually. If a few employees have concerns, it’s likely they aren’t the right fit for the organization. If a manager still ends up hiring the wrong person for
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the role, they should remove the employee immediately.

3. Invest in professional development. Growing a company means committing time to professional development. Managers can’t expect their staff to want to learn, grow and invest time outside of the workplace by attending seminars or taking continuing education classes if managers aren’t doing it themselves.

4. 3E’s: Education, Empowerment, Empathy. Utilizing the 3E’s will help you retain staff.

Education: Offering training sessions and having employees attend webinars and conferences will feed their desire to learn while augmenting their skill sets.

Empowerment: Empower staff by demonstrating confidence in their abilities to utilize the newly acquired skill set with new and challenging tasks. Once the employees are comfortable in their roles and know what they’re doing, encourage them to act first and apologize later.

Empathy: I believe the best managers and leaders have great empathy for their teams and staff. They understand that an employee can feel pressure without understanding the end goal, and make it a point to walk them through the process and help them to understand.

5. 3C’s: Collaboration, Compassion, Competition.

Collaboration: Promote internal communication. Encourage employees to get up, move around the office and talk to co-workers in different units.

Compassion: Have compassion for one another and try to understand what others are going through. Realize events outside of the office may affect someone at work, i.e. planning a wedding, death of a family member, having a child, etc. Consider reorganizing tasks on his/her team.

Competition: Internal competitiveness is OK! It’s great for an employee to want to be better…better than they were yesterday…better than a coworker…better than their direct team members. This doesn’t mean they want anyone to fail. And it never hurts to remind the team to compete as a whole against your business competition. Then everyone wins.

10 Time Management Tips That Work

Chances are good that, at some time in your life, you’ve taken a time management class, read about it in books, and tried to use an electronic or paper-based day planner to organize, prioritize and schedule your day. “Why, with this knowledge and these gadgets,” you may ask, “do I still feel like I can’t get everything done I need to?” The answer is simple. Everything you ever learned about managing time is a complete waste of time because it doesn’t work.

Before you can even begin to manage time, you must learn what time is. A dictionary defines time as “the point or period at which things occur.” Put simply, time is when stuff happens.

There are two types of time: clock time and real time. In clock time, there are 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day and 365 days in a year. All time passes equally. When someone turns 50, they are exactly 50 years old, no more or no less.

In real time, all time is relative. Time flies or drags depending on what you’re doing. Two hours at the department of motor vehicles can feel like 12 years. And yet our 12-year-old children seem to have grown up in only two hours.

Which time describes the world in which you really live, real time or clock time?

The reason time management gadgets and systems don’t work is that these systems are designed to manage clock time. Clock time is irrelevant. You don’t live in or even have access to clock time. You live in real time, a world in which all time flies when you are having fun or drags when you are doing your taxes.

The good news is that real time is mental. It exists between your ears. You create it. Anything you create, you can manage. It’s time to remove any self-sabotage or self-limitation you have around “not having enough time,” or today not being “the right time” to start a business or manage your current business properly.

There are only three ways to spend time: thoughts, conversations and actions. Regardless of the type of business you own, your work will be composed of those three items.

As an entrepreneur, you may be frequently interrupted or pulled in different directions. While you cannot eliminate interruptions, you do get a say on how much time you will spend on the thoughts, conversations and actions that will lead you to success.

Practice the following techniques to become the master
Time Management Tips con’t. from page 2

of your own time:

1. Carry a schedule and record all your thoughts, conversations and activities for a week. This will help you understand how much you can get done during the course of a day and where your precious moments are going. You’ll see how much time is actually spent producing results and how much time is wasted on unproductive thoughts, conversations and actions.

2. Any activity or conversation that’s important to your success should have a time assigned to it. To-do lists get longer and longer to the point where they’re unworkable. Appointment books work. Schedule appointments with yourself and create time blocks for high-priority thoughts, conversations, and actions. Schedule when they will begin and end. Have the discipline to keep these appointments.

3. Plan to spend at least 50 percent of your time engaged in the thoughts, activities and conversations that produce most of your results.

4. Schedule time for interruptions. Plan time to be pulled away from what you’re doing. Take, for instance, the concept of having “office hours.” Isn’t “office hours” another way of saying “planned interruptions?”

5. Take the first 30 minutes of every day to plan your day. Don’t start your day until you complete your time plan. The most important time of your day is the time you schedule to schedule time.

6. Take five minutes before every call and task to decide what result you want to attain. This will help you know what success looks like before you start. And it will also slow time down. Take five minutes after each call and activity to determine whether your desired result was achieved. If not, what was missing? How do you put what’s missing in your next call or activity?

7. Put up a “Do not disturb” sign when you absolutely have to get work done.

8. Practice not answering the phone just because it’s ringing and e-mails just because they show up. Disconnect instant messaging. Don’t instantly give people your attention unless it’s absolutely crucial in your business to offer an immediate human response. Instead, schedule a time to answer email and return phone calls.

9. Block out other distractions like Facebook and other forms of social media unless you use these tools to generate business.

10. Remember that it’s impossible to get everything done. Also remember that odds are good that 20 percent of your thoughts, conversations and activities produce 80 percent of your results.

CTC On The Lighter Side

**I started a task force to eliminate redundancies in our internal processes.**

**Really? I’m doing the same thing.**

“Take five minutes before every call and task to decide what result you want to attain. This will help you know what success looks like before you start.”
Proposed U.S.-EU trade pact could spur Southeast growth

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SUMTER, S.C. — During the Jan. 28 ribbon-cutting at Continental Tire’s $500 million plant, Peter Ammon, Germany’s ambassador to the United States, offered a plug for a new trade agreement that’s being negotiated by the U.S. and European Union.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership promises to boost South Carolina’s exports to Europe by 187% and create a total of 10,000 new jobs, Ammon said, citing a recent report.

Germany and the United Kingdom rank as South Carolina’s No. 2 and No. 5 customers, respectively, having bought $5.1 billion worth of exports in 2012, according to the latest figures from the International Trade Administration.

If the agreement is fully implemented, South Carolina could see exports of motor vehicles climb by $27.3 billion, chemicals by $615 million, other machinery by $337 million, and metals and metal products by $327 million, the report said.

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The pact is designed to promote economic growth and create jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. Research shows the agreement could boost the EU’s economy by $162.3 billion, the U.S. economy by $121.7 billion and the world’s economy by $135.3 billion.

Southeastern Economic Impact

If the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership is fully implemented, Southeastern states could see exports grow. Here’s an analysis of South Carolina’s potential increase. Today, EU countries purchase $7.4 billion of S.C. goods.

Commodity         Increase
Motor vehicles      $27.3 billion
Chemicals           $615 million
Machinery           $337 million
Metals/products     $327 million

More New Changes to CTC Website

Well if you haven’t stopped by for awhile we have made a number of improvements to the CTC Website. After launching the website in mid-January we have been focusing our attention on how members can enter and monitor Tips, Leads and Thank Yous.

Recently we have added the feature that when you enter a Tip, Lead or Thank You an email is sent back to you with your submission. This will allow you to print off the email and bring with you to the CTC Wednesday meeting.

Since Tips are a critical element of our club we wanted to begin to capture and save them more easily and accurately. This new feature will allow you to do just that (as well as save a great deal of entry time by CTC staff).

Having Tips recorded more accurately also allows for us to review or refer back to submitted items. The first iteration of viewing recently went through a change wherein if you select ‘View Tips’ on the CTC home page it will take you to a larger spreadsheet of all entries. You can scroll up and down the list as needed. We will put more development on this area in upcoming months to allow for easier search and retrieval.

So if you haven’t had the chance to check out the new website give it a try. Go to www.cimbas.com/ctc with the password of CTC2014. Any comments or suggestions are very much welcomed. This is another benefit of being apart of the CTC and it is there as a resource for you. And your business
The Columbia Tips Club is an active business organization with a very rich history of facilitating some of the best business leaders in the Columbia Metropolitan area to collaborate on opportunities that exist in our business community through the sharing of Tips and Leads.

The club is focused on the business growth of each of its members and actively works in providing value and insight to all participants. The club always seeks the very best business representatives of our community to come and be apart of the CTC.

We are committed to your success in 2014!!!