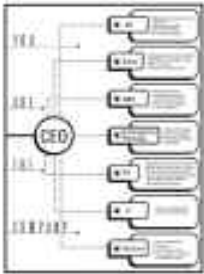


The CEO of Y-O-U by Marsha Petrie Sue

SAMPLE CHAPTER

Chapter 1

You are the company



You are *it*.

You are the company, the organization, the main source of everything.

Because you are this entity, you need an organization chart. You must create success categories that help you focus on each area of your professional and personal life.

The chart opposite offers you a picture of the structure of your company. Use it to help you focus on what is working well and what you might change to make your company more productive and profitable.

If you think this is a weird way to take charge of your life, answer these questions—

- **Who is responsible for your learning?**
- **Who is responsible for your own development and the research to get you where you want to be?**
- **Who should decide what you want out of life?**
- **Who should determine what people say about you after you are gone?**
- **Who should be able to tell others what your talents are and what job you want to strive toward next?**
- **Who should determine the value of you as a human resource?**
- **Who should sell your talents and capabilities to others?**
- **Who is responsible for the promotion of you—your public relations?**

Nothing is lost upon a person who is bent upon growth; nothing is wasted on one who is always preparing for his work and life by keeping eyes, mind, and heart open to nature, men, books, experience. Such a man finds ministries to his education on all sides; everything cooperates with his passion for growth.—*H. Mabie*

- Who should help you embrace the application of technology?
- Who should inform you about what you need to learn?
- Who should be responsible for putting food on your table or a roof over your head?

The answer to each question is: YOU!

As the CEO—the Chief Energizing Officer—you must take responsibility for overseeing each of these departments. This does not mean you do them all yourself, but that you do enlist the services of professionals to guide you.

Let's look at each department and the need, benefit and expected outcomes.

R & D (Research & Development) Department

Every company needs growth. Growth and future success are typically created in the R & D department. R & D means research on what is working and what needs to be developed. The CEO must be aware of what is being done to prepare for the future. This includes continually improving and polishing tools that were not needed in the past but will be needed in the future because of expected growth.

Brian Tracy taught me many years ago that I must invest 2% of my gross annual income in me. I now spend about 10% or more! Take a moment now to determine what you should be spending:

$$\text{\$ } \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times \underline{\hspace{2cm}} 2\% = \text{\$ } \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Gross Annual Income

Yearly Investment in ME

Are you investing this amount in your future, every year?

Aim at the sun and you may not reach it; but your arrow will fly far higher than if aimed at an object on a level with yourself. —J. Hawkes

The term “Learning Organization” is very popular today, and has been fostered by Peter Senge in his landmark studies of successful organizations (*The Fifth Discipline*). You achieve good employment and a successful life by learning about all aspects of your environment. Can you answer these questions:

Do you know the goals of your company?

If not, ask what they are.

Does your team have an understanding of the vision of your superiors, all the way up to senior management?

Your superiors often just have to be asked.

Do you have the tools needed to succeed in the job of your dreams?

If not, what are you doing about it?

Many people, from Peter Drucker to Bill Gates, believe that success lies in our interpersonal skills—the ability to manage confrontation, deal with difficult people, enjoy successful communications, and stay motivated and positive. These are learned skills. You are not born with them. You are expected to develop and use them confidently and skillfully.

I am always intrigued when people say, “Well if my company won’t pay for it, I’m not going to do it!” Putting your success and future in the hands of others will not always get you where you want (and deserve) to be.

Many people who attend my talks invest in themselves. They buy books, tapes, seminars, and take classes for their own improvement. They have decided to take charge of their future and their success. Have you?

Everybody wants to be somebody; nobody wants to grow.—Goethe

What next step can you take toward your success?

Turn your car into a university on wheels. Many studies show the value of learning in your car or when exercising. Listening to music is fine, and is a good way to decompress. But it is also chewing gum for the brain. Wouldn’t you much rather turn the useless time in your car into learning time? Just a quick five-minute run to the store can ignite new thinking by listening to an expert to affirm a strategy or solve a difficult problem.

Time. You decide how you use your time. Use it to build and grow yourself. Use it for the Research and Development you deserve.

I have trained myself to use time more effectively. The operative word here is *trained*. One of the biggest barriers to achieving success and taking control of your life is the use of the spare time you have. This is the only resource we all share equally. Do you use your time to increase your knowledge?

I have a need to better use my time more effectively for research and development. Training myself to have the guts, energy, and time, to return to school for my graduate degree was not easy. The outcome for me is the life I am now living. I

know I would not be living the life of my dreams if I had not completed my graduate degree. This is not necessary for everyone—it was for me.

And the training continues. The benefit of constantly listening to tapes in my car gives me the outcomes I continue to strive for. Sharing tapes with friends, investing in new learning resources, taking every opportunity I can in research and development is not a need—it is a must.

Make big plans, but change your plans as time changes.—Marchant

Contingency Planning Department

Contingency planning in companies is the strategy that allows for change. It's also called "what if" thinking. What if plan A doesn't work? Then you have plan B ready to roll.

When Contingency Planning is perceived as a tool, the outcome will be positive. You are setting the stage to be flexible and to be ready for change. So what if the next position you have your eye on is axed? Do you wilt and fold? Become a victim of circumstance? Or do you choose to pull yourself up by the bootstraps and say, "OK, what is the next opportunity, challenge, want, wish or hope I have for my future?" You have a choice here.

And there's the rub. "What if" thinking can be debilitating. Here is a real-life story: A woman attending one of my classes two years ago was visibly upset. I had shared the story of how I met my husband Al, by hiring a matchmaker, mentioning that I then became a wife, grandmother and mother all on the same day.

She approached me during the break and said, "Oh, I can't take the risk of using a dating service, because what if I meet someone who is not truthful about his background, and what if we fall in love and get married? What if there are some medical issues about his background that he doesn't tell me! What if we have a child and the baby is born with some medical issues, or maybe is retarded? What if my new husband can't deal with the medical problems and leaves me? What if I am supposed to raise a child with disabilities by myself? What will I do? What if the child has really bad medical problems and I can't find care for them?"

Plans get you into things but you got to work your way out.—Will Rogers

I wanted to yell, "STOP!"

A kind observer stopped her instead, saying: "You are going to 'what if' yourself into a nervous breakdown and you haven't even called a matchmaker yet!"

The perfect response.

Pay attention to the conversation you are having in your own head. Contingency planning and what if thinking should lead you to alternative ways to succeed—just in case the current plan doesn't happen.

Outlook, attitude and approach have everything to do with successful contingency planning.

Flexibility is key here:

- **Are you flexible enough to allow yourself to fail?**
- **To be resilient in situations that have unfavorable results?**
- **To move past broken plans?**
- **To pull yourself up, dust yourself off and move on?**
- **To chalk up disaster to life, learn from it, and start again?**
- **To understand that failure brings you an easier path to success?**
- **To know that every event has a learning nugget planted in it?**
- **To see the horse poop and know there has to be a pony somewhere?**

Easier said than done! But doable.

When I moved from California to Atlanta it was a big risk. I had commuted for two years and was then asked by Westinghouse Financial to pick up my life and relocate to the city in which I was working. This seemed reasonable and obviously was a good choice for the company.

Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly in the distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand. —Carlyle

But wait! I had to leave my friends, family, security—everything I had known for over 40 years. I needed a contingency plan. What if the project I was working on failed? What if I was stranded in Atlanta with no job? I consulted my dear friend who is an attorney. He had given me sterling advice in the past.

“How about asking for an employment contract?” he asked.

Oh, hadn't thought about that! So the deal was struck that if the project did not work out, I would receive a full year's salary and they would pay for my move back to California.

Do you have a need for stability? I do! What are the contingency plans you have set up so your confidence soars and the what ifs don't get in your way?

Human Resources Department

Who are the people you hire and team up with to be in your corner, to be the leaders to help you run your company? Do you selectively choose who will be on your team, or do you take a “willy-nilly” approach? Do you interview each member to insure they will fit into your success scheme? These people should all be considered part of your team and should be selected carefully:

- **Your Doctor—keeps you at your best health**
- **Your Attorney—makes sure you are operating above board**
- **Your Dentist—keeps your pearly whites shining**
- **Your Accountant—manages your taxes properly**
- **Your Financial Planner—keeps your portfolio properly balanced**

You can't do everything yourself. Hire the best to fill the gaps or your life will fall through the gap. —*Marshall Petrie*

- **Your Banker—for loans, cash and high credit rating**
- **Your Stock Broker—keeps your risk factors in mind and helps your money grow**
- **Your Grocery clerk—specials, favors and deliveries in the time of need**
- **Your Butcher—to impress at the right time during that important dinner party**
- **Your Dry Cleaners—clean and pressed on a moment's notice**
- **Your Minister—counselor, connection to the larger world and spiritual balance**
- **Your Family—critical support, not just at critical moments**
- **Your Partner—even more critical support**
- **Your Friends—even when things are not going so well**
- **Your Computer Tutor—keeps you in the groove with technology**
- **Your Politicians—speak your piece to an ear that hears**
- **Your Beautician/Stylist/Barber—so you can get that trim on a moment's notice**
- **Your Clothing Store Sales Person—keeps you informed of special sales and when that outfit comes in with your name on it**
- **Your Cobbler—people DO notice your heels!**

· **And anyone else who adds to the success of Y-O-U.**

Invite supportive people to be on your team. Hire people that are the best at what they do, not just cheap. You are a worthy growing company, and you deserve to have the “best of the best” on your team. Seek out their advice and their expertise.

You do not have to be the guru and keeper of all knowledge. You do not need to know everything.

It is best to be with those in time, that all hope to be with in eternity. —Fuller

I learned this many years ago from my Father, who was an accountant. His clients expected expertise on every decision—to manage their taxes, secure a plan for the future, to protect their hard-earned money from being eaten up by taxes. My Dad worked with financial planners and stock brokers and would refer the right professional to solve the exact issue. He belonged to the Lions Club, the Elks, the Masons, the March of Dimes. He networked to bring the best Human Resources to himself and his clients.

Do you have your Human Resource plan? Have you enlisted the “best of the best” for your company? I know very little about investment, but I know AI, my husband, has enlisted some of the best to oversee the placement of our money.

If you go to a professional to have a service rendered and you do not receive a satisfactory outcome, product or service, do you put them on notice? I know of many people who don’t, because they “don’t want to hurt their feelings.”

I say, pooh on their feelings!

I want to be the CEO and be in charge, which means I set the expectations. No service? Goodbye. The competition is too keen to have my Human Resource department keep poor performers. Does a successful company keep poor performers? No. If they do, they won’t be successful for very long. Expect the best and that’s what you will get.

We often must make decisions quickly—especially in the human resources arena. When we hear voices saying, “Oh, do it” or “Oh, no, don’t,” listen very carefully. Typically, our internal voice is that gut feeling, taking all the experiences we have had and sending us a subliminal message. So listen to the

Chance opportunities make us known to others, and still more to ourselves. —*Rochefoucauld*

-subliminal message. Listen to the first message, because what can happen is our negative self talk will sabotage our intuition.

I had a need to have a professional edit this book. My first round of finding an editor was unsuccessful – though I did spend some major bucks ferreting out

the wrong editor. The first person I tried was sweet, recommended by a peer, but I had no idea what my needs were. And my gut was yelling at me—“Great person, wrong for your need!”

So after three or four months of not much happening, I had to bite the bullet and tell this editor that I was taking a different focus on the book. Luckily, one of my peers in the National Speakers Association—Bill Webb—rescued me. He is the consummate professional, knows the editing bit and has tremendous credibility in our industry and the publishing world. As I initially met with Bill, my intuition was screaming to me, “You’d better hope he will take on your project. He is the perfect fit for the outcome you want!”

Are you willing to invite new people onto your team, both professionally and personally, that will add the talent you need to become the CEO and take control? This is where that old phrase kicks in—“You create your own luck!” And you do it through your own Human Resources Department.

If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays best interest. —*Franklin*

Sales Department

Yep, you are in sales.

Step 1. **Begin developing your “elevator speech.” Be able to sell YOU to the boss, an executive, or someone you want to work with. Reduce it to 3 minutes or less. Here is my elevator speech, which is always under construction:**

“Hi, I’m Marsha Petrie Sue. I present keynotes and workshops to associations and companies that want to improve communications, customer service and personal power of their executives and employees, ultimately improving profitability and productivity.”

Here is the outline. Fill it in for yourself:

Hi, I’m _____ . I work with _____ and have had tremendous success in _____ . My talents range from _____ to _____ . Being a life-long learner and working in challenging environments is critical to my success. (Or something along that line.)

Memorize your elevator speech. Practice it. Say it confidently, to anyone, anytime. You must be able to pull this out of your hip pocket and say it at a moment’s notice.

Fields are won by those who believe in winning. —*T.W. Higginson*

Step 2. Keep up on current events and your reading—popular books, magazines, and professional journals. When chatting with peers and superiors prior to the start of a meeting, talk about nuances of your industry, cutting-edge stuff, not how are the kids, the cat, the dog. Strut your stuff when you can, without being arrogant, self centered and ego crazed. If you don't toot your own horn, no one else will.

Step 3. Take time every three months to write down all the talents you have and how you apply them. Tom Peters says in *Work Matters* that the typical resume is passé. You should market and sell your talents. Be able to tell ANYONE, with confidence, what you do well, and what your goals and aspirations are. He says all of this must be rehearsed, practiced: If you stammer through your greatness with another person, especially someone that can hire you to that perfect job, your credibility is doomed.

Focus on what you have, rather than what you don't have. Because of our frequent negative thinking, we often dwell on what we can't do or what we don't have. Focus instead on everything you know and do so well. If you don't, no one else will do these things for you.

Step 4. On a regular basis, understand your value in your marketplace. Do an internet search on www.monster.com, www.hotjobs.com, or any of the other sites that can give you so much information on jobs, geography, job titles, and job descriptions. Don't like your salary or wage? *Change jobs!* If you don't have the skills or education—get them!

A professor is one who talks in someone else's sleep. —*W.H. —Auden*

I knew being promoted at GTE was very competitive. My research proved to me that promotion was many times dictated by a college degree. The three cut piles were High School graduate, Bachelor's and then Master's degrees. I needed an MBA – so I went back to the University of Phoenix, studied until my brain was fried for 22 months and in 1985 received my Master of Business Administration degree.

Public Relations Department

Three seconds. That's the time you have to influence another human being.

Will you establish good or poor public relations? Three seconds.

The *first* image people see determines if this will be a good interaction or a poor one, and the first characteristic that becomes apparent is attitude. Is yours positive or negative? How do you appear to others?

Whether it's you or someone else who needs an attitude tune-up, there are tools to help you rev up your engine. Here are some ideas to brighten the worst outlook and put you in the mood to be motivated and to motivate others:

- Count your blessings daily and give thanks.
- Think of seeing two sweet children holding hands.
- Or maybe driving by a flower shop with beautiful flowers displayed in the window.
- Or passing a hospital and realizing how lucky you are not to be in it!
- When you lay your head down on the pillow at night, think of five great events of that day. You will have days, as we all do, that are mind-boggling tough.

What it lies in our power to do, it lies in our power not to do. —Aristotle

I usually think of only three before I am fast asleep. By replacing negative events, you promote more restful sleep. Falling asleep with only the problems and issues of the day in your head will usually promote restlessness. Brian Tracy says, "You become what you think about."

- Get proper rest and exercise and start eating more healthily.
- Do not let pettiness at work, school, or in your personal life hold power over your success.

I have read that the #1 reason people gossip is to subconsciously make themselves feel better. As another person is dragged over the coals behind their back, the people stoking the fire don't feel too wonderful about their own situation.

Here's quite a morale booster:

A teacher in New York decided to honor each of her seniors in high school by telling them the difference they each made. Using a process developed by Helice Bridges of Del Mar, California, she called each student to the front of the class, one at a time. First, she told them how the student made a difference to her and the class. Then she presented each of them with a blue ribbon imprinted with white letters which read, "Who I Am Makes a Difference."

Afterwards, the teacher decided to do a class project to see what kind of impact such recognition would have on a community. She gave each of the students three more ribbons and instructed them to go out and spread this acknowledgment ceremony. Then they were to follow up on the results, see who honored whom and report back to the class in a week.

One of the boys in the class went to a junior executive at a nearby company and honored him for helping him with his career planning. He gave him a blue ribbon to put it on his...

In prosperity prepare for a change; in adversity hope for one. —Burgh

shirt. Then he gave him two extra ribbons, and said, “We're doing a class project on recognition, and we'd like you to go out, find somebody to honor, give them a blue ribbon, then give them the extra blue ribbon so they can acknowledge a third person to keep this acknowledgment ceremony going. Then please phone me to tell me what happened.”

Later that day the junior executive went in to see his boss, who had a reputation for being a grouchy fellow. He told his boss that he deeply admired him for being a creative genius.

The boss was quite surprised. The junior executive asked him if he would accept the gift of a blue ribbon, and placed the ribbon right on his boss's jacket, above his heart. Then, before he gave him the last extra ribbon, he asked, “Would you do me a favor? Would you take this extra ribbon and pass it on by honoring somebody else? The young boy who gave me these ribbons is doing a project in school. He wants to keep this recognition ceremony going and find out how it affects people.”

That night the boss came home and sat down with his 14-year-old son. He said, “The most incredible thing happened to me today. I was in my office and one of my execs came in and told me he admired me and gave me a blue ribbon for being a creative genius. Imagine! He thinks I'm a creative genius! Then he put this blue ribbon on my jacket above my heart that says ‘Who I Am Makes A Difference’. He gave me an extra ribbon and asked me to find someone else to honor.

“As I was driving home today, I started thinking about whom I would honor with this ribbon and I thought about you. I want to honor you. My days are really hectic, and when I come home I don't pay a lot of attention to you. Sometimes I

He that swells in prosperity will be sure to shrink in adversity. —Colton

scream at you for not getting good enough grades in school and for your bedroom being a mess, but somehow tonight, I just wanted to sit here and, well, just let you know that you do make a difference to me. Besides your mother, you are the most important person in my life. You're a great kid and I love you!”

The startled boy began to sob uncontrollably. His whole body shook. He looked up at his father and said through his tears, “I was planning on committing suicide, Dad, because I didn't think you loved me. Now I don't need to.”

This is a true story, and we need to keep it going. If you have anyone who means a lot to you, I encourage you to send them this message. You never know what kind of difference a little encouragement can make to a person. Send it to all of the people who mean anything important to you, or send it to the one or two

people who mean the most. Or just smile and know that someone thinks that you are important, or you wouldn't have received this story in the first place.

Finance Department

The buck stops—and starts—here. You decide where to spend each dollar you earn. Many people have this in common: they never feel they have enough money or time to plan for the future. The fact is, though, that we have exactly enough time and money to do whatever we choose to do.

I am amazed that in the nineties—the strongest decade of economic growth most of us have ever experienced—more personal bankruptcies were reported than in the previous major economic downturn. Why? Lack of discipline and the will to apply these simple steps:

Everything in the world may be endured, except continual prosperity. —
Goethe

1. *Lead a simpler life*
2. *Pay cash*
3. *Limit charge cards*
4. *Save money, even when you think you can't*

1. Lead a simpler life. Do you read magazines and watch advertising that demand you change with the seasons, the trends, or the neighbors next door?

The influence of the environment is tremendous and can lead you to poor choices. Super Bowl ads cost millions of dollars a minute; magazines need to be held with both hands because of the extra pages of advertising; eye-level shelves in grocery stores are premium spaces for products—each advertiser hopes to influence you. Do they? And how?

Born and raised in Southern California, I truly believed materialism was what life was all about. Our home in the rolling hills of the coastal community of Palos Verdes was a beautiful Spanish style stucco house with a pool. I lived there for my first 15 years. My parents frequently hosted parties, with the menu usually featuring filet mignon and lobster.

Our summers were spent either on the 36' cabin cruiser my father built in our back yard, or at the family lakeside home at Browns Lake, Wisconsin. These were the standards and role models I was raised with—I thought it was normal.

When my parents divorced, a hard reality unfolded. We had nothing. Everything was leveraged or loaned, borrowed or past due. Mom and I moved out of the beautiful family home and into a 2 bedroom duplex Mom bought on a shoestring.

In character, in manners, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity. —*Longfellow*

But the high-consumption model was set for life. After I graduated from college in 1968, my goal was to “have it all.” I interpreted that to mean: Spend as much as fast as you can.

Years later, I remember my Dad coming to visit my home in Westminster, California. He walked into the house quite disgusted, saying, “Well, I can see you are buying American! Two German cars is disgusting and materialistic!”

That comment went right over my head!

But hard reality hit me two years later when I divorced my first husband. I had no idea what we had or—more important—what we didn’t have. We had been living the life of Riley. Materialism....

After working myself out of another financial fiasco, I set a goal: Know where your money is and where it’s going!

Al, my current husband, taught me how to lead a simpler life. We do not live in the biggest house in Scottsdale—a beautiful home, to be sure, but certainly not lavish. We don’t drive the fanciest cars or go on the most lavish vacations, but you have never met two happier people.

2. Pay cash. This is simple. Don’t buy anything unless you have the cash in your hand or know exactly where the funds are coming from. If you don’t have it, don’t spend it!

Want to plan for a vacation? Take ten dollars a week, put it in an envelope labeled “vacation” and don’t plan until you have at least 75% of the money saved. Reduce the complexity of your financial obligations. Use automatic deposit for your paycheck or dividends. If you don’t see it and touch it, you have less chance of misusing your money.

Man is equally incapable of seeing the nothingness from which he emerges and the infinity in which he is engulfed. —*Blaise Pascal*

Contact the companies you receive bills from each month—insurance, utilities, mortgage and so on—and establish automatic payments. Each will mail, e-mail or fax you a form requesting the needed account information. Be patient, because this may take two months, but it’s certainly worth the time spent.

With the companies that are not able to set up automatic payments, consider paying quarterly, semi-annually or annually. The less you have to think about, the more in control you will be—and life will be simpler for you.

Soon technology will offer even more options, and cash may become outmoded sooner than we think. Bill Gates says that in the near future, we could all have a microchip implanted in our wrist. Need a soda at a vending machine? Wave your wrist in front of the optical scanner and the price of the drink will be deducted automatically. This technology is already in place on many highway toll stations—such as “FastTrack.” Drive by and your FastTrack account is reduced by the amount of the toll. Scary! But efficient!

3. Limit charge cards. Some of the stories you hear today are unfathomable: One woman was proud to announce her ownership (or so she called it) of over 152 credit cards—and had a balance due on all of them! Al and I have three credit cards. I use American Express for my business, we have a Visa for our personal expenditures, and Al has a company American Express card.

We receive “invitations” to accept more cards weekly, sometimes it seems like daily, because our credit is good. We plan to keep it that way. But aren’t we all amazed at the credit limits these cards offer?

Thinking is the talking of the soul with itself. —Plato

If you are a parent, have you noticed that even your children are receiving credit card applications? Tear them up immediately. Chop them into tiny little pieces! Receiving the cards is not fatal—using them is.

4. Save money. Extra cash because of a bonus? Invest it. In the long term, a diverse stock portfolio will grow your money. Consolidate your investment portfolio into just a couple of families of funds. This has taken us a few years to accomplish, but it is so much easier to track.

Teach these four simple steps to anyone who will listen and learn them yourself. If you are in a financially secure position, congratulations! Those of us who are secure are in the minority.

Karen, my husband’s daughter, is teaching her son, Wes, well. A teenager, Wes has a debit card. His monthly allowance is put on the card. Wes had to figure out from month to month what he can buy. The first couple of months the money was gone early in the month. Wes learned a good lesson. Making choices in purchases and how the money was allocated was his responsibility. When shopping for the music CD he *had to have*, or the new pair of jeans he *had to have*, he learned what his real choices were.

Respect for money is learned. Are you teaching people around you this lesson? Do you know it yourself? We all have a need for “stuff,” but we also all have a need to save. Being able to have financial stability and be monetarily secure is the responsibility of every human being. Who knows what the future will bring? Are you financially ready?

How will you meet your future needs? Do you know the difference between a SEP-IRA, Roth IRA, Traditional IRA...

You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it within himself. —Galileo

and a SIMPLE IRA? How about Keogh Plans? What are the benefits of real estate investments, second trust deed investments, or even a family trust? And here is the big question – do you have a will and if you do, when was the last time you updated it?

My prayers were answered during my first session with my financial planner years ago. I learned how much I didn't know. I had to develop an understanding of what my risk level in investments was. Then what was the investment vehicle that was best for my situation and my financial goals. I was so overwhelmed with information. But that was a very important financial turning point. Many years later, much learning and an incredible partner has moved us to financial security. How are you doing with your finances?

Marketing Department

Your Marketing is a level deeper than just the Sales and PR departments. Marketing is how you position yourself in your life with other people—how they perceive you and interact with you. As with Public Relations, “you never have a second chance to make a first impression.” There is an interesting reason for this, and it's called the “First Brain.”

Part of our thinking process is filled with all our experiences and the results of those experiences, what you can call “old thinking.” The First Brain acts like a gatekeeper to the rest of your brain—and that gate is either open or closed. If the gate is closed, you don't accept ideas that are new or different from your own. You are not able to take a risk because old thinking gets in the way. You are not able to change.

I believe the true road to preeminent success in any line is to make yourself master of that line. —Andrew Carnegie

Example: You meet some one for the first time. You look at them and size them up. You make a decision—which takes three seconds or less—and you will like that person, or not. You scope them out and say to yourself, “I can just tell I'm going to like them. They are my kind of people.”

And when you decide not to like the person? You say to yourself, “I don't think so.” Your First Brain is closed. You hear little or nothing of what the person says, because your First Brain has locked the gate to the rest of your brain. Not only has your Public Relations failed, your Marketing can't get on track.

If you are willing to open your thinking gateway (First Brain), new information and alternative ideas can flow in. You can then get a better picture of the other person, because you are more flexible. Your Public Relations strategy works more effectively. Your Marketing is then right on target.

Example: We all need to understand that mature audiences need more time to make a decision. If you are not from that generation—and don't value their differences—you close your First Brain and become impatient with their needing more time to decide. That is your choice. It's not that you can't open your First Brain—it's because you choose not to.

Most savvy business people determine on a regular basis that there are three asset values when assessing their business—Fixed Assets, Variable Assets, and Intellectual Assets.

The intellectual asset encompasses all your actual job skills, but the major impact derives from your emotional state. Daniel Goleman coined the term “Emotional Intelligence” to

It is easy to learn something about everything, but difficult to learn everything about anything. —Emmons

help us understand the importance of interpersonal skills as an intellectual asset. Emotional Intelligence traits are derived from your socialization, and are learned as you move from childhood to adulthood. When you improve your interpersonal skills you truly become the CEO of Y-O-U!

IT—Technology Department

Unless you are a computer wizard, hire a computer tutor. I have a couple of them—one for my database, and one for software. They help me use technology more effectively and are among my best friends.

One of the reasons I returned to school for my Master's degree was to learn about computers. My knowledge of technology was nil. Slowly but surely, I am feeling more capable and competent. Bill Gates says (in *Business at the Speed of Thought*) that if by 2005 you are not using technology daily, you will be considered work-illiterate. Even if you dig ditches, supply janitorial services or are the CEO, technology is here to stay.

Those who embrace technology advancements will succeed; those who do not, will not! Very simple. This has been a hard realization for me. Is it for you, too?

I had to learn the importance of learning new applications, using technology effectively, and not allowing new applications to steal my time. I do not use a PDA yet—it is cumbersome for me and I like showing people my goals when I speak directly from my hardcopy planner.

Some people shouldn't be using PDA's: they fumble and muddle around with it—what a time waster!

Many persons, after they become learned cease to be good; all other knowledge is hurtful to him who has not the science of honesty and good nature. —*Montaigne*

The message here is to embrace technology, apply what is appropriate for you at that particular moment, but don't spend hours on equipment or software that will not help you.

Example: PowerPoint slide shows.

PowerPoint makes me very nervous as a professional public speaker. More times than not, I have seen poor results from using PowerPoint: The screen loads improperly; slides are missing; lighting in the room is awful; or the lights have to be off so you can see the screen; people are soon asleep; the program crashes.

And on and on.

I am going to learn to use PowerPoint because I know it shows that I am on top of technology. I will simply use it as I have used overhead foils in the past—to *enhance* the presentation, not *become* the presentation!

The good news is that PowerPoint brings everyone into the new Millennium. The bad news is that 75% of the people using it don't know how! The point? Only use technology to enhance what you are doing, not overwhelm it!

In running my speaking business, I now know technology can make or break me. Web sites are an expected marketing tool in business today. Many nay-sayers in the speaking industry feel this technology is not necessary to succeed. I'm sure there is a very small percentage of speakers who were well established before the Internet era who do not need a web site. I also know what my site has done for my credibility. The links on my site and to other resources allow my clients to connect electronically.

We will always have time enough, if we will but use it aright. —Goethe

Email is a critical component of my business, with or without a web site. I want to stay connected to my network, clients, family and friends, no matter where my travels take me in the world. I can do that with email. The recipients can pick up messages when they want and respond at their convenience.

The people in my database receive my leadership ezine newsletter on the latest trends and issues of industry on a monthly basis in a format comfortable for them. Kept short and sweet, this is one of the best tools as a CEO I use today. Connecting, keeping myself remembered and providing valuable information can only be done with this technology. Snail mail gets tossed, phone calls are not returned and personal appointments are cancelled.

How are you using technology to make life easier and more efficient?

You are the company. Reflect upon the chart (pg. 6) and resolve now to make visible in your life the fact that you can truly become your own CEO.

Visit Marsha Petire Sue's web site:

<http://www.MarshaPetrieSue.com>