

**A DYNAMIC INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL MARSHALL
OF
WWW.ASKTHEBUSINESSDOCTOR.COM**

ABOUT THE MANY PUZZLING BUSINESS SITUATIONS

WHAT IS BUSINESS TO DO?

Interviewer:

In the last several interviews you have shared some interesting and valuable information about a variety of business subjects including business development, management, marketing, sales, recruiting top skills and how “The Rule of 10” will interfere, plus the importance of “creativity” and “out of the box thinking”.

After reviewing the notes from the previous interviews I discovered that some information did not find its way into the published interview. I also realized that under much of the information discussed are many puzzling business situations; almost like paradoxes without a clear conclusion or answers for a solution.

I see that you are chuckling a little and I know that you like to lead others into discovering things on their own.

Did I uncover something here?

Reply:

Yes, you have discovered some very important things.

Congratulations.

Just dumping large amounts of information onto people will not effectively teach others nor will it necessarily help them to utilize the information to improve, grow, or do a better job.

One must help to lead others into discovering the answers and important information on their own.

When people discover the answers on their own, they tend to believe the information better compared to just hearing it from others.

Self discovery also lead people to be more willing to utilize the information to grow and do better.

Does this make any sense to you?

Interviewer:

Yes it does.

Looking back on some of my college courses taken, seminars attended, various trainings, and speakers that I have listened to, I can actually say I cannot remember the detailed information of what was covered or what I learned.

But I can tell you what I learned from discovering things on my own plus how and where I learned it.

Interesting, isn't it?

Let's get back to the puzzling business situations that seem to not have clearly defined answers and solutions.

Reply:

Where would you like me to begin?

Interviewer:

I am seeing that grin again and hearing a slight chuckle.

How about you just mentioning some of the more interesting puzzling business situations and making some insightful comments about them.

Reply:

Alright, I can do this.

I will try to make this interesting and informative.

I think that you will find that the answers and resolutions for many of these major puzzling business situations will need some substantial business attitude changes. Since changing attitudes is something that has to evolve based on both current and future factors, I cannot forecast when the changes will occur.

My business crystal ball will not show when such things will happen but all indications show changes are coming.

Some of these puzzling business situations include;

1. The importance for "creativity" and "out of the box thinking"
2. The importance of quality improvement in all business functions and departments
3. The importance of continual skill development
4. The importance of having the most current technology in computers, manufacturing equipment and other equipment needed to help keep competitive, globally
5. The importance of recruiting and retaining top talent and skills
6. The importance of utilizing well trained sales and marketing people or professional independent sales agencies to service customers and the markets
7. Most businesses are demanding that their suppliers and service providers offer the best

quality for the most competitive pricing no matter what they have to do to accomplish this.

8. Behavior and decision making is often based on emotions, the unconscious and the brain; not necessarily logic and common sense.

With “creativity” and “out of the box thinking”, we are raised and trained not to be creative.

We are told to color inside the lines.

When asked a question, we are expected give an answer and do so quickly.

We are not trained to explore other possibilities, for the most part.

When people are asked how “creative” and “out of the box thinking” they are, most will tell you how good they are and how much better they are than others.

When these people are asked how they became so creative they usually reply that it is just natural for the m.

This is a wrong answer.

Very few people have overcome the lack of training to be creative.

Those that have overcome the lack of training to be creative have done so with some formal training, an unusual personal drive to be “creative” and apply “out of the box thinking” and much personal sacrifice in so many personal ways.

Most of these types of people can be found in science, technology and medical research, some writers, artists, musicians, other arts, and some creative professional advertising and branding people.

“Creativity” and “out of the box thinking” is essential for business development yet this is not formally trained in most colleges nor is this aggressively promoted by businesses with adequate incentives and rewards.

This is a puzzling business situation.

Quality improvement in all business functions and departments beyond products is essential for business development.

This is not trained in many colleges except for possibly product quality improvement.

Continual improvement in all business functions and departments is not commonly encouraged nor does it have adequate incentives and rewards for such.

Add to this that management and business leaders are often not trained in this important function.

This is a puzzling business situation.

Continual skill development is critical for business development and staying competitive in the global market place.

Many businesses lack funds to encourage and support employees to increase their education and skills.

When there are business funds available, employees often do not utilize the funds.

Businesses often do not have adequate incentive programs to encourage employees to improve their skills & education.

When there are government funds available to help pay for upgrading employees skills and education, most businesses are not aware of them.

Some businesses that are aware of such funds do not take advantage of them for a variety of poor reasons.

Many critical skills needed for business development are not taught in many local colleges.

This is a puzzling business situation.

The need for businesses to have the most current technology in computers, equipment, production equipment, and facilities to give them an edge in the global market place is extremely important for business development.

Most companies do not have the funds and profits to reinvest in equipment.

Some of the few companies that have generated enough profits to invest in such equipment do not invest in such and instead do something else with the funds.

I will not elaborate on what some companies do with such funds due to being politically correct.

When government talks about possible programs with grant monies or low interest loans available to help businesses to modernize with newer equipment and be more competitive globally; sometimes conversations about business not wanting government intervention nor government help, comes up.

Sometimes if government does offer financial programs to help businesses, they are full of “red tape” and excessive regulations making such programs not practical and possibly intrusive.

If government does support such programs to help businesses become more modern often there is much political debate about where such funds need to be redirected from.

Again, I will not comment on this specific situation so I can stay politically correct.

This is a puzzling business situation.

Recruiting and retaining top skilled employees is very important for business growth.

“The Rule of 10” which is so common often prevents this.

“The Rule of 10” is fundamentally the situation where on a skill level of 1 to 10 with 10 being highest, 8’s hire 7’s, 7’s hires 6’s, 6’s hire 5’s, 5’s hire 4’s and so on downward.

People have a tendency to hire people below their own skill level for a psychological comfort level. This happens both unconsciously and consciously.

Most businesses have no training or programs set up to prevent the “The Rule of “10”

Most colleges do not educate or train on this to help prevent the situation.

Many businesses that admit to the fact that they do not hire employees with higher skill levels do so because of their fear of upsetting current lower skilled management and also fear of the skilled workers leaving them for better paying jobs in more progressive companies once the economy gets better.

Such companies are not willing to be more progressive and address the challenges.

This is a puzzling business situation.

Utilizing professional well trained sales and marketing staff or professional independent sales agencies to communicate with customers and the markets is important for business development.

“The Rule of 10” hinders this.

People have experiences in their daily lives dealing with companies over various issues and problems. After people interact with some companies we often hear people comment “why wonder the company is struggling and losing business”.

Add to this that over quite some time, many businesses started out by using independent sales agencies to grow their sales, market share and obtain new customers. Many companies after growing sales with these agencies terminated their business relationship with the sales agencies that helped them grow. They did so for transitioning to direct field sales staff.

Now during the downsizing, companies are finding that due to lack of direct staffing they need the independent sales agencies again.

Many sales agencies have lost trust in businesses offering to hire the agency’s services.

Many companies or businesses have low sales to where income from commissions is far lower than the sales agencies actual cost to represent the companies to hopefully increase sales.

In such cases, many sales agencies are now requiring a minimum monthly income or fee to represent such situations.

In the past companies only paid out a monthly commission to independent sales agencies based on sales but could terminated the business relationship and agreement with a short notice.

After sales agencies built up company’s markets and sales to be transitioned out later for direct staff, they are now a little smarter on recouping their up front costs to represent companies.

Companies are surprised over this.

This is a puzzling situation.

Most businesses and companies are now demanding the best quality products and services for competitive pricing from their suppliers no matter what the suppliers have to do to accomplish this.

But many of the companies demanding this, they themselves often are not willing to do the same with their products and services due to the many reasons that we have just discussed in the above.

You probably personally know many businesses that should be doing a far better job with products and services that affect you and your family.

This is a puzzling situation.

Understanding customers and influencing them to purchase products and services is very important to business development.

Current high technology scientific equipment is proving that human behavior and decision making is significantly influenced by emotions, the unconscious, and our brains. Yet, most business leaders and management are not trained in this and these things are not commonly taught in many colleges.

This is a puzzling business situation.

Most of these subjects and challenges are covered in the website’s business libraries on www.AskTheBusinessDoctor.com

It should be obvious that some significant changes in business attitudes are needed to allow improvement in these areas.

Interviewer:

These are puzzling business situations but they are very serious.

Do you see any improvement or advances in any these?

Reply:

Oh yes, but not nearly enough progress.

Some companies are great examples of excellence in many of these areas but not nearly enough companies.

The colleges are teaching some of these subjects but not nearly enough.

Trade associations and various business associations are making much progress in teaching some of these subjects but not nearly enough.

I commend these noble and worth while efforts.

Interviewer:

I want to put you on the spot now and ask what you personally suggest to be done for improving all of these critical areas.

Keep being political correct to a minimum; just give some honest and bold answers, here.

Reply:

Now you are putting me on the spot.

Let me think how I can answer this without creating enemies and upsetting too many people out there; yet be honest and bold.

Give me a minute to think about this.

OK, let's talk.

I suggest a bold communications campaign by all colleges, alumni associations, trade associations, professional business associations, educational and training providers, business publications, newspapers, magazines, chambers of commerce, television, and radio to bring these issues and needed improvements to a bold public notice.

Make it an aggressive improvement campaign and initiative with all of the issues.

Yes, I am talking about a bold national approach to aggressively support progress and business improvement. The objective is to become the best in the world and as today's politics refer to it, "become the place of choice to locate a business".

If we can have national campaigns for anti drugs, anti smoking, do not drive if you have been drinking, and encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's

education, we can also have a national campaign for quality business improvement and with details.

On the bold side, maybe even to the extent of a campaign for “Support the companies that are showing significant improvements to become the best there is” then publicly list such companies and businesses with their services and products to encourage people to support them.

Bold and creative, isn't it?

Remember the rules for “creativity” and “out of the box thinking”;

1. no rules are allowed; there are no rules
2. there are no boundaries

Then approach all business leaders and senior management to educate and train them on all of these important issues.

Only through well informed and trained leadership from the very top levels of businesses and companies will any improvement be possible.

Combine these efforts with government programs of grants and low interest loans for company improvements to obtain the latest technology equipment and skill level improvements to help make businesses globally competitive.

With such support programs only then will any substantial progress will be made.

In addition, businesses will need aggressive internal programs to support such initiatives. Such programs to include adequate incentives and rewards for progress in these areas, along with significant negative ramifications to any management staff or employee found hindering any of the improvements and progress.

Have outside consultants come in to review the programs and review all incentive and financial reward programs from the bottom up to the very top level of the organizations. Make sure that there are adequate incentives programs in place to support progress at all levels of companies and to make sure that there are no incentive programs at any level that can be counter productive to business development in any way or hinder improving in any area.

Behavior often follows the money.

It is important to make sure that monies are used to support and reinforce improvements and progress.

It is equally important to track down all monies that are creating situations or encouraging anything that can hinder progress and improvements. Once these interfering situations are found or uncovered, they need to be changed or eliminated quickly.

Well there it is; an honest and bold answer with some creativity but yet hopefully, politically correct.

Interviewer;

The information from this interview is extensive, interesting and of value just like the other interviews with you.

I know that it was difficult for you stay politically correct while trying to give us a personal honest and bold answer to my last question.

It appears that you accomplished this though.

I believe that others will appreciate the information and the insights discussed here.

It is thought provoking.

Thank you for the information.

Michael P. Marshall

Michael has an advanced post graduate degree in Business, an MBA, BS degrees in Psychology and Social Human Behavior, and federally certified in International Business along with 25 years of experience in sales, marketing & business development starting as a field sales staff and advancing to Director and VP levels in marketing and sales. Even though he is a practicing professional by working as a full time staff Director or Vice President of Sales, Marketing & Business Development, Michael does keep a limited consulting practice.

His website of www.AskTheBusinessDoctor.com offers important business information as well as business development consulting programs available.

His main focus of expertise is Business Development utilizing extensive skills and experience in marketing, sales management, and “creativity” / “out of the box thinking” for business development.

Michael has considerable respect to the capabilities and power of professional independent sales agencies in helping companies develop significant business in both major and niche markets.

He can be reached at 918-499-1970 as well on his website of www.AskTheBusinessDoctor.com