

# RAJ REVIEW

Ideas

Insights

News

Monthly Briefing for the Business Professional

## A MESSAGE FROM RAJ

For most of us, the final months of the year are a time for reflection and thanks, giving and sharing, hopes for the future and, of course, celebration with loved ones. We at RAJ Associates wish you a warm, joyous, and peaceful holiday season and our best wishes for a happy and successful new year!

## SENSITIVITY TRAINING SEMINAR IS A BIG SUCCESS

We'd like to thank Jupiter Images for being the first organization to test our latest seminar, Sensitivity Training. Overall, we received extremely high ratings. Participants felt the discussions were relevant and particularly enjoyed the interactive format which helped facilitate discussion and presentation. Cited as the most valuable components were tips on how to deal with inappropriate behavior in the work setting, clarification of what constitutes sexual harassment, how ethnic and cultural stereotypes affect workplace harmony, how to discuss potentially sensitive issues with co-workers, and a reminder to think before speaking. 90% of the attendees recommended this training for all other departments in the organization and 100% felt the instructors held their attention and kept them interested throughout the presentation.

## November/ December 2007 Edition

### Reader Highlights

NEWS:	Seminar Success
FEATURED ARTICLE:	Execute Your Strategy Without Killing It
FOOD FOR THOUGHT:	Check Time Before Criticizing
TIP OF THE MONTH:	Making Body Language



## FEATURED ARTICLE

### Execute Your Strategy Without Killing It By Lauren Keller Johnson (Excerpted from Harvard Management Update 12/04)

According to Ernst & Young, 66% of corporate strategy is never executed, which means that huge amounts of time and money are expended with nothing to show for it. Whether due to corporate tradition, conflicting interests, or poor communication, successful companies have learned to overcome such obstacles.

The process of defining and designing a strategy cannot be seen as distinct from creating a plan of execution. This means involving a wide range of people, not just the inner sanctum of upper level executives. When leaders plan in a vacuum, they end up without the support of the lower ranks, or even customers and suppliers. Thus, it is vitally important to seek input from whomever will be affected by the change. In doing so, everyone involved will have a sense of ownership and be more interested in the plan's success, to say nothing of the fact that they will likely have a significant impact on making the plan more viable. When this occurs, everyone focuses on the company's interests rather than their own.

Clear objectives, tasks, and accountabilities are key. Understanding and defining the links between high level strategy, strategic objectives, and lower level support is vital. Long-term views should serve as a source of inspiration, while shorter-term strategic objectives move the company toward the long-term vision. It is

important not to attempt too many objectives at once; rather, they should be broken down into three or four tactical goals with initiatives tied to those goals. They should also be doable – not so complicated as to scare people off. Tasks and milestones should be clearly defined because strategy is executed one person and one project at a time. Equally important is universal clarity on how progress will be measured at each key stage. Rapid feedback will keep everyone abreast on individual and company-wide progress.

A rigorous plan to sustain and build on the strategy is required. Successful managers often accomplish this by encouraging buy-in – making their people care. This is accomplished by explaining the emotional and financial benefits as well as the penalties for not achieving them. When problems arise – which they will – rather than telling people what to do, in depth discussions should be held to inform them of how the strategy will address those problems. When one connects the strategy to real life situations and dreams, the execution becomes far more personally satisfying. Incentives can also play a large role in successful implementation, whether in the form of bonuses, pay increases, promotions, or other non-financial rewards. The key here is to know your employees and exactly what motivates them on an individual basis.

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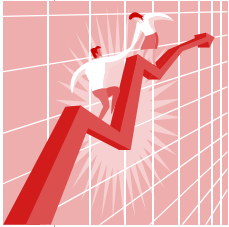
### BOOKS OF THE MONTH

*The Manager's Tool Kit*, Cy Charney  
*Leadership Theory and Practice*,  
Peter Northouse



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The best strategy implementers mobilize cross-functional execution teams around each strategic objective and supporting initiative. This enables people to collaborate across the enterprise to ensure



that each initiative supports its corresponding objective and is carried out on time. It is wise to match initiatives to team leaders based on skill, experience, and personal interest in new challenges. And, by making accountability and

progress public, managers' and employees' sense of responsibility are strengthened. Lead managers should, however, stay out of their subordinates' way when they are handling the execution well.

Even when the plan is moving along smoothly, it is important to continually reinforce the importance of the strategy and its implementation. Three major questions that should not be forgotten are (1) whether the person is on board, (2) if they are moving forward, and (3) whether they are in sync with everyone else involved. It is also incumbent upon the questioner to elicit feedback and suggestions from the managers and then utilize them whenever possible.

No planning will succeed unless the proper tools and resources are readily available, whether training, information technology, or time. Executives must keep in mind that new strategies must be worked into or around current workloads and plan accordingly.

## TIP OF THE MONTH

### Making Body Language

Saying what you mean on a sales call isn't enough. You have to show it. "To effectively communicate, it's not always what you say, but what your body says, that makes the difference," says Patricia Ball, President of the National Speakers Association. She says executives looking for a competitive edge should practice the following areas of body language:

*Nothing Crossed:* Keep legs, feet, and arms open. In addition, show you're relaxed by opening your suit jacket once inside the client's office. This type of body language says, "I'm laying it all on the table. I have nothing to hide."



*Mirroring:* Imitate the client's body rhythm and actions, but don't overdo it. For example, if the client crosses her legs, subtly do the same.

*Leaning Forward:* Moving closer to the client shows curiosity and intensity. Leaning back demonstrates aloofness or rejection. According to Ball, "When we're interested in something we want to hear better, so we lean forward."

*Direct Eye Contact:* This is usually a sign of strong character.

*Handshake:* The most important element of a good handshake is one that reaches all the way into the other person's hand. In addition, match the client's pressure.

Nonverbal communication can also be an effective sales tool when executives learn how to read a client's body language. For example, a deep breath followed by a sigh is a release of tension. This may indicate that the customer has made a decision and is therefore ready for the close.



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### *Check The Time Before You Criticize*

It's not only *what* you say and *how* you say it that you must consider; it's also *when* you say it. You can praise an employee any time and it will always be welcome. But before



you offer criticism, ask yourself: Is this the best time? If an employee is up to his elbows in a complicated task or project, let him finish. If an employee is about to leave on a three-day weekend, wait until she gets back. You want the individual to accept the criticism and use it to improve performance. Yet in each of the examples cited, your input will likely become only a momentary distraction – and a lasting morale-killer. Choose a time when the employee can fully concentrate on what you have to say.

## INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS

Hard work gives life meaning. Everyone needs to work hard at something to feel good about themselves. Every job can be done well and every day has its satisfactions.- Osceola McCarthy

We have the resources to solve our problem. But the question is, do we have the will?- Martin Luther King Jr.

### ON THE HUMOROUS SIDE

Most of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to get their work done.-Peter Drucker

To err is human – and to blame it on a computer is even more so.-Robert Orben

## GET IN TOUCH

We love feedback. Let us hear from you about what's most useful in our newsletters, how we can make it better, and topics you'd us to tackle for you.

Call us to discuss your needs, explore how we can help, and learn more about our services.

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