



The Leading your business in the face of economic uncertainty

Practical steps to lead your business

With Coach Jeff Earlywine



Lesson Handout

I am convinced, more than ever, if you prepare yourself, your staff and your business to embrace and learn from uncertainties you will increase your client base and have more successes, which will result in larger profits. The businesses that don't will probably not be around to tell about it.

Therefore, lets explore in detail what it means to have a committed team that refuses to lose, a team that constantly thinks outside the box, and a team that focuses on a preferred future. This will provide you with skills and ideas to help you develop your own preferred future. If you will indulge me, I would like to use another analogy – stockcar racing.

Stockcar racing is one of my favorite sports, and has been most of my life. I have spent hours sitting on a hard bleacher watching 43 drivers race at speeds exceeding 200mph, and doing it just inches from each other. It is a sport that has evolved from a bunch of moon-shiners showing off their “beefed up” cars to now a multi-million dollar industry full of high-tech computerized equipment. In the middle of all these high-powered engines, fast turns, and million-dollar paychecks are some basic principles to help you and your practice thrive in a world of uncertainty. Below are five of those principles first explained in racing terminology and then made applicable to your life and business.

Mental Preparation

In a driver's mind, the race has to start before he ever arrives at the track. The driver and his team have to be mentally prepared to endure whatever it takes to win. That's the number one priority. Losing is not an option!

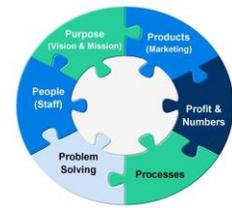
In order for you to win, or overcome your day's challenges, you must be mentally prepared. I have found that mental preparedness and success in my day comes from...

- Preparing and planning my day, yesterday. You can do this by simply making a list of what you want to get accomplished tomorrow – this can be done on something as basic as a 3x5 card.
- Managing my time. Your daily agenda is managed with good time management techniques. The real question is... “Are you the master of your time, or is it the master of you?” The following concepts will help you maximize the 86,400 seconds that you have today:
 - Establish measurable goals and plans
 - Know how to invest your time
 - Identify and eliminate time wasters



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- Know yourself and your priorities
 - Learn to say, “No”
 - Delegate, delegate, and delegate
 - Group similar and like activities together
 - Organize for quick and easy retrieval
 - Use a calendar and a to-do list.
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- Expecting the best but being prepared for the worst.
 - Remembering to keep my priorities first in my day.
 - Thinking outside the box – just because you have never done it this way before does not mean you can’t or shouldn’t.

Sound Car

Every racetrack is going to have its peculiarities and a different set of challenges to overcome, but the driver and crew must identify them beforehand and factor that information into the set-up of the car. Adjusting the car to each track is the single, greatest challenge, week-in and week-out, for every driver and team. Every piece of equipment on the car must be thoroughly checked. The engine has to be thoroughly checked by every member of the crew. By the time the green flag drops on race day, car, driver and team must be as one and as close to perfect as possible.

The better we stick to our priorities the more successful we will be. If priorities are what keep us heading in the right direction, then our plans are the equipment that must be adjusted and analyzed with a fine-toothed comb. The old saying is true, “If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail.” Remember, your life is a glass jar. You fill it each day with large, medium, and small rocks. The large rocks are your priorities, which must go in first.

Track Position

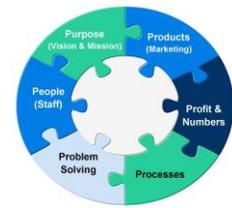
Track position is the key of keys when it comes to winning a race. The secret to establishing track position comes down to risk. While the crew chief can keep the driver posted on what his car can do, knowing when and where to do it is still left up to a driver's instincts. Trying to pass a car that's going the same speed is very difficult. You need the right combination of timing, knowledge of the track and risk.

Track position in racing is just as important as being in the right position at the right time in life. It has been said, “It is not what you know, but who you know that counts.” That may very well be true, but if you are not in the right place at the right time it does not matter. So the question is, “How can you be in the right place at the right time to



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capitalize on an opportunity?” The answer, at least for me, is to focus on preparing for the opportunity instead of always looking for the opportunity. I am of the opinion that if you prepare well enough the opportunities seek you out. Then, when you get an opportunity, go at it with a refuse to lose attitude.

How to prepare your business for coming opportunities

1. Offer the right services by hiring the right people.
2. Build a reputation of 5-Star service before, during, and after.
3. Be patient, never give up on offering your services. Remember, Michael Jordon missed over 9000 shots in his career, lost over 300 games, and twenty-six times he was trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed but he is still the best player to play the game of basketball.
4. Network with other professionals in the community.

Pit Stops

Making up time on the track, only to give it back in the pits, is one of the surest ways to stay out of Victory Lane. While most pit stops routinely take between 15 and 20 seconds, and might only occur four or five times a race, they can combine to total the most significant *minute* in a three-hour race.

A pit stop in your life is R&R, rest and relaxation. Most of us live lives going Mach 3 with our hair on fire, and love every minute of it. However, pit stops are the key to life's success. Just like in racing, the pit stops in our lives are short and few in number. But they are extremely important. Also, as in racing, our pit stops must be intentionally planned out, and effective. The goal of each pit stop in our life should be to refuel our tanks, clean our view of life, and provide strength enough to overcome the uncertainty of life's challenges.

Luck

If luck is where preparation meets opportunity, then bad luck is where preparation meets circumstance. More times than not, cars involved in accidents really did nothing wrong. They just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time (circumstance). It is inevitable that a certain amount of bad luck will take place in every race.

I don't know about you, but this sounds just like life. I have found that bad things do happen to good people, and that good luck appears just as often. Many times it is our perspective and attitude towards things that makes all the difference.

Changing your attitude is as simple as the five suggestions listed below:



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1. Smile. It has been proven that smiling results in chemicals being released in the body resulting in increased health and energy.
2. Speak something positive about yourself. Each day we hear all kinds of negative remarks about ourselves. From heart-piercing jokes from friends to television advertisements telling us that we must be in perfect physical shape to reach our goals in life. Creating a habit of positive self-talk will build our self-esteem with tremendous benefits – remember FOCUS.
3. Count your blessings – family members, occupation, material things. We are so blessed. Stopping to count your blessings will cause you to be satisfied with who you are and what you have. Having goals to achieve greatness is important, but not being satisfied with what you have achieved will only cause you to become frustrated and desiring the proverbial “grass on the other side of the fence.”
4. Treat someone you care about or work with as if they are the most important person in the world.
5. Don't take yourself so serious – learn to laugh, especially at yourself.