





Where do you go for growth and inspiration?


Seminar Topics

If you're like most small companies you have little time for inspiration - perspiration is more likely. These times call for new thinking and sometimes it can be helpful to expose yourself and your team to new ways of thinking. If you are interested in having Sharon Aby, Beyond Ideas, speak at one of your meetings, give a seminar at your company, or train your salespeople, here are some suggested topics she regularly presents to small businesses.

 **Stepping Up To 21st Century Selling** "Revenues are down and profits are sinking," is becoming a familiar lament coming from many businesses today. Faced with greater competition and a tighter economy, companies are spending more money on sales and marketing with no return on their investment. Chances are they are doing the same things that they've always done expecting to have different results. To take the lead in this dynamic market you must develop a 21st century selling mindset and learn to operate in real-time. It's essential to create a continuous sales process to keep your sales pipeline full and your sales funnel flowing. The secret is to learn how to seed the virtuous cycle of innovation, marketing, and sales for your company. The seminar focuses on six components of 21st century selling, beginning with how to operate in real-time - the only time zone for the 21st century.



 **The Perfect Storm: Why Business Changed Overnight** One thing that is very clear is that the world of marketing and selling for small business has changed dramatically. It used to be, you put an ad in the yellow pages and printed a brochure and more. We all know that something significant has changed over the past few years. Like the perfect storm, there are 3 big changes that intersect. First, the global marketplace is firmly in place, driving lower prices and unlimited choice. Second, the digital marketplace - or internet - erases time and place leaving no barriers between competitors and your customers. And, third, there was an overproduction of goods during the good years, now we have an oversupply problem and excess capacity. It is so enormous that when the current economic downturn settles down, we won't be returning to the old ways - that is for sure. This seminar is designed to give you insights into the three forces affecting all businesses today and how you can organize your business to become a 21st century competitor.


 **The Virtuous Cycle: Customers, Markets, and Innovation** Your very survival will depend on your ability to move rapidly and flexibly from ideas to action, strategy to tactics, marketing to sales, and customers for life. The way to organize and execute with agility in the face of change is to acquire a 21st century mindset: open, collaborative and decentralized. Open because there are no secrets on a Network that operates 24/7/365. Collaborative because information today flows in all directions, instantaneously and simultaneously. And, decentralized because power does not reside at a single point of central control anymore.


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The 21st century mindset will allow you to survive the recession by creating a virtuous cycle. You'll learn how to create a distributed market presence, create customer access and add IT smart systems all connected in a way that makes your company the one most responsive to change. With a new mindset, you'll change your view to a new reality, reset priorities and give customers new solutions, and innovate.


10 Traits of Successful 21st Century Companies


Today the Internet structures the material world of business and therefore, the logic of the network or digital laws determine the way things are done. By now, most of us think we know what that means. But do we really? The Internet and its invisible hand have been rearranging every aspect of business for several years now. It has become the order of all things. The greatest challenge each of us faces right now is to let go of our analog world and embrace the digital world of business. We think we've made this transition because we use cell phones, pagers, digital cameras and so on, but digital requires that we not only use it, it requires us to be it. Learn why the winner is the organization that offers the most varied menu from which a customer can choose and customize. Learn why there are no competitors, just better solutions, and more choices because of ever increasing solutions. Learn how to think and behave like the companies that are mastering the 10 traits that are shaping the foundation of business in the next century.

 **Innovate or Die : Strong words or reality?** What is innovation, but improving upon what you did yesterday? Less than a decade ago product cycles were 18-24 months, in other words, new products came into the market every couple of years. Today, new products are coming into the market constantly and companies who used to have 2 year product introduction cycles are now introducing new products every 6 to 12 months. That means that companies must introduce new services or products as a matter of practice just to compete. Whether it's a new menu item at Starbucks or a new product from Apple - standing still while competitors poach into your territory is not an option. This seminar examines what it means to innovate from your accounting strategies, to your products and services, or through your human resource practices. Innovation is a way of thinking that permeates your entire organization and creates a call to action from each and every employee.

 **Sales Is A Process, Not An Event: The Sales Cycle** Business is about relationships. Having said that, most companies are doing relationships badly. Either not using technologies to effectively manage customer needs or worse, misusing technology - badly - to harass customers. How many unsolicited emails do you receive everyday? For many sales people the challenge is to get that sale, what makes getting that sale so difficult? It's difficult because of the increased competition, too much product, too many choices and price pressure. Companies who think they can push more noise into the marketplace - ads, emails, mailers - and be heard above the crowd probably do find getting the sale difficult. The answer is simple, but not easy. The answer, which this seminar will explore in detail, is that you must own the sales process of creating awareness, education, consideration and sales

 **Get It Right Every time: Communicating Well** People who communicate well are more effective in business and in life than those who don't. The essence of leadership is the ability to communicate your vision clearly and daily to employees, customers, partners, and investors. Managers who get work done through people need to be able to motivate, train, and develop employees. And employees who are the front line of your business talking to customers everyday are the face and voice of your business. If your company is currently leaving communications up to chance or currently have an unresolved communications problem you might want to think about getting some help. This seminar frames communications as an art and a science - how it sounds when done right and the learned discipline of great communicators. And since communications go beyond what individuals say to what your company says in it's marketing and sales campaigns we'll show you how to get your market message right every time as well.

 **Managing People By Leading** We had a slogan at Apple that went like this, "Apple people can't be managed, they must be led." General George S. Patton said, "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do, and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." Your employees get through their own lives quite nicely doing the things that they are motivated to do. Your challenge as a leader and manager is to tap into each person's well of creative energy - harness it, measure it, and reward it. The old model, the Industrial Age, required assembly line or cookie cutter performance from employees. In contrast, the 21st century model, The Information Age, requires companies to harness and harvest the energy and ingenuity of every employee. Why? Because the marketplace is changing every minute and the only way to compete is to respond to those changes in real-time. When you're ready to get the most out of your people this seminar can help. Topics covered will include the top 10 ways to manage by leading.

 **Hire To Win: Recruitment & Hiring Process** Do you have people working for you who will argue with you? Are some of them smarter than you? Are you hiring people who balance your talent and the skills of others in your organization? Nothing matters more to winning than getting the right people out on the field. The secret of great companies in today's marketplace is that they hire very very well. Attracting great people begins with the courage and fortitude to cast your net wide and set high expectations. Expectations that come from your company's mission and strategy, which are translated into required skills and attributes. The law of attraction suggests that you will attract to you what you intend - so intend to find your replacement - settle for nothing less. This seminar will show you the mechanics of how some of America's best companies hire the best people year after year. It will show you the discipline of creating a process that elevates the hiring decision to be on par with the other most critical functions of your company. President John Kennedy's team was known historically as the best and the brightest - that was not accidental hiring.

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☞ Your People Are Strategic Assets: Appraisal & Development Process Even if your company is too small to have an HR department, somebody has to be doing HR. As Jack Welch says, “If you managed a baseball team, would you listen more closely to the team accountant or the director of player personnel?” Give someone the responsibility to create a review process. If your company doesn’t have a meaningful evaluation and development system you simply have no way to manage people to better performance. Forget trying to manage people to objective results. It can be a simple process, the important thing is that it is managed consistently and with integrity. This seminar looks at how the great companies manage people as a

Great companies manage people as a strategic asset.

strategic asset, beginning with an appraisal and development process. You’ll understand people better: ambitious self-starters, people who just show up, and employees lacking certain skills. You’ll leave with system examples and HR tools to creating a process of your own, but most importantly the session will change the way you think about your people and your role in their performance.

☞ Make Everyone Count: Developing Highly Effective Teams If you’ve hired the right people the next challenge is to create the team. Teams are made up of players who are the best at playing their position and together they handle the ball faster, better, and with more finesse than the competition. Create teams around the skills you need to do the job. It’s too bad that business teams aren’t as clearly defined as sports teams. You wouldn’t put a guy in the forward position if he couldn’t shoot. Likewise, your job is to assemble teams of A players who consequently raise the level of play of each member of the team. Winning teams begin with winning individuals who are encouraged, led, and rewarded by good managers. This seminar shows you how to create and develop all-star teams that deliver results year after year.

☞ Think It, Say It, Do It: The Art & Science of Focus Clarity, communications, and execution are the pillars of an effective 21st century company. The new economy bombards us everyday, at an accelerating pace, with obstacles, competitors, options, and opportunities. You have to run faster just to stay in place. Inventories that used to be adjusted monthly are now adjusted in hours. Products and services that were your business mainstays are becoming obsolete. Your employees need new skills to respond to an ever changing competitive environment. This seminar will show you how to execute rapidly and flawlessly with this 3-prong strategy - Think it, Say it, Do it. Learn how to think with clarity, which means removing things of lesser importance so that you bring focus to what is important. Learn how to say what needs to be done and mobilize your organization. Learn how to do what needs to get done by setting objectives and measuring results. In today’s environment focus and rapid execution is a skill worth cultivating.

About California Associates

