

Making the Impossible Possible Newsletter

Spring 2017

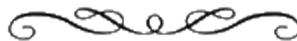
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“Making the Impossible Possible”

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Letter from the editor

Dear readers,

I'm often asked why I volunteer for organizations and my church even though sometimes it is time consuming. I've benefited in both added business and feeling the satisfaction of knowing I've helped others improve. I chose to be an entrepreneur because of the flexibility it gives me to make choices. Please remember I offer a free consultation. Do you need help developing your strategies for the future? Are you considering retirement, deciding on whether to become an entrepreneur, or more fully develop your business with a new marketing or business plan? Please give me a call and we can discuss whether I can motivate you to move forward.

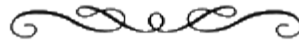
This year, my travels have included Lawton, OK; Las Vegas, NV; Washington, DC; Anaheim, CA; Long Beach, CA; and Woodland Hills, CA. In May, I'll be travelling to Sacramento, CA and Baton Rouge and New Orleans, LA. Thus far, in the next few months, I'll be travelling to Denver, CO; Paso Robles, CA; Reno, NV; Pittsburgh, PA; Sioux Falls, SD; St. Cloud, MN; and Lancaster, PA. To give organizations and corporations discounted

speaking fees, I try to coordinate events and trainings. Please let me know about events or possible speaking opportunities in these and other areas, since I'm always adding cities to my itinerary.

Have a wonderful spring and summer season!

Ardis Bazyn

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HIRING AND FIRING STAFF OR CONTRACTORS

By: Ardis Bazyn

Do you have procedures in place for hiring and firing employees or contractors? If not, create some guidelines, checklists, or consider developing a manual or document to consult in the future. If you have never written materials, you may wish to have a consultant teach you some techniques that would be helpful in dealing with employee situations. State employment agencies will often work with employers who have had difficulties on specific hiring and firing practices.

If you have been fairly successful in hiring great employees or contractors, it might be beneficial to list the steps you have taken to find those good ones. This is important in case you choose or are forced to designate someone else to handle this responsibility in the future. In order to continue to generate positive results, you should list your previous hiring process. Consider the functions, which have been the most valuable for attracting and retaining reliable employees.

Whether you are a new business or well-seasoned, hiring and firing practices are always challenging. Several tasks need to be explored: publicity for new positions, the skills and education preferred, the range of wages, and the process for choosing the most favorable candidate for the current position. Also, when you fire an employee, you should have already determined that "any" new employee would be better than the one you are releasing.

First of all, you must decide when to hire an employee or whether a contractor would work. If you have an open position because an employee resigned from your business, it may be an easy decision to hire a replacement. However, you should take this opportunity to reconfigure or otherwise restructure the duties of the position to more reliably reflect your current business operation. Some employees may prefer some tasks to others. You may be able to give a new employee duties others did not want. As they work longer, some of their least favorite tasks may be diverted to a different employee. Thus, all would be happier in their work.

Revising each position as it becomes vacant will allow your business to run more smoothly. It is best to consider the new opening as an opportunity to make adaptations in the position. For example, you may have updated computer software in order to complete the paperwork or other duties differently. Therefore, the new employee may need to have experience in working with your new software. Conversely, you may determine it would be helpful to start using a new program and hire a person who has the knowledge necessary to run that program.

Training must be considered. How much do you wish to undertake. Perhaps, in order to

start an employee at a lower rate of pay, you are willing to accept applicants with little or no experience or certification. However, if you require an employee with specific skills, or particular software capabilities, it may be worth paying a higher wage. Time sensitivity is the main gauge for this decision. Do you have the proper staff and time to train in this area of expertise? Will you have to pay for outside specialists? You must determine what will work best for you in your current business. You may prefer to train employees yourself unless you have a manager or assistant manager with the skills to do training in a way that suits your business best.

Some hiring decisions are taken out of your hands. State and federal requirements about discrimination in hiring must be followed. These characteristics cannot be considered: Age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, and gender. Your ultimate choice must be based on prior experience, education, skills, and other qualities, which make the person the best for the job. Of course, your pay rate may exclude some reliable applicants.

Think about exactly what the job title should state. The job description in the ad published should be as accurate as possible; for it may make a great difference in the applicants you receive. The number of inquiries will vary primarily based on your publicity.

When developing your ad, state what skills are crucial in as few words as possible. The copy must be clear but extra words just increase the cost. You may choose to add the salary range. If you wish more calls and prefer to screen candidates, a phone number or box number should be given for interested persons to contact for appointments. This will allow you to limit those you wish to interview. Also, if your business is located in a security conscious facility, you may prefer to have persons entering the building cleared ahead of time.

It would also allow interested persons to ask a variety of questions before they made an appointment. Often, this screening will eliminate curious and inappropriate applicants. You will be able to explain the possibility of flexible hours for students and parents of small children. Some businesses may not be able to handle flexible schedules but employees will work harder for you if you can allow them. Flexibility is more important to some applicants than the amount of pay.

In order to be fair to all interested persons, the same application should be used for each one. Also, interview questions should be similar. If you ask new or varied questions, it will make it more difficult for you to determine your ultimate choice since you may not be able to compare answers to varied questions.

Specific areas of expertise should always be your primary concern. If you need them to drive, request an up-to-date license and ask about their driving record and insurance on the vehicle. Different tests can be used to indicate ability in particular areas. Questions about whether a prospective employee has knowledge of the state's sanitation or safety rules, has certifications in food safety, or has taken the Restaurant Association food safety course are relevant for those hiring food service personnel. Inquire about their ability to format written documents, use specific computer software, or just read and fill out forms. You may wish employees to know specific computer programs, to have experience in supervising other employees, or to understand true customer service etiquette. Your questions should indicate how extensive their experience really is in the areas you find beneficial.

If you have concern about whether an applicant will be able to complete some functions of the job, tests or actual exercises as part of an interview can be weighed. For example, specific questions about the ability to lift certain amounts of weight or lifting numerous times in short periods of time, ability to write clear instructions, ability to add or subtract, to handle a cash drawer, and writing tests for those who must write extensively might be necessary

for the new job. Questions regarding how they would handle any given situation or particular problem would be beneficial. Concrete examples for them to consider will give you more guidance. All applicants must complete the same tests or exercises to be nondiscriminatory. If they wish to skip the tests, you may inform them they may be excluded from the list of applicants.

An interview should include questions prepared in advance about hypothetical situations that may occur on the job. You might ask how they would handle a rude customer who complains about one of your products. Any feasible questions about the tasks to be performed on the job are helpful. If you require the employee to make change, it might be important to have a math quiz. Another question might be: why do you want this particular job? The answer may warn you about possible problems if the applicant said any job was ok. A more appropriate response would be that they were interested in your company.

You should also note how the applicant was dressed. Specific clothes are not as important as whether they are clean, neat, and in repair. You should ask them if they have the type of apparel you expect on the job. Uniforms can alleviate this problem altogether. You must also ascertain whether the person is courteous, respectful, follows directions, and seems to be trainable.

Sifting through resumes is a complicated task. I usually go through them first to weed out those requesting a much higher rate of pay than I can afford. Then, I take out the ones, which don't meet my minimum requirements. Finally, I check the prior work experience. I rarely call previous employers unless two applicants are rated similarly. Previous employers do not usually say anything detrimental about a past employee. You can sometimes guess by how quick the particular questions are answered. If there is hesitation or the answer seems canned, you may wish to choose another applicant. I also check how long employees worked at each previous employer. Some applicants may jump from job to job every few months. Unless you relish constant training, you may prefer more steady workers. However, this may be misleading if the pay difference was substantial or when workers were laid-off.

If you are in doubt of the capabilities of any applicant, you may ask them how they would handle a given situation. Once you have decided which applicant is the most qualified, you may then ask a person with a disability if they need accommodations. In some cases, smaller businesses are not required to hire this person if the costs of accommodations are too high. However, many rehabilitation service agencies are able to provide what the person needs to be successful. Often, disabled employees tend to be very reliable and stay longer in a position than others.

Sometimes applicants with varied cultural backgrounds might act differently than you expect. Some ethnic group members do not believe in looking you right in the eye. Others may speak softly or deferentially. Perhaps, one may use brash language or look tough. Don't allow yourself to judge an applicant too hastily. Honestly critique all applicants based on experience and skills rather than totally on your personal instincts. If you have specific criteria listed in advance, you can focus on that checklist to grade each applicant.

Once you decide on which employee to hire, call him/her immediately and find out when he/she is available to start. Some applicants need to give a two-week notice to a present employer or may have to arrange for day care. You may wish to call or write applicants who made it to the interview process to thank them for their time.

Firing is very problematic. In most cases, if you fire employees after they've been with you for more than 13 weeks, you may be liable for unemployment benefits. Often determinations are based on how accurate your employment records are kept. In most cases, you must give two written memos to an employee about deficiencies on the job. Each memo must

mention the specific problems with the employee and time frames for compliance. In other words, you must state clearly what is wrong with the work and how the errors or lack must be rectified.

You could offer more training or simply require more attention to details of the particular tasks performed. After the second memo is ignored or inadequately addressed, you must suspend the person for a period of time (three days is typical). If, after returning, the employee continues with the unresponsive behavior, you can issue notice. If you follow this procedure and your requests are not unreasonable, you should not have to be responsible for unemployment benefits.

However, after an initial investigation is concluded, you may be required to attend a hearing to justify the firing. During this investigation, you will be sent a form to fill out regarding your reasons for firing this employee. If you simply lay off an employee without a sufficient reason, unemployment benefits will be paid when or if the former employee makes a request to your local unemployment center.

Other methods may resolve a problem with an employee. You can reduce the hours and the employee may choose to quit. However, if the hours are cut substantially, you may still be liable to pay some unemployment benefits. Other times, you can shift their workload to help them more easily comply with your demands. Conversely, you can assign less satisfactory chores to the employee and he/she may resign. If you do not increase wages regularly, an employee may also choose to resign.

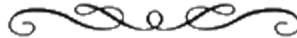
If employees see you dealing fairly with others, they will be more likely to trust and respect you. You should try to be as honest and helpful as possible to all employees. Appropriate raises should be awarded to those who do excellent work. Bonuses could be given in lieu of a wage increase. These steps may lessen the number of times you will have to hire new employees.

Often employees appreciate bonuses, incentives, or other benefits of the job. Excellent work conditions such as good lighting and equipment, agreeable management personnel, attractive projects, and appreciation or awards for their efforts may be seen as benefits.

Many employers use employee handbooks. If you decide to create one, several elements should be considered. First, an extensive description of each job should be written. The document should also include an outline of wage policies, particular incentives and bonuses, commissions (if any), benefit program policies, and firing or disengagement procedures. Asking a consultant to read your document for possible additions is always a good idea.

(Other tips on hiring and firing and helpful business resources can be found in "BUILDING BLOCKS TO SUCCESS: Does the Image of Your Business Attract Customers and Motivate Employees?" Order online at www.bazyncommunications.com)

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Thinking of Podcasts?

By Felicia Slattery

One way to get your name "out there" and in front of a lot of people in your niche easily and have it working for you over the long-term is by being a podcast guest.

In fact, this week, while I was suffering from the debilitating effects of food poisoning, I finished my one-sheet and here's what happened for my business:

- Was featured on Inc.com because a writer for them had interviewed me for his podcast months ago, liked what I said, and decided to quote me in a new article.
- Been officially invited to speak on FOUR podcasts.
- Been referred with direct and private introductions to speak on another SIX podcasts.
- Received more subscribers, and more sales: all while not even turning on the computer a couple days.

While starting a podcast is all the rage these days, and of course can be great for your business, honestly, I much prefer being the guest because it's so much less work and you get a lot of benefits from being the guest.

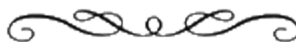
If you're not sure how to even go about being a podcast guest, here are a few steps for you:

1. Research the best podcasts for your niche. Use Google or go straight to iTunes or Stitcher.com to look for podcasts tailor-made for your audience. You can also ask on social media what shows people like or if they have any favorites in your niche.
2. Determine what your show / interview will entail. If you were to be interviewed on a podcast, what would you talk about? If you've written a book, that's an easy and obvious choice. If you are in any part of the process of writing a book, that would work well, too. Or you could discuss the topic of whatever you give away for free online to new subscribers, mistakes you see people in your field making, scams to avoid, or simply provide other tips, steps or useful info in your own unique way.
3. Create a segment proposal sheet. The more professional it looks, the more likely you'll be invited to be on the top shows. Make it easy on yourself: use of my Speaker One-Sheet Templates for the professional design.
4. Post your completed segment / interview proposal sheet on your blog, on social media (don't forget inside various groups where podcast hosts are LOOKING for experts like you!), and even write a press release about it. Make sure to ask your friends to please share it and help you spread the word you're available for interviews!

Those are the exact steps you can follow to get yourself featured on as many podcasts as you like. You'll get benefits like improved SEO (more links to your website), more visibility, more subscribers, more speaking requests, more clients, and on and on.

(Printed by permission by Felicia Slattery 1059 N. Cedar Bluff Road, Suite 177 Knoxville, Tennessee 37923 United States (865) 333-4728.

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Updates

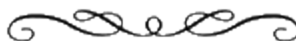
By Ardis Bazyn

To order books or seminars, check out www.bazyncommunications.com or call 818-238-9321. Checks, money orders, and Visa or MasterCard through Paypal are accepted.

All my books are available for purchase on my website: www.bazyncommunications.com in several formats. You can receive a discounted print copy of my third book by ordering it on my publisher's website: www.xlibris.com. BUILDING BLOCKS TO SUCCESS: Does the Image of Your Business Attract Customers and Motivate Employees?

Go to the author page and look for Ardis Bazyn or go to the book page and look for "Building Blocks to Success".

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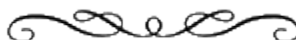
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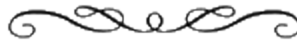


Contributions Accepted

If you wish to contribute an article to a future newsletter, or make any suggestions, please send an email to abazyn@bazyncommunications.com. Each

article received will be read and will be printed if it meets the newsletter criteria.

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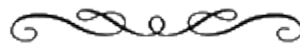


Links

Check out the links of organizations in which I participate:

| | |
|---|--|
| American Council of the Blind | www.acb.org |
| Burbank activities | www.burbank.com |
| Burbank Business Network International | www.bniburbank.com |
| Burbank Chamber of Commerce | www.burbankchamber.com |
| California Council of the Blind | www.ccbnet.org |
| California Voter Empowerment Circle | www.CALVEC.org |
| Coaching and Speaking Internationally | www.247coaching.com |
| Democracy Live Accessible Voting | www.democracylive.com |
| Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs | www.ivie-acb.org |
| Randolph Sheppard Vendors of America | www.randolph-sheppard.org |
| Speaker Match | www.speakersmatch.com |
| Success Simplified | www.successsimplified.com |
| Xlibris Publishing | www.xlibris.com |

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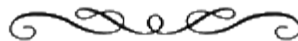


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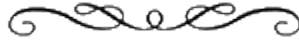
Favorite Quotes

"I'm convinced that about half of what separates the successful entrepreneurs from the non-successful ones is pure perseverance" –Steve Jobs

www.bazyncommunications.com

“You can have everything you want by helping enough other people” “The right idea with no follow-through is dead on arrival”

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