



# Seven Strategies To Focus Your Business on Results

- *A Special Report for  
Business Owners and Managers*



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## Introduction

The ability to focus is a powerful force. It creates an energy that if channeled correctly can do amazing things. In the world of business I've seen it double revenues, turn businesses around and pull management teams together to achieve never before imagined results. Focus is power.

If you're like a lot of small business owners you might have this feeling in the pit of your stomach that something's amiss. It's as though your business is not firing on all cylinders. You're working hard and so are your employees but there's this feeling that things aren't working as they should. Results aren't meeting expectations. There's this need for a plan but no time to create one. You spin your wheels taking action but wonder how much traction you're actually getting. You find yourself struggling with the same business issues year after year. You're stuck and frustrated because you can't seem to make headway.

**YOU NEED FOCUS!** You need the energy, direction and results it will create for you and your employees.

Imagine what it would be like if you had a plan that outlined your core objectives and strategies for doubling your bottom line results? Imagine your employees pulling together to achieve these goals and objectives. Now, that's power!

If you want the power of focus to come alive in your business we'd recommend the following seven strategies. We can attest to them because we've seen our clients achieve amazing results when they implement them in their business.

**Part One: Follow Your Guidelines**

Brand new Entrepreneurs and MBAs would pay a fortune to know what an experienced business owner knows. And yet, how often do we as business people fail to recognize the value of our years of experience and accumulated know how? Just think for a moment of all you've learned over the years through trial and error; through hands-on experience and the ups and downs of business life. You could write a book on the wisdom you've gained solely from the mistakes you've made along the way.

Despite the wisdom we've accumulated we rarely put it to work. It's one thing to gain knowledge but another to apply it for our benefit. The leading reason we fail to apply it is because we fail to capture it. Unless we can capture our experience in a way that is visible and available to us we stand a good chance of losing it. You know the old saying, "Out of sight, out of mind."

There are two parts to Strategy One. The first is to develop and remember three specific guidelines that if applied will have the ability to transform the results we achieve in our business. Here's an exercise to lead you through the process of creating your guidelines.

**Guidelines Exercise:**

**Step One** - Think for a moment about all your business activities over the last year. Write down your three biggest accomplishments and your three biggest disappointments.

**Step Two** - Then, ask yourself, "If I wanted to repeat or avoid repeating these results what would I need to remember?" Record your answers. These are the lessons that will move you forward.

**Step Three** - Select the top three lessons that, if practiced, would have the greatest impact on improving your business.

**Step Four** - Boil down your top three lessons into three short phrases or guidelines so that you can easily memorize them. Each of your guidelines should be no more than three or four words max. You want them to roll right off the tip of your tongue. And don't worry. They don't have to make sense to anyone else but you.

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We use the following three guidelines at JDA:

1. Always be in action.
2. Seek support from others.
3. Plan, prioritize, manage and do. (PPMD)

You might wonder, “Why do we give the creation of three guidelines such importance?” Because they come from your own personal experience. They come from your own internal wisdom. That’s what gives them meaning and importance to you. You know them to be true and that if applied, will do more for improving your business performance than any advice or book a consultant could give you.

## **Part Two: Empower Your Success**

The second part of strategy one is to search out that one thing which is holding you and your business back from the success you so earnestly desire. All of us, to one degree or another, have limiting thoughts that stop us before we even start. The human mind is actually higher than any wall and stronger than any chain when it comes to holding us back from the success we feel we can only dream of. The truth is, our limiting thoughts stop us dead in our tracks and the sad part is we’re the one’s empowering them to do so.

There’s usually one thought that holds us back the most. It haunts us at every turn and the really sad part is that we’re usually blind from seeing it manifest itself simply because we’re too close to the problem. Our friends and associates can see it but they’re usually too nice to tell us. It takes a lot of courage to open someone’s eyes when we know how limiting our own thoughts can be. And even if they did tell us we probably wouldn’t believe them. We have to discover it for ourselves.

So, are you ready for a little self discovery? I promise you, the more honest you can be with yourself throughout the following exercise the more of a breakthrough you’ll have in overcoming that single most limiting thought.

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## **Empowerment Exercise:**

**Step One** - It's pretty easy to discover what's limiting you the most. All you have to do is take a look at your business and ask yourself, "What's not working?" Go ahead; make a list of all those things that aren't quite moving in the right direction. Sales scarce? Employee attrition at an all time high? List the most disappointing results your business is producing and then prioritize the list so you can identify the one that hurts the most. You want to identify the one that's causing the most pain for you and your business overall. Now's not the time to go into denial. Be boldly honest with yourself.

**Step Two** - Now ask yourself, "What is it I do or what it is I don't do that allows this to show up in my business?" Don't try to pin this onto someone or something else. You must take full responsibility because this business is YOUR responsibility. There's a truism at work here. Actions determine results. So ask yourself again, "What action or lack of action on my part is allowing this number one most painful result to show up in my business?"

**Step Three** - Now for the clincher, what do you say to yourself to excuse or justify this action or lack of action? There's a little voice in your head and it whispers words into your ear whenever this issue surfaces in your business. It says something that makes it okay for you to take or not take the action that causes the result to perpetuate within your business. It justifies WHY this disappointing result is showing up in your business. If you can quote the exact words of your internal limiting voice you'll have identified your single most disempowering thought and focus. Keep in mind, what you focus on, shows up. It's the whole reason you've getting what you're getting.

**Step Four** - If you don't like what you're getting you have to change what you're thinking. With this in mind its time for you to reframe your limiting thought and turn it into a very powerful focus that creates a whole new level of energy for getting the results you want. You want to create an empowering thought or paradigm that sees you winning in this area – not failing. Keep it simple (no more than a single sentence or phrase) positive and personal. And most important, make it believable. If it sounds like a lie your brain is going to reject it.

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When I first left corporate America to start my coaching practice I often told myself, “No one will ever accept or respect me as a coach.” It resulted in my inability to obtain clients. But thanks to this process I was able to identify this highly toxic thinking and transform it into a whole new way of looking at myself.

The new way I started to phrase my self perception was, “People value my warmth and wisdom.” I treated this new paradigm just as I did my three guidelines, high visibility and constant repetition on a daily basis. Whenever I found myself at a networking event or in front of a new customer prospect I’d think the words, “People value my warmth and wisdom.” It didn’t take long for me to start believing the truthfulness of this statement especially when others started to respond to the warmth and wisdom I displayed for their personal and business well being. With this as my new empowering way of thinking and focusing, clients came quickly.

To help it stick I’d suggest you declare your new empowering thought to those around you. It’s an effective way for you to drive your stake of commitment into the ground. It will also get you support from those with whom you share it. In order to make the change you’re going to need support from others. You’ll also find that focusing on your three guidelines will make it easier for you to live into your new empowering thought. All of this will fuel your ability to deliver increased bottom line results and leads you to strategy two.



## Focusing Strategy #2

### Create A Vision to Architect Your Success

#### Part One: Create Your Vision

Jim Horan, the author of The One Page Business Plan, has a great way of helping business people craft their vision statement which I like to use with all my clients. First he poses the question, "What are you building?" And then he provides a fill in the blanks template to prompt your answers. When it's all connected your vision statement is done. It describes your business when fully developed.

Give it a try. I'll use my own vision statement for Joel Deceuster & Associates so you can see what the template looks like when it's filled in and connected. Remember, your vision statement is simply a description of your business when it's fully developed.

#### **Vision Statement - Joel Deceuster & Associates, LLC**

"Within the next three years grow Joel Deceuster & Associates, LLC into a successful \$1 million-dollar coaching and consulting organization serving small to medium sized businesses located within the Silicon Valley and San Francisco bay area. JDA will provide year long strategic planning, execution and accountability programs that align and focus workgroups to achieve their most important annual priorities and goals."

#### **Vision Statement Exercise:**

Go ahead and create your own vision statement. Rewrite the following paragraph and replace the italicized prompts with your company's information.

Within the next *(number of years)*, grow *(company name)* into a successful *(local, regional, national or international)* *(type of business)* providing *(description of products and/or services)* to *(describe your customers.)*

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## **Part Two: Live Your Mission**

The second part of this strategy is to determine WHY you're building it – your mission. That “why” is your motivation, and your fuel. One of the best ways to communicate the mission of your business is to look at it from a customer's perspective. What does it stand for to them? Why do customers keep coming back?”

At JDA our mission is: Big Results for Small Business. Short, sweet and memorable. JDA is all about helping small businesses achieve big business results. It's almost an advertising tag line. Matter of fact we liked it so much we turned it into our tag line. A mission statement is just that – something so focused that it works as a key marketing statement. If you have a hard time figuring it out just ask a customer what they think your mission is in serving them.

### **Mission Statement Exercise:**

Create your own mission statement by answering the question, “Why are we building this business and answer it from a customer's perspective.

Once you've created a mission statement that inspires you be sure to live in harmony with it. When it comes to your mission you definitely want to walk your talk or your customers will immediately detect your duplicity.

### Strategy #3

#### Define Your Strategies to Build Your Business

Now that you know why and what you're building you need to move on to the next strategy which is HOW will you build it? This requires a series of strategies. Everything from a marketing strategy to a strategy for expanding the business from year to year. Most business owners get stumped wondering what their strategies should be. My suggestion is that they organize their business into its top ten functional areas. Areas like sales, marketing, financial, HR, manufacturing, product development and so on.

#### **Strategy Development Exercise:**

**Step One** - Organize your business by creating a list of its key functional areas. If you come up with more than ten consolidate them so you have no more than ten.

**Step Two** - With each of those ten areas in mind ask yourself, "What do I need to do in this area to help fully develop my business over time?" The answer is your strategy.

**Step Three** - Your next step is to develop an implementation plan for each of your ten strategies. These are short outlines that detail the steps you'll take to implement your strategy and achieve any goals associated with it. It does take some time, thought and effort to create your implementation plans but in the end it will pay off in saved time, energy and resources. By focusing on your top ten strategies your focus and your actions will drive your ability to increase your bottom line results.

## Strategy #4

### **Set your Goals to Determine Your Results**

Goal setting can be simple. All you need do is look at each of your ten strategies one strategy at a time and ask yourself this question. "What is the potential outcome of implementing this strategy over the course of the next twelve months? You're looking for a specific, measurable, annual result. With ten strategies you'll end up with ten annual goals. The measurement of which will be a clear indication that your strategies are working or not.

If a goal isn't specific and measurable we call it a wish, a dream, a good intention. Goals are concrete and measurable landmarks that tell you if your business is winning or losing. Don't get caught in the trap of creating process goals (We will sell more products this year.) Process goals are not concrete and they certainly aren't measurable. But a results goal (We will sell \$7M in new products during FY 08) is very concrete and measurable. You know what you're shooting at with a target like that and you know how to calibrate your business to hit the mark.

I always get those clients who want to create more than ten annual goals. More than 10 of anything does not a focus make. So I give them and you this promise. If you will prioritize your goals and put all your energies and resources into achieving your top ten, the others will take care of themselves. They happen naturally as a strategic by product of this focusing process. So, stay focused on the top ten results that will take your business to a whole new level of success this year. All sorts of amazing additional results will appear. Your top ten goals are a magnetic force attracting the unexpected and unimaginable in your direction.



## **Strategy #5**

### **Focus Your Actions to Implement Your Plan**

Strategy five is all about focusing the work that has to be done in order to implement your strategies and achieve goals. What will be your most important priorities when it comes to the actual work or initiatives you and your team will do this year?

Examine the implementation plans for each of your top ten strategies in strategy three. To help focus all the work that will need to be done to execute those plans you should apply the same focusing process and prioritization. Do that by picking the top ten projects or initiatives imbedded in your implementation plans. The same magic applies here as it does in achieving your top ten goals. Complete your top ten projects and everything else will fall into place.

The focusing process is how things get done. Do what's most important first and all the rest seems to take care of itself. It certainly cuts down on all the emergencies and urgent fire fighting that most business owners face on a day to day basis.

To summarize a bit you've learned the importance of focusing on your top ten business building strategies, your top ten business goals and your top ten business initiatives or projects. It's what's required if you want to make quantum improvements this coming year. Don't stay stuck in your comfort zone. I can promise you that if you do these three things you'll be well on your way to achieving remarkable results. But before we end we still have two very important strategies to discuss.



## **Strategy #6**

### **Measure Your Progress to Know Where You Stand**

How do you know if you're winning or losing if you don't keep score? Just as they keep score in sporting activities, so you must keep score in business. What doesn't get measured doesn't get done.

In my Focus Your Business Now program I have a web based system to keep track of and measure my client's progress in achieving their strategies, goals and key initiatives. It's called the One Page Business Plan and was created by the One Page Business Plan Company. Every month my clients and I meet to review their scorecards and progress reports and decide what their next steps need to be in order to achieve their objectives.

You should also have a business review meeting with your managers every month so you'll always know where the business stands. Measuring progress or keeping score keeps your team's focus in tact and your plan on track.

Feel free to give me a call for a live demo of this amazing web based application used around the world by thousands of businesses.



## **Strategy #7**

### **Be Accountable For Your Own Success**

The secret sauce to making the previous six strategies work is accountability. Without accountability there is no performance. So, go out and find yourself an accountability partner. My clients have me showing up each month holding their feet to the fire and giving them support and encouragement. You might want to have your spouse, your best friend or a coworker or a fellow business owner as your accountability partner. Their role is to have the courage to hold you accountable and the compassion to support you along the way.

Accountability is key to keeping yourself and your employees focused and on point with your strategies, goals and action plans. If you do not have an accountability system in place you will revert back to your old habits and your energy for focusing on the results you want will dissipate. You're better than that so, be accountable and watch your business win in a whole new way.



## Conclusion

There you have it. The seven strategies for increasing bottom line results. These strategies are the foundation for the work we perform with business teams. But don't take our word for it, read their testimonials on our web site located at: [www.FocusYourBusinessNow.com](http://www.FocusYourBusinessNow.com)

## The One Page Business Plan

My last focusing suggestion is to take your guidelines, empowering thought, strategies, goals and action plans and put them all on one side of a single sheet of paper. What I have found is that if you can reduce your these things into a one page focus you know you've got something that is visible and succinct enough to be achieved. What could be more clear? You'll cut out the fat that gets in the way to slow people down. You'll have a lean meaty plan that can be communicated and aggressively pursued and acted upon by yourself and everyone in your company. All of my clients have a one page business plan that's enabled by web technology so every member of their team can work in alignment with one another.

Harnessing the energy of your team and unleashing their potential with such a plan is what the [Focus Your Business Now](#) program is all about. If you'd like to find out how we'd apply these seven strategies within your business [click here to contact us](#). We have the experience to help your team create and implement its own one page plan to increase your bottom line results year after year.



## About Joel Deceuster

Joel is the Founder and President of Joel Deceuster & Associates, LLC in San Jose, California.



For the past six years Joel has coached small businesses, corporate teams and independent business professionals to create their visions and achieve their goals.

**Prior to founding JDA, Joel spent 25 years as a sales and marketing executive for three of the world's largest business-to-business publishing, exposition and research companies:** International Data Group, CMP Media and Ziff-Davis. He has managed several multi-million dollar sales teams to achieve extraordinary results, and he is the recipient of numerous sales, marketing and customer service awards.

**Then in the late 90's Joel and his partners launched Techrepublic.com, an online IT community.** Having attracted over one million registered users, he and his partners sold Techrepublic in early 2000 to the world's largest IT research and services company, The Gartner Group, for 93 million dollars.

**"In those big, well-funded companies,"** explains Joel, "I benefited from the resources that were available to support the effective planning, team alignment, and accountability that leads to extraordinary results. I saw this as part of the advantage we had over smaller competitors."

**"So when I left that environment,"** he recalls, "I thought 'Hey, nobody is offering these tools to small business, so there's a huge need. And I've become quite good as a strategic planning facilitator and coach for putting it all into action.' So that's why I launched JDA. I get to do what I love and it has a huge impact for my clients. I'm having fun and helping companies grow. What could be better?"

**Joel graduated with a degree in communications/advertising from Brigham Young University.** He has been certified as a Franklin/Covey facilitator for *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*; a certified E-Myth consultant for the *E-Myth Mastery Program for Small Business Owners* and a certified *Best Year Yet* coach and franchise owner as well as a certified coach and consultant for the *One Page Business Planning Company*. As a business coach and strategic planning facilitator, Joel has worked with numerous organizations both large and small.

**Joel is a member of Coachville, the world's largest community of coaching professionals.** In addition to his coaching and strategic planning facilitator activities, Joel is a member of the board and Past President of the BYU Management Society - Silicon Valley Chapter, Joel is a member of the National Advisory Council for the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University. He's an official Ambassador for the San Jose/Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce and a member of the San Jose Rotary Club. Joel also sits on the Business Forum Committee of the Silicon Valley Capital Club.

**Joel lives in San Jose, California with his wife Madeline and is the father of six children and has five grandchildren.** All five of his sons are Eagle Scouts in the BSA where he served for 15 years as a scouting leader. He has a passion for raising roses with over 160 varieties planted in his garden. Joel is an avid hiker and an accomplished public speaker.

[Contact Joel Deceuster](#) today and put him to work to help focus your business now!