



Flip Your Thinking to Survive the Economic Downturn – 5 Ways to Remain a Company Asset

By Pat Heydlauff

Are you an asset or a liability to the survival of your company during this economic downturn? No matter who you are or what your job description is, you've probably thought "Am I the next to go?" You don't have to be so worried about losing your job, if you flip your thinking.

"Think survival! Employees and employers alike should be thinking about how to improve the long-term survival of their business," said the CEO of a major privately held corporation. This thought process isn't just top-down or bottom-up but needs to be inside- out thinking.

The CEO went on to say, "Businesses cannot afford to lose market share nor dip into operating capital because there will be no resources left for marketing, advertising, and hiring when the economy does rebound. That's when the company gets in real trouble. If a company loses its market share and depletes its capital, it will not survive – no matter how good the economy might get. Therefore, businesses need everyone to think survival, reduce expenses, and look for ways to change for the better without any negative financial impact on existing capital."

Whatever it takes to help a business survive needs to be done because it means jobs survive. If you are an asset, you will survive as part of the team. In a major economic downturn, it's no longer business as usual. It's about thinking in a new way so that everyone wins. If the company wins, you win by receiving an income and being able to support yourself and your family. If the company loses, you and several of your associates may become that liability the company can no longer afford instead of an asset that is essential for helping the company survive.

While there are times, circumstances, and events that require a company to make hard decisions about the future, including yours, so it can survive, there are things you can do to help level the playing field in your direction. Here are five things you can do to make yourself an asset:

- Eliminate energy drainers in your workspace and organize it so you can find anything you need at a moment's notice. Time is money, after all. Be merciless and maintain it regularly. You will save time and money by using fewer supplies and being more productive.
- Upgrade your thinking. It's not just about you – it's about **all** of you surviving. Flip your thinking to "we" mode not "them versus us" mode. We are all in this together. It's not about you surviving but rather the company surviving so all of you can make it through the downturn and all of you can take part in the upturn whether it's six or sixteen months from now.
- Focus on the most important things you have to accomplish in a day and do them first. Put aside the instant messaging, texting, and Twittering for after hours. Get rid of all the personal pictures and items on your desk and walls. They all serve to distract you from the job at hand. If you must multi-task, stay focused on the big picture and what

will help you help the company survive. Focusing makes you more efficient, effective, and valuable.

- Think teamwork! It isn't about management versus everyone else or one department versus another. It's about getting the job done in a timely fashion and helping each other when necessary. It's about cutting as many costs in as many ways as possible. Encourage and motivate each other. Think like a championship football team or the swimming team that helped Michael Phelps win his eighth Olympic Gold Medal. Your Gold Medal is the survival of the company you work for and the survival of your job because you are an asset.
- Do something creative on your lunch hour or after work to get the right side of your brain working. It's the right side of the brain that helps you create new ideas and solve problems such as getting through this economic downturn. An employee is an asset when he or she can find ways to solve problems improve survivability and increase market share without financial impact. This type of break-through thinking comes through creativity. Right-brain activities include things like playing an instrument, writing, painting, sculpting, quiet walks in nature, or meditation. If you're stuck at your desk, take a few minutes to do some creative visualization. Close your eyes and mentally visit a place you love – remembering to breathe deeply while in that frame of mind.

A business needs to constantly change for the better, and they need everyone on the team to think as one. Each member of that team is both a liability and expense for the business or an asset and a growth grower who will help the company produce and change for the better.

In order to be on the asset side of the equation think "we"! The more productive and efficient you are, the more you will be seen as an irreplaceable asset so you can survive the economic downturn.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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