

MONDAY MANNA

13 March 2017

PRINCIPLES FOR RUNNING YOUR BUSINESS

By Jim Langley

A few years back, I had the opportunity to share my broad business goals with approximately 40 insurance agents when I was honoured by my company for 25 years of service with our company. I offered some words from personal experience, explaining the goals I have followed are simple and yet profound: Be there; be studious; be disciplined; be persistent and consistent; be service-minded; be positive; and be near God.

I told them that I believe these goals can be applied regardless of what direction a person takes in business and life. Over the years I have come to a better understanding of what works and does not work in selling to and servicing my clients. Let me elaborate:

Be there. For my clients, I need to follow the words Jesus gave to His disciples in John 13:33-34: *“Love one another”* and place the needs of our clients before our own needs. When I follow this command, I take my work much more seriously and develop a strong desire to help others as well as I can in a timely fashion.

Be studious. I need to continually keep up with changes in insurance laws and available products to best accommodate my clients’ needs. One of my life verses reminds me, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward” (Colossians 3:23-24) This is all the reminder I need to remain on the cutting edge of my profession.

Be disciplined. I must stick to viable systems and only work with companies I know I can trust. Proverbs 1:7 reminds us, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” My clients want me to be wise in my recommendations and not act foolishly with their investments and well-being.

Be persistent and consistent. I must understand the value of every “No,” and persevere to earn the next “Yes” as I meet with prospects. In James 1:12 we are encouraged, “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” I consider my business a part of serving God; I know He is pleased when I honor Him in my work.

Be service-minded. I must always place the needs of others above personal gratification. Ephesians 6:7 instructs us, “Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.” I consider myself a servant to each of my clients, but even more, I am a servant to my Lord.

Be positive. I need to “hang around” other positive people as much as possible. Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” With so much negativity in this world, we need to immerse ourselves in positive thinking and behavior to ward off the negative, counterproductive behavior that is so prevalent.

Be near God (most important). I need to clearly understand my purpose in life and be reminded who is really in charge. God can provide us with a peace “which transcends all understanding,” proclaimed by the apostle Paul in Philippians 4:6-7. This helps me remain close to Him and always look to Him as I deal with circumstances in life, whether it involves my business, family, or other areas of my personal life.

I believe these seven broad goals can serve anyone well in life, but the catalyst that makes it all work is Jesus Christ. He offers to be our example and coach as we do our best to serve Him and our clients, and deal with all that He places in our path.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Do you have business goals that guide your approach to work each day? If so, what are they – and how do you use them?
2. Which of the goals cited by Mr. Langley seems most meaningful or significant to you? Is this a new idea for you, or does it relate to goals or principles you are currently following in your work?
3. Why do you think goals are necessary, whether for establishing and building a business, or for simply going about our everyday lives?
4. Do you disagree with any of the seven goals listed? Or would you suggest adding any other goals to this list? Explain your answer.

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

- Proverbs 1:1-7;
- John 13:33-34;
- 1 Corinthians 10:31;
- Colossians 3:17;
- 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12