

Taking your business from

the pulse

“Of all the things I’ve done, the most vital is coordinating the talents of those who work for us and pointing them toward a certain goal.”

WALTER ELIAS DISNEY,
FOUNDER, WALT DISNEY

What do Abbott Laboratories, Circuit City, Fannie Mae, Gillette, Kimberly-Clark, Kroger, Nucor Corp., Philip Morris, Pitney Bowes, Walgreens and Wells Fargo have in common? Each has transformed itself from a good company to a great company.

You too can take your salon or nail business from good to great. How? By employing the best-of-the-best, developing a clear vision that is embraced by your talent, and executing a vision through continuous improvement, you will build a business that far exceeds your expectations.

Good to Great

Talent Show

According to Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... And Other's Don't*, A key factor driving the success of companies that have made the leap from good to great is that they don't "motivate" people – their people are self-motivated.

So, what motivates the best-of-the-best and why would they want to work for you? A recent survey concluded that to win the war on talent a business must:

- Instill a best-of-the-best mindset at all levels within an organization. Employees are treated equally and expected to conduct themselves in the utmost professional manner at all times.
- Build a high-performance culture that combines a strong work ethic with an open and trusting environment.

- Recruit great talent continuously. Looking for great talent is a full-time job.
- Develop talent to their full potential. Every company leaves a tremendous amount of human potential untapped because its staff is underdeveloped.
- Allow room for growth. Businesses must start acting on the negative influence of nonperformers.
- Focus on retaining peak performers. One way companies can retain top talent is by delivering on promises.
- Create employee value propositions (EVPs) that deliver on dreams – The EVP is the compelling reason why the best-of-the-best would want to work for you. You know you have all of the elements of the EVPs in place when:
 - The company genuinely cares about its people and the people, in turn, truly care about the company. Trust and open communication are the fabric of your business.
 - Great leaders really do treat people with trust and respect, and honor all who contribute to the institution. They manage to find the balance between giving people independence to accomplish great things and providing the guidance, or even the guidelines, to help them do it.
 - Your staff likes what they do and the people they work with. Much of feeling good about a job is the result of being valued for one's unique talents.
 - Talented people today expect their contributions to be acknowledged and their compensation to reflect its impact.

For your salon to achieve “greatness” you must secure a well-rounded team that works as a unit sharing one common goal — the corporate vision.

Vision

Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “I have a dream,” and what followed was a vision that changed a nation. That famous speech is a dramatic example of the power that can be generated by a person who communicates a compelling vision for the future.

A vision is a *guiding image* of success that drives a business. A vision answers, “What will success look like?” Simply put, it is an abstract rendering of where you see your business in 5, 10... 15 years. So where do you begin? Experts say that the best way to get your staff to support your vision is to recruit their input right from the beginning. Therefore, try the following group activity to develop your salon’s vision.

1. Get your staff together to brainstorm your vision. Break into small groups to increase participation and generate creativity. Determine a time frame for your vision such as where you see your business in 5 or 10 years. Ask the members of your group to think about the following questions: What role do you want your salon to play in your community? What will success look like?
2. Ask each member of the group to come up with a metaphor that describes your salon such as, “Our salon is like a mariachi band – all playing the same music together.” The value of the metaphor is that your team members get to stretch their minds and experiment with different ways of thinking about what success means to them.
3. Now, have each member draw their metaphor on a piece of paper and share their images with the group. One person should facilitate the discussion and look for areas of agreement among the group, as well as different key points that emerge. The goal is to find the language and imagery that your employees relate to as their vision for success.
4. From here the salon owner should draft a vision statement based on the group’s discussion and feedback. The vision statement should be realistic and credible, well articulated and easily understood, appropriate, ambitious, and responsive to change. It should support the salon’s core values and challenge and inspire the group to achieve its mission.
5. Once a draft is comprised it should be brought back to the group and revised until a consensus is reached.

Once the vision statement has been established it is time to execute the plan.

Execution

With the talent in place and the vision to guide the people it is time to execute the plan.

Execution includes:

- Evaluating short-term goals regularly and adjusting as needed.
- Openly communicating with your staff about the ups and downs associated with the newly instituted vision. Helps retain talent.
- Instituting an incentive program for employees to submit ideas for continuous improvement.
- Celebrating milestones.

Jim Collins states that through continuous improvement any business no matter how large or small, full-service day spa or nail-only salon, can achieve long-term success as a “great” company.

When Fannie Mae, Gillette and Kimberly-Clark reached “greatness” there was no “aha” moment. Instead, just businesses built around a framework of excellence and employees committed to the long haul.

I challenge you today to start the framework for your transformation. Game on!

WRITTEN BY **WENDY WOODWARD**

Sources:

Build to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies by James Collins and Jerry Porras; Good to Great by Jim Collins; Why Pride Matters More Than Money by Jon R. Katzenbach; allianceonline.org; Fastcompany.com

[book links]

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Why Pride Matters More Than Money

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Topgrading: How Leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching and Keeping the Best People by Bradford D. Smart

[Books can be purchased in the Bookstore at www.nailbizmag.com.]

Calling All Salon Owners...

I encourage you to share your stories on how you’ve transformed your business from good to great. Simply, email me at editor@nailbizmag.com.