



Reinventing the Wheel

GOLTZ ON BUSINESS
by Jay Goltz

We've just landed on Mars. How'd that happen? I'll tell you how it happened.

Thousands of years of education, information and advancement finally got science to the point where they could pull it off. They were able to do this because space travel is a science. In science, it's something you go to school for, you learn, you build upon.

In business, you start from zero, you fumble around, you learn some things, you don't learn some things, and you frequently keep making the same mistakes. You're never going to get your business into orbit if you don't make some progress. It's called education. More importantly, in business, it's called training.

Let me explain. When you graduate with an accounting, law, or medical degree, you either serve an internship or go to a company where people will train you, show you, mentor you.

In small business, you don't necessarily graduate from anywhere. And if you do, it is just as likely to be in philosophy or archeology than it is in business. And for those of you who don't have a business degree, you're not at a big disadvantage. I often think a psychology degree would be more useful than what I learned in business school.

The requirements for going into a small business are not a degree, experience, or who you know. It's money, desire, or more frequently, birthright. Unfortunately, none of these things qualify a business owner to be successful, which explains the high business failure rate. You are just supposed to figure out all of the nuances of management, finance and dodging

bullets, you seldom have time for a good lunch, and once in a while you wonder what's going on at home. As a small business owner or manager, it is easy to get so caught up in what you're doing that "you don't have time" for training. It's like the lumberjack who's too busy to sharpen his axe.

Most people do things the hard way. The wrong way. Whether it's hiring, managing or properly budgeting, many people spend their entire career being ineffective. There's a better way. Big companies do it all the time. It's called training and education.

The first realization you need to come to is that picture framing is both a craft *and* a business. You can probably get education for the craft side from industry sources such as trade publications, trade shows, and framing schools. The business information, which is the same for most businesses, can come from a variety of sources—books, seminars, classes, tapes, and of course, my column. (Beware—I'm not sure I always know what I'm talking about!)

You should not only educate your staff, but you should education yourself. As a start, I'm going to recommend five areas in which to hone your skills: (1) hiring (2) customer service (3) advertising (4) management and (5) basic cost accounting.

Go to the bookstore, look into classes at the local college, go to a seminar. If you've never had training or education in these areas, you're probably doing some things wrong. Learn from others. Stop reinventing the wheel.

I'll see you on Mars. ■