

## 13 Reasons Organizations Get Better Results Using Professional Facilitation Services In Strategic Planning

1. There is a strong tendency to define everything in terms of what the organization has done, strongly influenced by its accounting system and reporting customs, and NOT to define the strategy from a perspective of the client if you don't use an outside facilitator.
2. An outsider, a third party, will challenge tradition and validate non-traditional views, and act as a 'yes man' filter.
3. If the CEO or COO leads strategy development, it is virtually assured that the team will feed him what they think he or she wants to hear.
4. It allows the insiders to participate and focus on the plan and not worry about the process.
5. A professional outsider can facilitate the process in a more neutral fashion.
6. The outsider will be able to challenge the whole thinking process of the group and/or the individuals. This makes the process much more productive as he/she does not have any other agenda than creating the best strategy the client team can come up with.

### The Results From a Professionally Facilitated Planning Process Are Measurable

- Increased Market Share
- Increased Earnings
- Strengthened Focus on Attracting, Servicing, and Keeping Customers
- Clear Strategic Direction
- Motivated Employees
- Resources Allocated
- Proactive Management Encouraged

## Steps For an Effective Planning Process

### Basic Foundation

### Business Philosophy

### Vision Statement

### Values and Principles

### External Assessment

### Competitive Analysis

### Internal Appraisal

### Mission Statement

### Critical Goal Categories

### Organizational Goals

### Marketing and Sales Plan

### Implementation

7. 10% of the value is in the actual document that is created. It represents the music from which the whole choir can sing their song. However, 90% of the value is in the process, the managed discussions, the research and data development, the creation of information from the data, the (at times heated) deliberations-and finally, the process to get to conclusions. To manage that process effectively and efficiently, one cannot be a part of the internal agenda of the organization.

8. The process, when facilitated by a qualified professional, can and will become an outstanding team building experience with often profound lasting outcomes- invaluable!

9. An outside facilitator does not have the emotional and institutional baggage. A colleague of mine recently witnessed a glaring reason why it's best not to have the current executive run the process.

As an outside consultant who was hired to write some training curriculum, she was invited to sit in on this non-profit's next strategic planning session. What she witnessed made her jaw drop. The executive director stood in front of the group classroom style and proceeded to badger the committee chairs. He threatened their jobs and intimidated some to the point where they could not get the words out of their mouths.

Needless to say, like a good consultant, she impressed upon the decision makers that an outside facilitator such as she would yield a better result.

10. I've seen the commander's IMPLIED wishes come out in staff planning. The result is a finessed "yes him to death" plan, which makes the CEO feel good, but fails to bring out dissent, external forces input, or the best that the staff has to offer.

11. "Trying to do your own strategic planning is like a dentist trying to drill his or her own teeth."

Howard Litwak, President and Certified Business Coach-Measurable Results LLC

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12. Insiders can't help but have a pre conceived notion as to where they are going and how to get there. A lot of it will be based in organizational history, some of it internal to the leadership's concept of reality and personal goals.

The outside facilitator has none of that potential baggage but can draw upon the collective experience when and if appropriate. Strategic plans depend on not only an internal assessment and perspective-but an external one that only comes with the aid of an outside the organization facilitator that can challenge assumptions and "information " not based in fact.

13. It has been said that in order to generate out-of-the-box thinking, you must:

1 -Get outside your box.

2- Then think

A facilitator who comes from outside your box and asks the right questions significantly increases the chances of generating breakthrough, innovative ideas. And this, after all, is what you want, right?

Do you get **stuck** in the process of thinking and action required for developing a plan which will drive your business forward? Are you inspired and have a plan but are not getting the results that you want? Contact me today for a free, no cost meeting. You will be assisted in:

- Identifying areas where you can and need to improve,
- Determining what is possible to accomplish,
- Developing a plan with action steps you can easily start on,
- Committing to action

Don't wait to accomplish the things you really want but are not sure of how to. Contact me today. My contact info is below.

## About Howard Litwak

I believe that my success has been driven by my own professional development over the last 20 years.

I help businesses and individuals improve their ability to overcome obstacles and get the results that they want.

My approach has paid rich dividends for the clients I have worked with in over 25 different industries. Many of these clients are small to medium sized business owners who put a premium on professional competence and being the best that they can for themselves and their customers.

Business Owners and business leaders find my services extremely valuable when they recognize that there are skills and competencies that I have that they don't, which would improve their top and bottom lines.

My expertise includes what it takes to get things done, developing attitudes and behaviors leading to goal achievement and higher productivity, sales development, and improving effectiveness in people's abilities to influence and persuade others and outcomes. Who doesn't want to be more effective here?

Outcomes include:

- Improved sales,
- Improved revenue,
- Higher performing teams,
- Better time management,
- Increased confidence,
- Development of positive "Can Do" attitudes.

To increase my value to clients and the community, my recent certifications include:

- Certified Business Coach- Resource Associates Corporation Coaching Academy (2011)
- Certified Administrator of the Attribute Index-Innermetrix Corp. (2008)
- Certified Administrator of D.I.S.C. Index –Innermetrix Corp. (2008)
- Certified Administrator of Values Index – Innermetrix Corp. (2008)
- Certified member- The Institute for Sustainability (2011)

I appreciate that successful individuals never stop learning, and learning organizations constantly do what it takes to avoid mediocrity. With this in mind, I stand ready to challenge you and your organization if you really want to do what it takes to get better results. **Are you ready to break out of your routines and mindset? If so, don't hesitate to contact me to see how I may be able to help.**

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