



Business Planning

It's hurricane season for American business. Winds of change are barreling in from all directions. Competition is tougher than ever and coming from places you least expected. The customer is more sophisticated and demanding. Technological changes are incessant. Government regulations are tougher. And everyone is restructuring, reorganizing, reinventing, downsizing, outsourcing – all at an ultrasonic pace. – Robert Kriegel and David Brandt

Are you planning to make things happen or reacting to what happens? Is your time and energy directed proactively or reactively? Are you preparing your business to thrive rather than survive?

What were you doing three years ago?

- What did you do and how did you do it?
- Who were your competitors?
- What technologies did you use?
- How was your organization structured?
- What was the size of your workload?

What will you be doing three years from now?

- What will you be doing and how will you do it?
- Who will be your competitors?
- What technologies will you use?
- How will your organization be structured?
- What will be the size of your workload?

What is your attitude – and that of your organization – toward the future?

- Open and receptive to new ideas
- Excited rather than anxious about change
- Challenged, not threatened, by transitions
- Committed to change as an ongoing process

Do you - and your organization – take actions to

- Anticipate and initiate change
- Challenge the status quo
- Create instead of react to change
- Lead rather than follow the competition, the customer, and the industry?

How do you – and your organization – get ready so you can respond quickly to the challenges and opportunities of your future?

- Challenge your well-worn beliefs, assumptions, and practices and identify those that have outlived their usefulness.

- Create an environment in which people are more open to innovation and new ideas.
- Coach yourself and others to recognize and overcome the resistances to change.
- Get people excited about change and motivated to act.
- Cultivate the personal characteristics needed to thrive in a changing environment.

A major reason to focus on fundamentals, according to Bossidy and Charan (Confronting Reality 2004), is that growth won't come easily. In fact, the battle to hold or increase shares of fiercely contested and slow-growing markets will be one of the three-yards-and-a-cloud-of-dust variety, won by fractions of points in market share and profit margins