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ChangeAbility  
The Newsletter of Redpoint Business Coaching  
Volume 4, No. 4, September 05  
www.redpointcoaching.com  
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Welcome!

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Koenig PhD, MBA from Redpoint Business Coaching

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cool resources for starting or building your business.

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I Trusting Your Staff and Spending Quality Time with Them Makes All  
the Difference

I've recently conducted several 360° surveys for my Redpoint clients. A  
360° survey provides feedback in the form of an anonymous performance  
assessment of a business owner by all the people (subordinates,

colleagues, managers, clients, suppliers) who surround that business owner (hence “360°”).

In the case of my clients, the owners and CEOs typically wanted to receive feedback on their leadership skills from their staff. During the process, we defined the criteria they wanted to be assessed by, and then I drafted a questionnaire, surveyed the staff, and compiled and presented the results.

Now, if you think this is an intimidating exercise, you are not alone. Because of the anonymous nature of the exercise, staff are often brutally honest and are not reluctant to reveal their views. In each case, my clients have taken on the challenge bravely, though, knowing that this candid assessment is a critical first step towards their own improvement.

Back came great feedback about their performances as “the boss.” They were perceived as being exceptional at interacting with clients, great at getting business results and strong communicators.

The two critical areas of improvement I have continually observed are:

+Lack of quality time spent with staff; and

+Lack of trust

*+++You Need To Spend More Quality Time With Your Staff+++*

Lots of owners of growing companies experience this: heavy workloads prevent you from spending time with the very people you rely on to get the job done, and who look to you for direction, mentorship and reward.

Your busy schedule therefore leads to ‘seagull’ management: you stop in quickly and drop a ton of information, directions and sometimes criticism on your staff before you quickly take off again.

It came back loud and clear from my clients’ feedback: you need to spend the time to talk to people substantively and ask them how things are really going. It is not necessarily the quantity, but quality of time and interaction that counts.

Staff members who have been heard and feel that their feedback and suggestions have been taken on board are always more engaged workers. And engaged workers are almost always better performers.

Ask yourself for your business or organization: Over the last week: how many people have I asked how things are going? How many people have

I thanked for a job well done? Remember: praise in public, criticize in private. And, of course: when you are wrong (and you will be ;-), apologize.

++*We sometimes feel you do not trust us. It always has to go your way*++

I am sure this sounds at least partly true for the vast majority of business owners. After all: this is your baby, you have grown it and you know best what it needs. Trusting someone else to take over and perform tasks you have owned for so long is incredibly difficult for most business owners.

In fact, the reason why people start businesses in the first place is that they believe they can perform a particular task better than anyone else (or at least better than their current or past employer). This strong belief in one's abilities is one of the great strengths of the entrepreneur. Yet we know this strength can also become your biggest liability: the reality is that if you want to build a company, you have to trust people to help run it for you.

Trust itself sounds like a challenging concept to actively develop and control, but Carl Robinson, a Seattle based psychologist and executive coach, offers some helpful insights in his discussion of trust that appeared in an article in the *Journal of Managerial Psychology* (2004):

Motive-Based Trust is what most people think about when they think of trust. It is based on the belief that another's values, goals and beliefs are closely aligned with yours. Motive-based trust is the basis for most personal relationships.

In a business relationship though, Competency-Based Trust – based on your belief that your employees have the capabilities to get the job done - is far more important. Why's that? Remember, you are hiring people not because they are nice, but because they have the skills and the smarts to get the job done.

So how then can we learn to develop these forms of trust?

**\*How To Develop Competency-Based Trust\***

+ **Assess Your Hiring:** Do you have the right people in place to get the job done? Do they either have the necessary capabilities or are they willing and able to learn them? If yes, read on. If no, you need to consider making some staff replacements.

+ Take time to observe your people in action. Give them goals and let them come up with their own methodologies. Resist the huge temptation to jump in with solutions and advice-giving. If, after a while, you do not like what you see, go back to assessing your hiring practices or start providing more training.

+ Look for outside support. Hire a coach or consultant and/or establish a board you can lean on to help assess candidates. For more info on the benefits and how-to's of establishing a board see:

<http://www.redpointcoaching.com/resources/documents/Oct03.pdf> .

#### \*How to Develop Motive-Based Trust\*

While developing competency-based trust is relatively straightforward, motive-based trust tends to develop only once competency-based trust is established; motive-based trust is, therefore, harder to assess.

Because this is a more intangible area, lots of entrepreneurs rely on their instincts. Remember, though, that you have great tools to align motives:

+Remunerate staff based on their performance (e.g. a commission pay structure for your sales staff or a profit sharing pay scheme)

+ Provide key staff members with equity in your business.

Carl Robinson argues that in an imperfect world where trusting relationships sometimes have to develop quickly, distributing equity is a great way to establish tentative trust.

My experience with 360° surveys has shown me that spending quality time with your staff and developing competency- and motive-based trust makes all the difference between mediocre and great business owners.

#### (II) Sports Corner: My Sister Did It Again: World Orienteering Champion!

While my own sports year did not go as well as I would have hoped, my sister Vroni, who lives with her family in Turku/Finland, landed a number of great successes this year.

First, she won the Open Orienteering Nordic Championships (by many considered the harder race to win than the world championships), and then she had a great world championship in Japan. Sprint: 5<sup>th</sup>, Long Event: Bronze, Relay: Gold!!

As her brother I can attest: she is tough as nails ☺ Check out some photos at: <http://www.konig-salmi.com/>

### (III) Upcoming Workshops

#### MINI RETREAT: LIFE CHOICES...CREATE A LIFE YOU LOVE AT ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

This mini retreat helps you to reconnect with who you are and what you want within a community of lifelong learners. The focus is on change, renewal, balance and vision. I will be leading a session on 'Starting and Building your own Business or Private Practice.'

Date: Saturday Sept. 24 (all day)

Location: Antioch University

To register, contact Muriel Dance at 206-268-4100

#### WORKSHOP -- "STARTING YOUR CONSULTING BUSINESS"

Thinking of starting or improving your consulting business? This all-day workshop at the SBA/SCORE office in downtown Seattle will give you the tools to do so. I will be presenting during the panel discussion.

Date: September 21st

Location: SBA/SCORE Business Enterprise Center

Park Place Building

1200 Sixth Avenue (Sixth and University),

17th floor

Seattle, WA 98101

206.553.7320

Register online at [www.seattlescore.org](http://www.seattlescore.org) or call the SBA office at 206-553-7320 or toll free 1-877-732-7267

+++++LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK+++++  
Simply reply to this newsletter. I welcome your feedback!

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ChangeAbility is a publication of Redpoint Business Coaching, which is run by Urs Koenig PhD, MBA

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