



TriOpus Group

Shaping your company's talent

This month:

WHEN YOU'RE STUCK IN A RUT



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Are you feeling like you might be spinning your wheels? Are you getting stuck in a rut? Do you get up the same time everyday, eat the same breakfast (or none at all), take the same route to work, listen to the same radio station, say "hi" to the same people when you get there? Or is it more serious – doing the same activities at work and hoping for different results? What is keeping you in the same place? Are you fearful of change? Don't have the energy for it? Not even realize you need a change? Break out of the mold you have created. It just takes some initiative on your part. Even the smallest change in your daily routine could be the catalyst to making some changes at work. Do you need a change? Well, only if you want different results from the ones you've been getting... Why not read a great new business book, brainstorm some new ideas, hire someone with a different viewpoint from your own? Change is inevitable, so why not take control of it?

are you stuck in a rut? hang in there...or make a change



The best thing to kick start your staff when they're in a rut is to provide them with great training opportunities. Challenge them to learn and implement new skills to help boost their performance results. TriOpus Group can help! We have many programs available to assist you. Here are just some of the programs we offer:

- ✓ Building Profitable Customer Relationships
- ✓ Coaching That Counts
- ✓ Success Through Innovation
- ✓ Meetings That Count
- ✓ Managing Change
- ✓ Team Effectiveness
- ✓ Selling That Counts
- ✓ Sales Management
- ✓ Customer Service That Counts

for more information, visit our website or call us at 1-800-864-2721.

"What, then, is the true Gospel of consistency? Change. Who is the really consistent man? The man who changes. Since change is the law of his being, he cannot be consistent if he is stuck in a rut."

- Mark Twain



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A consultant I once worked with used to say repeatedly, "The definition of insanity is doing the same things over and over and expecting different results." This is a common adage in the business community, and I've used it myself with clients in many situations, but until recently, I hadn't noticed that it applied to me. Now, I've been accused of missing a few marbles but no one has been brave enough to come out and tell me that I'm actually insane. It took a life altering experience for me to realize that my partners and I might just be "Cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs".



Like many of you, I've spent a lifetime as an overachiever. I think it all started with the fanfare that ensued when I won the fire prevention poster contest in grade three. I haven't sat still since in my pursuit for accomplishment. Having said that, I now realize that perpetual motion isn't always the same as forward motion. This is what brings me back to my issue with mental health.

Recently my husband and I made the momentous decision to have a child. Yes, you may be already questioning my sanity – but this isn't the point I'm trying to make. Having a baby allowed me to experience something I had never encountered in my life before – all the crying, those crazy bodily functions, the constant feedings – and don't even get me started on the baby! But more than that, I was given a six-month window of time to step away from work, and focus solely on my lifestyle. Taking this break gave me the perspective to realize that, as a company, we may have been spinning our wheels a bit. The time away gave me a renewed outlook on what we were doing, where we were going, and how we were going to get there. I was seeing the forest for the trees for the first time in a while.

I think we might have been getting stuck in a rut. Because we had been busy, we didn't have much time to reflect on what we were doing, so we just kept moving at the same pace, doing many of the same things. To quote writer Molly Ivins, "The first rule of holes: when you're in one, stop digging." Upon my return to work I suggested that we take a step away from our current activities and brainstorm additional strategies for our company. We had some pretty interesting conversations and we went through a roller coaster of emotions. We went far outside of our comfort zone to embrace some new ideas and we've got an improved plan for working smarter, not harder.

Now I'm not recommending you go to the extremes that I did in order to gain some perspective, because kids are expensive, but if you get the sense that you or your company might be stuck in a rut, there are some things you can do.

If you're in a rut, you're deeply entrenched in repetitive patterns. The first step is to become aware of those patterns. Stop spinning your wheels and cursing the mud. Next, change just one thing. Even a small change can be a start toward achieving a different result.

If you focus on something, it grows. If you put all your energy into those same things causing the rut, you can pretty much count on the rut getting deeper. Shift your energy and focus toward what you want to create more of. You may need to start with the end in mind – what are your ultimate goals? Determine those first and figure out if what you're doing is getting you there. Who knows? The smallest new idea can grow into the best part of your business.

If your new goals or tasks overwhelm you to the point of immobility, break them down into small, manageable pieces. You don't have to change your world overnight. Take it one step at a time and reward yourself for small accomplishments.

You can get out of even the deepest mud if you have the right tools for the task.