

7 Veteran Strategies to Realign Your Business in a Tough Economy



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January 25, 2010

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Doing Business in the Current Economy

- Myths and realities of the new economy
- How are Private Duty Agencies performing in these economic times?
- What has been the experience of the 418 Visiting Angels Offices?
- Create a new vision statement appropriate to a tough economy

Realities of Growing your Business

- Fewer #s high hour – high revenue cases
- Reduced hours - earlier D/C – families provide care or find less costly alternatives
- Adult children make decisions that reflect their concerns about the economy
- Delayed decisions for care
- Price shopping

Strategies to Realign Your Business

1. Create Disciplined Optimism
2. Marketing Strategies for the Tough Economy
3. Refine your operations for maximum efficiency
4. Implement an aggressive marketing plan for exceptional results
5. Handling customer concerns during the Inquiry Process
6. Retain yours staff - Be a great boss in a bad economy

Create Disciplined Optimism

- Recognize the power of attitude
- Focus on possibilities
- Turn attitude into action
- Discover how to motivate yourself and your team
- Develop a “whatever it takes” attitude
- Celebrate
- Leave a lasting legacy



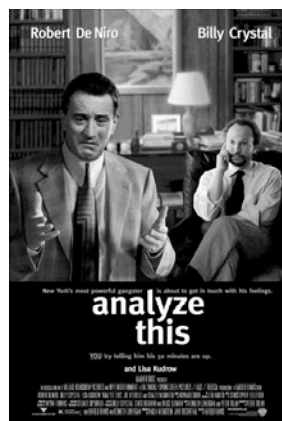
Optimism

1. Stay positive – ward off negative language
2. Read inspirational literature
3. Audio CDs
4. Join a networking group
5. Increase skills – i.e. toastmasters
6. Associate with positive people
7. Make an accomplishments list with your staff
8. Keep your commitments
9. Treat everyone as a potential client
- 10 *Be Happy*, in advance!



For Maximum Efficiency Refine Your Operations

- **Challenge:** Make your operations more efficient . . .
How I saved \$78,000
- Look at where errors or disconnects occur
- Scrutinize, Analyze, Plan



Processes to Examine

- Lead management, intake, start of care
- Scheduling, rescheduling
- Billing, payroll & collections
- Management of complaints & incidents
- On call
- Employee application process
- Orientation, supervision, customer and employee satisfaction
- Caregiver turnover and performance issues
- Record management



Steps to Process Improvement

Identify the processes you want to improve

1. Develop the first 90 day plan
2. Follow by long term improvements
3. Measure and report improvement results
4. Periodic reviews
5. Compare results to goals
6. Reward team members

Resource: Business Process Improvement Workbook, Harrington, 1997

Key Marketing Strategies for a Tough Economy

1. Have an aggressive marketing plan
2. Manage your internal marketing efforts with skill and precision
3. Increase your lead conversion rate
4. Stay Motivated

Have an Aggressive Marketing Plan

1. Company Analysis
2. Competitive Market Studies
3. SWOT Analysis
4. Revenue Analysis
5. Identify Referral Sources
6. Develop an Action Plan
7. Follow your plan

Convert Leads Effectively

- Most experienced responds to lead calls
- Listen, don't tell ... be empathetic
- This is an emotionally driven decision
- Remember the goal of the lead call . . .
a face to face meeting
- CR does not have to be there
- Goal of the face to face meeting . . .
start of care date
- Tell stories to explain your services
- Respond to all internet leads the same day



Tips for Converting Leads

- Consumers are more price sensitive
- Handle the price question
- Suggest the advantage of packages with lower rates
- Respond with meeting anytime, anyplace, ASAP
- Become a pro at overcoming objections
- Be perceived as a necessity
- Provide value added features, services and discounts

Wisdom from our offices

- Disappointment leads to action – 14 % conversion rate – 40% was the expectation
- Goal for the additional revenue – hire a marketing person
- Inquiry – truly connect with the customer -- compassionate side
- Offer appointment first then share brochure
- Methodical follow up each week

Results

Goal and Bonus Program for office staff

- 39% Conversion of inquiries per month=\$150.00/per person
(THIS IS THE EXPECTATION)
- 40% - 49% Conversion of inquiries per month
=\$250.00/per person
- 50% or up Conversion of inquiries per month
= \$450.00/per person

Over the course on one year conversion rates rose from 18% to 39%*

- EXCITEMENT, REWARD, RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, EXPECTATION AND MOST IMPORTANT **OWNERSHIP**.

Customer Concerns During Intake - Overcoming Objections

- Refine the wisdom that got you to this level
- Skill in overcoming objections is required to improve close rates
- Train for a high level performance –every staff person who meets with prospects
- Role play, strategize and get creative in increasing skill

Common Objections

1. We'll think about it OR we'll wait until (Easter, Christmas, Summer Solstice, Chinese New Year)
2. You can drop something in the mail
3. I can keep helping Mom for the present
4. We (she) can't afford this (\$)
5. The house is too big, too small or we're thinking of an ALF (house focus)

Common Objections

6. Mom doesn't want anyone in her house
7. We had a bad experience once
8. Let me talk it over with Harry (decision maker)
9. How do we know we can trust the CG (or you)?
10. I'm just looking

Sample Response – House too small or ALF

- We can and have provided care in most home environments
- Your mother's home is very suitable for care
- Moving to an ALF or apt. is a big decision requiring advance preparation
- We can see that you would appreciate a solution that would help you in the near future
- Offer to be that solution now. This will give them time to plan for the next step (they may delay when they see how well your services work out)
- Provide cost savings information when comparing options

Direct Your Marketing Person Effectively

- Create a Plan and then Plan some more . . .
- Does your Marketer know . . .
 - ✓ Who to call on within each type of referral source?
 - ✓ What questions to ask and how to overcome possible objections?
 - ✓ When/how often to meet with each referral source?
 - ✓ Does she have an intention for each call?
 - ✓ Does she triage each referral source based on importance?
- Would my Marketer benefit from Training?

Tools for Follow Up

- Weekly Reports
 - Goals for each week's marketing calls
 - Results from those calls
- Track Your Referral Sources
 - Database
 - Updating your database
- Track Results
 - Which leads are a result of your marketing person's effort?

Stay Motivated

1. Be at the Next Level – don't just talk about it
2. Don't let the economy influence you
3. Call for help
4. Make a commitment
5. Get office staff on board and excited
6. Action and measuring progress toward goals
7. Know what to do and do it.
8. Have the attitude, "I create my office economy!"

Use Technology to Your Advantage

Resolution for 2010

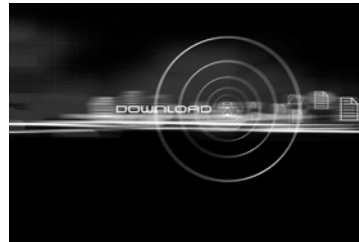
We will use our Software System to
its greatest advantage



Software: Match and Filters

1. Match & Filters:

- A. Preference
- B. Previous History
- C. Availability; Entire Time, Days Only, No Available
- D. Skills
- E. Locations
- F. Qualifiers
- G. Expired Licenses
- H. Incompatibility
- I. New Hires



Software Features

3. Schedule Conflicts:

- A. Double-Booking
- B. Cancel & Reschedule

4. Additional Functionality:

- A. Availability
- B. Logging
- C. Note Pad
- D. Gross Margin

5. Payor Validations:

- A. Date Range
- B. Hours & Visits
- C. Job Description
- D. No Authorizations
- E. Cancel & Reschedule

Software Features

6. Additional Functionality:

- A. Availability
- B. Logging
- C. Note Pad
- D. Gross Margins

Efficiency: Directly link your scheduling to QuickBooks and to send your payroll to your payroll service – saves 2+ hours.

Add Telephony: Saves 4 hours of verification time!



HR Validations

1. HR Validations :

- A. Checks for Expired Licenses
- B. Checks for Expired Personnel Logs
- C. Incompatibility
- D. Skills
- E. Availability Limits

* Critical Steps to Establishing a Customer Service Culture

1. Customers are the reason for work, not an interruption of work
2. Train office and caregiver staff – train, train, train
3. Empower your office and caregivers to serve
4. Make service personal
5. Its okay to say yes to approaches that will retain customers
6. Solve Customer service problems
7. Recognize your staff for outstanding service
8. Ask your customers what they think of your service

Retaining Your Staff

This means - Be a Good Boss in a Bad Economy

1. Provide predictability, understanding and control
2. Make tough times less traumatic
3. Earn loyalty of your staff – you can keep them for years to come
4. Humans react negatively to unexplained events – an explanation is far better than a void

Resource – R. Sutton, “How to Be a Good Boss in a Bad Economy”, HBR, June 2009

What Visiting Angels Learned Our Growth in the Tough Economy

- Growth from 2008 to 2009
- Offices growth experience
- Big strategies made a significant difference
- Plateaus and moving to the next level
- Positioning for the new economy

Congratulations!

*You are now positioned for success in the
new economy.*

Pat Drea