



## **Siegel of JASP Management asks - Business executives: How's your new year going so far?**

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Leading business management consultant Jerry Siegel, president of JASB Management Inc., and co-president of the Organizational Development Network of Long Island, is asking business executives to take a few minutes and consider how 2012 is going so far. He suggests that, with the start of a new year, many executives get pumped and especially ambitious, setting new goals and vowing to improve productivity and profitability. Despite the good intentions, however, Siegel said many do not make the progress they hope because they fail to focus on key areas.

According to Siegel, the key areas that can make or break an organization are: leadership, management skills, goal setting, communication, team building, motivation, organizational development, and personal growth. "They are the lynchpins of a business' foundation," said Siegel. "If just one is missing, the company will not reach its full potential, leverage its strengths, and capture new opportunities to the same extent it would if these areas were functioning optimally." Starting with leadership, Siegel says, that it is not an innate ability. "Effective leadership requires multiple skills as well as certain traits such as an open mind, positive attitude, perseverance and a willingness to acknowledge and accept that there will be some failures."

Strong communication, he notes, depends on three components: a sender, a receiver, and a message. "Effective communication sounds simple, but it is far from it," said Siegel. "Failing to understand different styles of communicating, what body language is conveying, and the different meanings associated with the most common words we use are the primary barriers. They can only be removed by learning how to actively listen and properly structuring the way we ask questions." Siegel said that open ended questions are the most effective.

As for team building, many businesses invest heavily in expensive, off-site retreats, but Siegel explained that, "Team building is much more fundamental than a once a year 'kumbaya' experience. Team building requires ongoing cooperation, accountability, synergies wherein each team member's strengths are validated, and relationships built on mutual respect and trust."

Employee motivation is another area that is often met with quick fixes that are not substantially meaningful or lasting said Siegel. "The only kind of motivation that lasts is attitude motivation which is based on change." He explained that attitude motivation is how each of us reacts to others and they react to us. "Motivation is achieved when an employee takes action because he or she wants to and not because they believe they have to," said Siegel.

Regarding goal setting, which many executives take on at the end or beginning of a year, Siegel said the activity is meaningless if the goals are not written down, or are not specific, measurable, or

attainable. "By writing down specific goals that can be measured and realistically achieved, executives can save considerable time, benchmark their progress, prompt goal-oriented actions and motivate others toward achieving the goals."

Siegel added that, "Improvements in these areas, along with organizational development, designed to improve a business' overall effectiveness and viability, and personal growth, wherein individuals gain insights enabling them to reprogram their thinking from negative conditioning to a heightened awareness, acceptance and action, all can contribute to a dramatically different outcome in 2012."

Siegel, who has had a "Renaissance" career, having served as an accounting professional, and the CEO of a successful service business which he grew to over \$14 million in annual revenues and a staff of 125, works closely with executives of many small and medium-sized businesses in diverse industries. The former vice president and education coordinator of the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) with an MBA from New York University's Stern School of Business has a strong track record in helping businesses realize their goals through marked improvements in the key areas from goal setting to leadership. He also serves as a mentor for the Melville Chamber of Commerce's Young Professionals Group.

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