



The Tool Box

Serving the Electrical, HVAC & Plumbing Industries Since 1912

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What If?

By: Wally Adamchik - www.FirestarterSpeaking.com

Three Questions You Must Answer Today to Protect Your Company in the Economy Tomorrow

The sky is falling. The sky is not falling. We are doomed. We are fine. Confused? You are not alone. The economic roller coaster of the past few months presents unique challenges. We simply do not know what exactly is going to happen and that uncertainty is paralyzing our economy. It is also paralyzing managers. McCain and Obama campaigned for change; you need to campaign for a *plan*--a plan that answers the question, "What if?"

Businesses all over the world are worrying about what might happen. But, now is not the time to worry; now is the time to *develop a plan*. In the Marines, we routinely conducted contingency planning. We would pick the three most-likely scenarios for a situation we were facing, and then develop plans for each one. Our job was to execute at a moment's notice. We planned while we had time, and then implemented one of those plans based on the situation we finally did face. Rather than agonizing about impending doom, I suggest you gather your team and answer the following three questions:

- What if the economy recovers and business is great for us in the next 6 months?
- What if the economy stalls and our business revenue significantly decreases in the next 6 months?
- What if our business remains stable despite the external fluctuations in the economy?

Planning for these contingencies will help you in the following important ways:

First, it will give your team **confidence**. Inaction breeds fear. Action creates energy and gives people a sense of control over their destiny. You will be exercising leadership, and that is exactly what your employees want. When the House of Representatives failed to pass the bailout bill in September, 2008, citizens nationwide decried the lack of leadership in Washington. You need to lead today. More than ever, your people want to know the score, and they want *you* to tell them about it.

Second, answering the above questions will allow you to be more **flexible** and able to respond more **quickly** to your clients. When it comes time to act, you will be ready. Other firms will be just beginning their planning, while you will already have a plan in place. You will get the "first movers" advantage. This can put new money in your pocket or allow you to keep the money you already have. The *process* is what matters. These contingency conversations are not lunchroom chatter or filler at a staff meeting. They are written plans that you create, refine, record, and store for use. They're like the fire extinguisher in the glass case: ready when you need it.

One of the axioms of military combat is, "No plan survives contact with the enemy." Some would use that as an excuse to not plan. "Why bother? It is going to change anyway." But, the smarter business leader knows that *the power is in the planning*, not in the plan. That's where you learn, where you think ahead, brace for the worst, and work together to achieve a goal. The plan will change but you will be ready for whatever you face because you asked the question, "What if?"

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SAVE THE DATE!!!

**2009
SUMMER
CONVENTION**

**GINN
HAMMOCK
BEACH
RESORT**

**AUGUST 6-9, 2009
PALM COAST, FL**



**Mechanical Member:
TRANSWORLD, INC.**

Transworld, Inc. was founded in 1987 by Jim Ritter in Charleston, S.C. specializing in small to large commercial, industrial, institutional and historical renovations covering the states of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

Our service department accommodates residential, commercial, and industrial repairs and maintenance. Being capable of providing a turnkey project from design to installation has been one of the many keys to our success.

Our services include using state of the art technologies in Infrared Thermography, Ultrasonic Equipment and Voltage & Current Diagnostics to determine power quality issues to reduce business interruption cost, extend equipment life and to minimize Life/Safety risks.

With our services we offer comprehensive electronic documentation that can be used for 100 % tracking, trending, electronic one line tree view and user friendly customer interface.

Transworld has a commitment to integrity, innovation, quality and safety. Our commitment to providing our clients with an unparalleled degree of professionalism, service and satisfaction to every project is our mission. Our staff of well-trained project managers, estimators and electricians are regarded with respect and considered to be leaders in the industry.

**Transworld, Inc.
P. O. Box 21373
Charleston, SC 29413-1373
Phone: (843) 577-3491 Fax: (843) 722-0117**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Alice Gatch	1/3	Gatch Electrical Contractors, Inc.	Wife of Jimmy
Rudy Cullum	1/5	Cullum Mechanical Construction, Inc.	
Steve Brewer	1/7	Easley Mechanical	
Carolyn Paul	1/9		Wife of Sonny
Susi McWilliams	1/12	Columbia Cooling & Heating Co., Inc.	Wife of Robert
Frank Wilson	1/12	City of Spartanburg/Inspections	
Mary Pat Minor	1/13	G-M Mechanical Corporation	Wife of John
Paul Prevatte	1/17	North Strand Mechanical, Inc.	
Kevin Wood	1/17	Endeavor Employer Services, Inc.	
George "Dan" Raines	1/18	Energy Pro of SC	
Wyman Sox	1/20	Honorary Life Member	
Brett Burkett	1/21	Burkett Electric & Electronic Systems	
Bob Jacques	1/21	Hajoca Corporation	
Kathy Kirkland	1/21	W. N. Kirkland, Inc.	Wife of Mike
Roger Griggs	1/21	Roger's Computer Service, Inc.	
Terri Harley	1/23	Metro Electric Company, Inc.	Wife of Randy
Scott Arledge	1/28	Smith & Stevenson, Inc.	
Bill Self	1/30	Self's Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.	
Dan Brailsford	1/30	Robinson McFadden	

*Happy Birthday Members! We Would Like To Announce Yours.
Please call the Birthday Hotline at 803-772-7834 or Email to mflowers@mcasc.com*

“Tool Box Talks” - Safety Tip

HAZ COM

Haz Com is the short term for the HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD. This standard was developed to ensure that the hazards of all chemicals produced or imported are evaluated, and that the information gathered about their hazards is transmitted to employers and employees. Neither workers nor employers are exempt from this standard.

You may think that there are no hazardous chemicals on your job. What about gasoline, diesel fuel, oxygen, acetylene, curing compound, and even WD40? Any chemical container brought on site that has warning labels on it like hazardous, caution, danger, flammable, or corrosive is covered by the Standard. Think about the chemicals you use during your daily activities. Look in the tool trailer. Check your tool box. Check what's carried in the back of your job pick-up.

Requirements in the Standard cover five separate areas: identifying hazardous chemicals, product warning labels, material safety data sheets (MSDS), a written program, and employee training.

When you IDENTIFY CHEMICAL HAZARDS look for physical hazards which can produce a dangerous situation outside the body and for health hazards which can cause health damage. Next, look for the PRODUCT WARNING LABEL which should alert you that the chemical is dangerous.

Each chemical used in your work area should have a MSDS. They come in many different forms; anywhere from one to many pages in length. Each will give the common name, address, and phone number of the manufacturer, first aid information, what to do in case of fire and other special handling requirements.

Each employer must have a comprehensive WRITTEN PROGRAM including a list of chemicals in the work place, where MSDS's are kept, how employees will get information on unlabeled containers, etc.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING. Each employer is required to train all their employees to use hazardous chemicals safely. Remember - this is a Standard that we can live with!

ONLY FOOLS RUSH IN - CHECK CONFINED SPACES BEFORE ENTERING!

Get your Haz Com training online now at rsssafety.360training.com.

RSS Safety, LLC

1122 Industrial Drive, Suite 113, Matthews, NC 28105

Telephone (704) 844-2519 Fax (704) 844-0291

Concerns

Rhett Leake - James M. Pleasants Co., Charlotte

Condolences

**Mr. Charles Hipp, III & Family
Harris Integrated Solutions, Inc., Summerville
On the loss of his mother
Mrs. Eliza “Lisa” Gantt**

**Mr. & Mrs. David Bishop
Waldrop, Inc., Spartanburg
On the loss of their son
David Christopher “Chris” Bishop**

Welcome New Members

**Sara Cox - Blanchard Machinery/Power Systems
Summerville**

**John Whatley - Greenville Mechanical, LLC
Greenville**

**Robbie Bass - Southern Piping Company
Greenville**

**Michael Harris - Harris Integrated Solitions, Inc.
West Columbia**

Happy Anniversary

**Mr. & Mrs. Frank Hill - 1/14
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Poplin - 1/25**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jim Knight (803) 896-4374

Nov. 13, 2008

State Offering Training in Your Community on New State Illegal Immigration Law

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR) has scheduled training sessions at technical colleges across the state in January to help employers understand and know how to comply with the new state immigration law.

Governor Mark Sanford, on June 4, 2008, signed into law the "South Carolina Illegal Immigration Reform Act". In addition to complying with I-9 requirements, all employers are required to verify the legal status of employees. One way to do so is through the Department of Homeland Security's online database called E-verify; another is to determine that the employee has a South Carolina driver's license or other government issued identity document. The statute also sets penalties, including fines and loss of business licenses, for failing to get verification and for knowingly hiring an illegal immigrant.

LLR will investigate complaints and randomly audit companies. However, according to the provisions of the law, the agency cannot accept and investigate complaints or conduct audits until July 1, 2009, at businesses employing 100 or more workers, and July 1, 2010, at businesses employing less than 100 workers.

A Web site, www.llr.state.sc.us/immigration, is available to assist employees, employers and others affected by the law. Visitors can review the law, get updates as regulations are drafted, review frequently asked questions and learn about future training in their area. There are also links to other state agencies with responsibilities under the law.

Seating will be limited at each technical school, so LLR is asking employers to consider sending only one representative.

January 2009 Training - All Training Will Be 10 AM To Noon

- Jan. 5 **Florence-Darlington Technical College**, 2715 W. Lucas Street, Florence – Fred C. Fore, 400 Building
- Jan. 6 **Horry-Georgetown Technical College**, Conference & Business Ctr., 950 Meyers Ave., Myrtle Beach, Bldg. 600
- Jan. 7 **Midlands Technical College**, Airport Campus, Academic Center, 1260 Lexington Dr., West Columbia, Aud. 116
- Jan. 8 **Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College**, 3250 St. Matthews Road, Orangeburg, Auditorium in Building R
- Jan. 9 **Central Technical College**, 506 North Guignard Drive, Sumter, Industrial Technology Building 400, Room 401
- Jan. 12 **Northeastern Technical College**, 1201 Chesterfield Highway, Cheraw, Hampton Hall, Building 200
- Jan. 15 **Aiken Technical College**, 2276 Jefferson Davis Highway, Graniteville, Amphitheater in Building 700, Room 736

Upcoming Events!!!

5th Annual MCASC Statewide Meeting & Barbeque

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

Guest Speaker: Senator Glenn F. McConnell
The Coop, Columbia, SC

3rd Annual Piedmont Area Clays for College

Friday, April 24, 2009

Harris Springs Sportsman's Preserve
Waterloo, SC

21st Annual George W. Bryce, Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament

Friday, May 1, 2009
Oakdale Country Club
Florence, SC

1st Annual Coastal Area Inshore Fishing Tournament

Tentative Date

Saturday, May 16, 2009
TBA

18th Annual MCASC Santee Scholarship Tournament

June 5-7, 2009

Quality Inn & Suites
Santee, SC

MCASC Summer Convention

August 6-9, 2009

Ginn Hammock Beach Resort
Palm Coast, Florida

Wasting a Crisis - By: Ann Elliott

A crisis changes the prevailing order. Nothing is the same after a crisis. Are you using the prevailing economic conditions to your advantage?

Paul M. Romer, Stanford economist and recognized expert on economic growth, said "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste." Many businesses are caught up in the prevailing, negative outlook and are missing an opportunity to improve the way they do business. All they see is the downside of an economic downturn.

The problem with a significant global economic downturn is that no matter where you go there it is. Before you get too caught up in the frenzy, remember that sensational, bad news sells.

There is no question that we are experiencing you-know-what. Look on the bright side. You have already done a year of time. You don't have to repeat those twelve months. If the experts are correct, and that's a big if, in mid 2009 the economy will be turning around. George Bernard Shaw said, "If all the economists were laid end to end, they'd never reach a conclusion." Remember this too shall pass.....sometime.

The current downturn in the economy has our attention. If you are not taking advantage of this slowdown, you are missing a great opportunity to be ready for the upturn.

Some symptoms of a terrible crisis and a lost opportunity:

- Focus primarily on the negative
- Tolerate a low performing work force
- Toss the basics of good business
- Operate in a top down, command and control mode
- Spend energy on what you cannot change
- Maintain complex, inefficient systems
- Fore go marketing and training initiatives

Some businesses do better in a downturn despite what you hear on the nightly news and front page of the newspaper. Car repair shops, for example, have more work because people keep cars longer. Attorneys who handle bankruptcy have more business in a downturn. Instead of buying a new house, people repair or remodel their existing house.

Here's an example of a missed opportunity to use a terrible crisis:

This week I took a pair of shoes to a shoe shop for new soles and heels. I asked the owner if he was experiencing more business these days. He said, "Yes, I'm really busy now." He reminded me, however, "There have also been times when it's really slow." He told me now people are repairing a nice pair of leather shoes instead of tossing them in favor of a new pair.

As I walked out the door clutching my yellow claim ticket, I said, "Create a great day." He looked up from his workbench over the rim of his glasses and said, "I'm too busy to have a good day." Surprised and unable to contain myself, I said, "Surely you meant to say you are too busy to have a bad day."

Use these practical solutions to capitalize on a crisis:

- 1. Remind yourself of what is going well in your business and your life.** Take an inventory of all you have to appreciate. The little stuff counts, too. You will discover you have an "embarrassment of riches."
- 2. Take care of your customers and clients with extraordinary products and service.** Find out what they expect and how you can solve their problems profitably.
- 3. Expect a high level of performance from your work force.** Train them so they can excel.
- 4. Trim excesses at all levels in your business.** Streamline systems to get the most work with the least amount of effort and the highest accuracy.
- 5. Be transparent with your employees.** Keep them informed and expect them to find solutions.
- 6. Find out how others are affected by this downturn.** Ask them what strategies they have in place to deal with it. Share yours with them.
- 7. Push the problem solving and decision making further down into your organization.** Give your employees a stake in the outcome.
- 8. Use this perfect opportunity to showcase how you can solve problems for your clients and customers.** Learn how to market effectively and creatively.

There's nothing like a crisis to galvanize your resolve. The days of succeeding in spite of yourself are over. If you are serious about running your business on purpose, use this crisis to your advantage. What strategies have you put in place to position you to succeed in the inevitable recovery? A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.

Ann Elliott is a leadership strategist and founder of The Berkana Company LLC. She is the author of "What Successful Women Know About Leadership" (2005). As an experienced facilitator, trainer, and business consultant, she helps entrepreneurs and business owners build a thriving business that is efficient, profitable and a fun place to work. Ann speaks professionally at conferences, workshops and seminars. To schedule her for your event, contact: Indo@berkanacompany.com or visit www.berkanacompany.com

The Killer Bee Syndrome

By Tom Frisby - www.frisbygroup.org

There are bees which sting. My grandma would wet some baking soda and place it on the sting mark and behold the pain would quickly subside, and off I would go to play amongst the peach and pear trees again. But my grandma and I didn't have to deal with Killer Bees. These suckers will kill you. And there are many recorded instances of such fatal attacks by the killer bees.

In the construction industry we have our honey bees that sting and the killer bees which kill. The honey bee sting involves some disputed changes, a month or so of delay. It hurts a little, but you live through it.

But then there is the killer bee. The killer bee can put you out of business. The killer bee is the syndrome in which owner caused delays should result in a significant time extension, but the owner doesn't grant one. And so you are bound to accelerate meaning overtime, loss of productivity, etc. Or where the general contractor fails to control the masonry contractor and the other trade contractors are forced to checkerboard their work. Out of sequence work increases crew movement and material handling, and impacts learning curve as well as workmanship. Labor costs tend to rise exponentially. Why? Read all the studies on loss of productivity.

But Owners get stung by the killer bees also. Owners who are planning revenue streams based on given completion dates of buildings only to incur substantial loss of revenues when the building is delayed because of contractor caused delays, or poor workmanship by the contractor. These can be gigantic losses. Years ago on the Bad Creek Pump Storage project, the loss for failing to meet the planned completion date was \$100,000,000 Investment Tax Credit, and \$500,000,000 daily in revenue. The contract for the first precast barge (to be used for Liquid Propane Gas Storage in the Java Sea), the contractor (headed by Dr. Art Anderson of ABAM) would have lost \$100,000 per DAY for every day he was late but the consortium of Petroleum companies led by ARCO would have lost about five times that much in revenue for every day the barge was late.

So, the losses for the owner as well as the contractor can be staggering when schedules are missed. My experience is that the number one reason schedules are missed, or sequences are altered or time is compressed relates to Owner decision making. When an RFI originates in the field, it is basically a stop work order until a decision is made. When submittals come back with red lines, these amount to "stop work orders" in plant production until the "red lines" are resolved. Often the submittals are incorrect in the first place; often the designer uses the submittal to "play with the toy" and make changes that should have been considered in the design phase.

Often there are delays in responding to the RFI because the question for which it seeks a solution was not well framed by the contractor in the first place - how many answers to RFI's do I see that read: "In the contract." A needless waste of time by a contractor who uses the designer to do his research.

On the Aloha Stadium many years ago, the project was delayed almost a year (resulting in millions of dollars of delay cost) when the contractor sought a solution to remediating concrete that was not crack-free (this was an air movement system and the concrete needed to be non-porous and crack-free . . .well, it wasn't and the air movement system wasn't going to work, because air, like water, would penetrate the cracks and not provide the necessary resistance) because the Owner, the Engineer and the Contractor spent that year quibbling over whose fault it was. In fact, the subsequent remediation cost less than \$85,000 but the delay damages were over 50 times that.

Decision making is a team sport. It is not a solo activity. I could not write this article with any level of credibility if I attempted to lay the mantle of culpability with any single party. As Hillary says, It Takes a Village. At the pre-con (or first partnering meeting - although real partnering seems to be rare in this State and even then anemic at best, except for the Ravenel Bridge which set a high bar for effective partnering) one of the first priorities we establish is to agree on an effective decision-making mechanism. And "best of its class" results, as reported by Construction Industry Institute shows remarkably positive results where this approach is taken. But whatever mechanism is used, just remember my adage: Often wrong, but never in doubt! In other words, the name of the game is to keep that momentum going.

And if not, the next sound you may hear is the buzz of the killer bee. Or bees. And it takes more than a baking soda compress to assuage the pain.

**Associate Member:
KUDZU STAFFING, INC.**

Kudzu Staffing Inc. began to “climb” in May of 2006 and just like Kudzu it has been “growing” and “spreading” ever since. Kudzu is headquartered in Greenville, SC, and in 2008 expanded its operation into the Charleston Market.

Kudzu prides themselves on providing the highest level of service. “We aren’t a huge global agency with tons of red tape and different levels of management. We are built around customer service and being well-versed in what companies are looking for when using our services,” Sean Thornton, co-owner, says.

Kudzu Staffing specializes in the manufacturing, construction, and administrative skill sets. They provide recruiting, worker's compensation, matching taxes, advertising, payroll administration, and government reporting for our clients. Their employees enjoy benefits such as vacation pay, holiday pay, health insurance, and retirement plans. They can be a solution for your staffing needs whether it is long term or short term. Kudzu is proud to be seen as an extension of many clients’ HR departments. Some companies even outsource entire parts of their company to Kudzu. Benefits of this to the employer are: reduced liability, reduced work. comp. exposure, lower unemployment claims, less HR headaches, etc...

Outsourcing employees is the wave of the future, especially in this economy. Outsourcing some HR services is great for large and small businesses because it gives you a buffer before you are definitely ready to hire that individual permanently. “We will do anything and everything to set ourselves aside from our competition. There will always be a need for outsourcing/staffing in our area with the markets we serve, and we intend to provide the highest level of customer satisfaction in order to keep one step ahead,” says Will Jones, co-owner.

Greenville Office:
112 Clair Dr.
Piedmont, SC 29673-7771
864.272.0181

Charleston Office:
3125 Ashley Phosphate Rd., Ste. 101
N. Charleston, SC 29418-8458
843.225.0123

**Congratulations to our next Associate & Mechanical Members who will be highlighted in the upcoming issue of “The Tool Box”:
Farrell Chevrolet, Spartanburg - Associate Member
Trane Upstate Carolina, Greenville - Mechanical Member**

JANUARY 2009 MONTHLY AREA MEETINGS

MIDLANDS AREA

Thursday, January 8, 2009 @ 6:00 PM
Location: MCASC State Office, 1504 Morninghill Dr., Columbia
Sponsored By: Energy Pro of S. C.

Topic: “Government Contracting”

Speaker: Dan Raines
Energy Pro of SC

PIEDMONT AREA

Tuesday, January 13, 2009 @ 6:00 PM
Location: 430-J Roper Mountain Road, Greenville
Sponsored By: Johnson Controls, Inc.

Topic: “Technologies For Automating Our Industry”

Speaker: Steve Maddox
Sunrise Technology Group

PEE DEE AREA

Thursday, January 15, 2009 @ 6:30 PM
Location: 933 Santiago Drive, Florence
Sponsored By: City Plumbing Company of Florence

Topic: “Create Your Own Bailout”

Speaker: Chuck Panoff
The Carpedius Group, Ltd.

COASTAL AREA

Tuesday, January 27, 2009 @ 6:00 PM
Location: 1008 Bankton Road, Hanahan
Sponsored By: Eastern Industrial Supplies

Topic: “Status of the Noisette Project & Redevelopment of the Naval Base”

Speaker: Jeff Baxter
Director of Development
The Noisette Company



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*Serving mechanical contractors in
South Carolina since 1912.*

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Bob Jacques, Associate President
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MCASC Vision Statement

The Mechanical Contractors Association of South Carolina (MCASC) will be the leading construction association in South Carolina for specialty contractors and suppliers in the electrical, mechanical (HVAC), and plumbing fields by serving its membership, the industry, and the Community in a vibrant and harmonious fashion.

MCASC Mission Statement

The Mechanical Contractors Association of South Carolina (MCASC) will provide its membership with:

- current business/technical information and support
 - a proactive political/legislative agenda
- a joint industry collaboration to improve relative business practices
- an ongoing effort to offer training opportunities for both professional and craft personnel
 - educational scholarships for deserving students
- the development of industry related career opportunities

The Association's objective for this mission is to enhance the future of the Construction Industry in South Carolina.