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From the Editor



Eric Wiedenmann

Welcome to the 37th issue of The Revenue Accelerator™. [Market Development Group](#) (MDG) aims to provide practical revenue and profit generator tools for MDG clients, colleagues and friends. The Revenue Accelerator™ circulation has grown to over 3,500 business leaders worldwide since our first issue was published in 2006. We welcome any suggestions of articles or topics you would like to have included in future issues.

The guest writer in this issue is **Michael Levin**.

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How to Shift From Commodity Sales to Value Selling

By: Eric Wiedenmann

Many of our clients face the challenge of being in a market segment where their product or service is considered a commodity. The challenge is that it is usually in a price driven discussion and sales people are often trained to commoditize their sales rather than selling value.

When a company offers a product or service viewed as commodity, they tend to focus on the features only to find out that there is almost always another company that can do something similar at a cheaper price which will result in a sales person losing the order.

It's not about the features of your product or service but the value or ROI. If your sales people focus on value propositions such as peace of mind, long-term cost savings, quality, productivity, faster time to market and reliability then discussions regarding the initial purchase price becomes secondary.

Be proud of your price tag! There is nothing wrong with being more expensive, as long as you are able to understand the real value that your customers are looking for and can communicate it. Own your own price tag. As a matter of fact, I have sold products that were 100% more expensive than the competition because I would say "yes we are more expensive and here is why."

Driving your Company Revenue by "Creating an Entrepreneurial Workplace"

By: Michael Levin

Creating an Entrepreneurial Workplace to me is a powerful way to create employee engagement and drive critical company initiatives. It's a way to not only get your employees comfortable with positive change, they will embrace and lead that change.

This philosophy is something I've embraced and worked hard to create in my own companies that I have launched, grown into multi-million dollar entities and sold. My clients have also shared this same experience as they have seen tremendous business results lead by powerful and positive culture changes.

The intent is to turn traditional leadership upside down in which problems are surfaced to the top (if you hear about them at all) and the leadership team is expected to solve it. And, if these problems aren't solved to the employee's satisfaction, they feel as though they aren't heard and ignored.

I hear two constant complaints from leadership and those they lead. From leadership, I hear "How come I can't get my employees to take greater ownership?" The employee's number one complaint I hear about their company is "The communication within our company is terrible."

By implementing this philosophy and process, it helps to address both issues. First it helps create greater employee ownership. Secondly, it improves company communication and culture.

In the upcoming Jack Canfield book (author of Chicken Soup for the Soul) "The Road to Success", as a co-author I share a bit about this process.

There are, however, some significant challenges to creating this environment. The first is “What is the motivation for the employee? Why should they take a chance and stick their neck out and lead critical initiatives when it’s far safer to just do what they’re told?”

When I have researched the needs of the employee versus the needs of the employer, there is an inherent lack of alignment between the two. Employers want employees to take greater ownership. When you look at the needs of the employee, taking ownership isn’t on the list. Their primary needs are to work in a safe and friendly environment, have security and be able to afford to take care of themselves and their family.

There is one need though that does fit and it is the key alignment between employees and employers. Employees want to significantly contribute to the company’s success and solving issues. They want new learning opportunities that lead to advancement and personal development. This is the need that has to be leveraged to create this environment and it’s the place to start.

Let me share a story to help illustrate how you leverage this alignment while meeting the other key needs of the employee. A senior member of the National Speaker’s Association once said to me she appreciated my style when I spoke because I do so without a net. I asked her what she meant by that. She said I like to speak without a podium, without powerpoints and I present my own material versus the safety of using someone else’s. I leave myself fully exposed.

I have done the same at times with my businesses. The first I launched while I still had my career as an Executive for Pepsi. I had a net. At times, I’ve launched businesses with my house and savings on the line. It was certainly much scarier without a net.

Most people are uncomfortable being entrepreneurial without a net. You need to make your employees feel safe and secure while promoting their entrepreneurial spirit. They need to know they can make meaningful contributions, take initiative and do so without the risk that, if they make an honest mistake, their job isn’t at risk. You need to provide them a net.

This is the place to start. There is a lot more to creating this environment. At the same time, this groundwork needs to be laid so an entrepreneurial workplace has the opportunity to flourish.

About Michael:

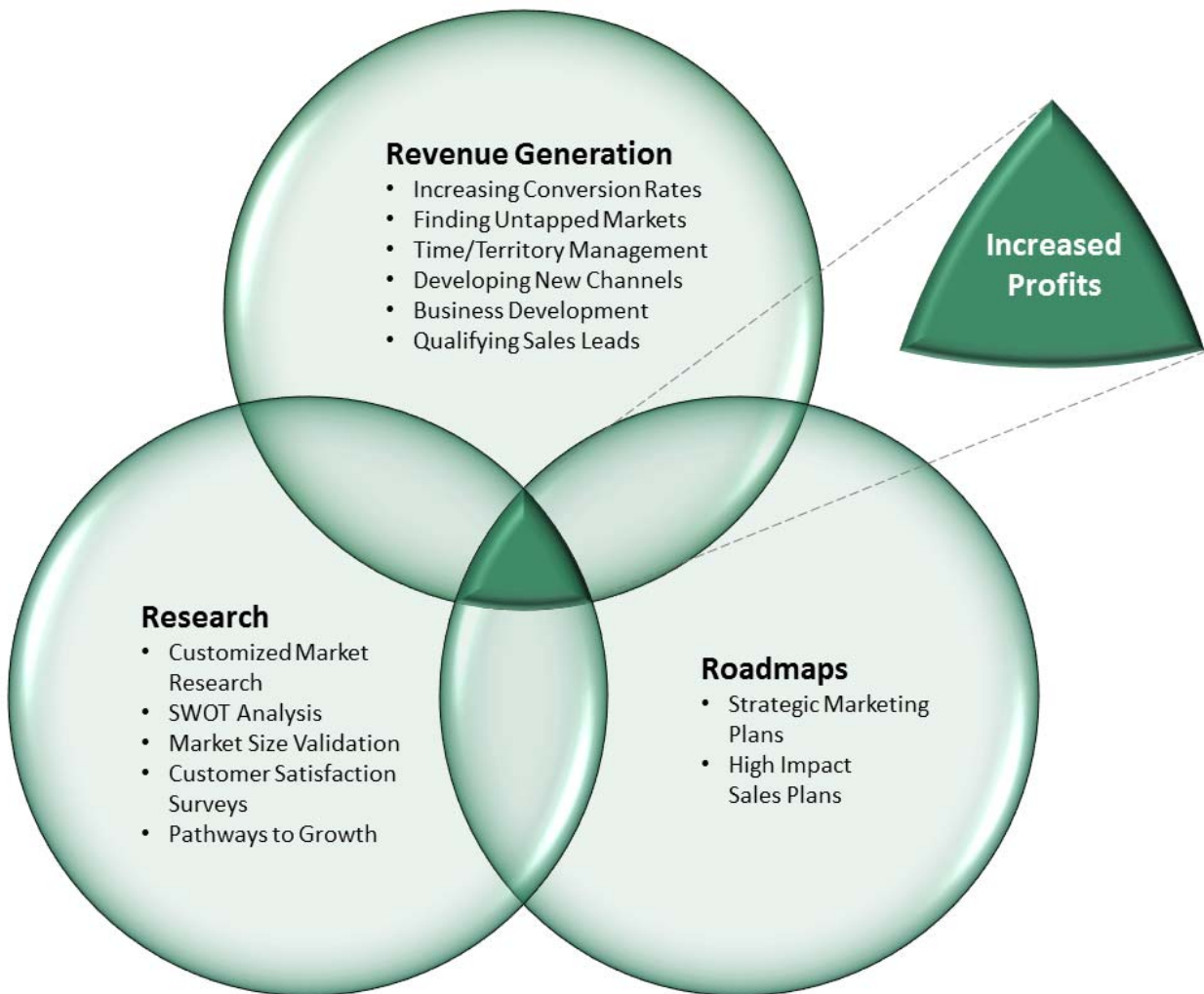
Michael Levin is President and CEO of [Custom Solutions Inc.](#) He is an accomplished Coach and Speaker, sharing his unique and high impact philosophies and processes in the areas of Sales and Leadership along with Presentation Skills. His clients include Pepsi Cola, Oracle, Clorox, McKesson, New Belgium Brewery, Cal Weld, Hexcel, as well as a significant number of other firms of all sizes. He has launched multiple product and service companies and grown them into multi-million dollar entities.

Michael is a graduate of Chico State University.

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This Is How [MDG](#) Helps Clients Increase Sales Efficiently and Cost Effectively



Contact [Eric Wiedenmann](#) to learn how [MDG](#) can help increase your company's sales and profit goals quickly and cost-effectively.

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