

MONTHLY SOCIAL MEDIA



Templates



REMEMBER

1. Feel free to change the headline of the blog post so it sounds like you.
2. Also, write one or two sentences in your own voice to introduce the blog post.
3. Create a stock close for your blog posts with a call to action and your contact information.
4. If you promote your blog to Facebook or Twitter more than once, craft each promotion a little different to make each one unique.



Blog Post



Prune the Suckers!

In horticulture, suckers are non-productive shoots growing on a plant or tree that “suck” precious nutrients away from the fruit-bearing branches. Suckers grow on fruit trees, grape vines, raspberry plants, and other fruit-bearing plants.

In the garden, you can detect suckers because they grow quickly and are long and slender and produce no fruit. However, since suckers grow as part of the plant, they may not always be readily obvious. Suckers hinder growth and productivity, so the gardener learns to recognize them, prune them, and throw them on the compost pile.

“Suckers” grow in our business and personal lives as well. Over time, we inadvertently develop practices or behaviors that suck the fruitfulness from our lives and work. Distractions also qualify as suckers. Personal and business suckers deplete time, resources, and focus from our lives.

These productivity “suckers” are far more common and harmful than we might think. A recent survey conducted by the business coaching firm Inc. found that “time-wasting, low-value and no-value activities among business owners accounted for more than 30% of their workweeks.”*

Sometimes “suckers” in our lives and business are easy to detect and other times they are so well camouflaged as part of our business that we don’t recognize them.

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Potential Suckers

Let's consider some of the potential "suckers" in our lives and business and ways to prune them:

- 1. Negative thinking and negative self-talk.** Nothing robs us of joy, hope, enthusiasm, and productivity like negative thoughts and negative self-talk. And don't fall into the trap of excusing such behavior by saying you're a realist!

Negative thinking can creep into our thought patterns so subtly that we may not even realize it. Fits of anger, depression, complaining and grumbling all give evidence that we've allowed this "sucker" to flourish in our lives. Prune it away by replacing negative thinking and self-talk with positive thinking and positive self-talk. This takes discipline and perseverance.

- 2. Naysayers.** Naysayers and negative people also suck the life out of our lives and business. To the extent possible, simply avoid such people. You don't want people in your life who take joy in running you or your business down. However, if this person is someone you want to maintain a relationship with, then have a candid talk with them and explain the impact of their negativity on you and others.

If someone does say something negative or discouraging, smile and counter it with a positive, encouraging word.

- 3. Media.** TV, video games, search engines, movies and social media can all suck time and productivity from our lives. I'm not saying these are all bad. We all need some "play time" in our lives. But these media are often very alluring and can become addictive.

If you recognize some form of media as a "sucker" in your life, set limits for yourself in using it. You may need to prune some media out of your life altogether. Or, consider using media as a reward for completing a project or working a certain number of hours.

What may make this "sucker" difficult to detect, however, is the fact that we all use media in our businesses. For instance, it's easy to go to Facebook to post something for the business, and the next thing we know, we've spent half-an-hour reading other people's posts!

- 4. Email.** We are constantly barraged with email. Every few minutes (seconds) a little chime announces the arrival of a new email and potential distraction. Turn off the chime. Prune this "sucker" by deciding to check emails at only certain times of the day.

- 5. Anything else that's non-productive.** There may be any number of other distractions throughout a day that suck productivity away from you. Think about your work area; your peak productivity times; people, pets, or other duties that make demands on your time. Don't let what seems urgent distract you from your plan and goal. Prune away the "suckers" so you can stay on task.

However, there are times when something unplanned but too important to ignore forces its way into our schedule. Sometimes that issue is so mind-consuming that we know we've got to take care of it, or it'll continue to dominate our thoughts until we do. In such cases, take care of it so you can quickly get back on track.

Take a few minutes to assess your personal life and business. Identify the most common "suckers" for you. Write them down and decide how you'll "prune" them out of your life.

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Facebook Post

Prune the Suckers!

Suckers are non-productive shoots growing on a plant or tree that “suck” precious nutrients away from the fruit-bearing branches. But we experience “suckers” in our lives and businesses as well. These too deplete our time and productivity. Read the rest of the article...

Enhanced Facebook Post: You could be wasting up to 30% of your time at work on activities that “suck” value from your life and business. Read the rest of the article...



Twitter Tweet

Prune the Suckers!

What are the key productivity suckers in your life? [blog post]

Enhanced Twitter Post: Productivity suckers may be depleting as much as 30% of your time. [blog post]



LinkedIn Update

Prune the Suckers!

Suckers in plants stunt their growth and hinder fruit-bearing. “Suckers” in your business and personal life have a similar effect. Learn how to recognize these “suckers” and prune them out of your life. Read the rest of the blog post...

Enhanced LinkedIn Post: One of the quickest ways to increase productivity in your business is by eliminating the “suckers” – things that eat up time, resources, energy and attention. Identify them and “prune” them away. Read more in this week’s blog post...



Video Script

A. Your standard Opening: Hey everyone it’s YOUR NAME and on this episode, I want to share with you an important topic: Prune the Suckers!

B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style): Prune the Suckers!

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C. Your Standard Close: Until next time this is....



Email Blast (or auto responder)

Subject: Prune the Suckers!

A. Your standard Opening (revise to fit your writing voice):

Greetings! YOUR NAME here and I've got something for you that I thought that you'd find extremely helpful!

B. Content (revise to fit your writing style): Prune the Suckers!

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C. Your close

If you’d like to read more relevant and informative articles, check out my blog at www.....



Blog Post

Core Values – A Key to Your Success

Consider the following scenarios:

- 1.** A potential client calls and asks you to work on a project for them. You know this client is difficult to work with and the project does not interest you, but you need the money.
- 2.** Things have been financially tight lately and a client offers to pay you “under the table.”
- 3.** The past few months you’ve been inundated with a non-stop flow of work. Potential clients have offered you three more lucrative jobs this week! You’ve barely been able to keep ahead of the work and you run the risk of neglecting your relationships, getting sloppy, or burning out.

What would you do in the above situations? How would you know what to do? Having a clear set of core values can make many difficult decisions easy.

What Are Core Values?

Core values define how you conduct your business and your personal life. Typically, core values contain a combination of moral or ethical principles and values that are simply important to you. Some moral or ethical principles might include:

- ❖ Honesty & integrity
- ❖ Keeping one's word
- ❖ Honoring God in all you do
- ❖ Treating others with respect and dignity
- ❖ Working safely
- ❖ Offering the very best service and products possible
- ❖ Protecting the environment

Examples of values that are important to you might include:

- ❖ Accepting only work you enjoy
- ❖ Having fun
- ❖ Ongoing personal growth
- ❖ Maintaining radical margin
- ❖ Keeping stress levels low

Why Do We Need Core Values?

In his book, *The Leadership Code*, AJ Slivinski explains:

Values serve as the hub of the wheel that drives the performance of your organization and from which all decisions are made. Your core values inform the public, your customers, and all other constituents what your company is about, how you operate, and how you treat people. Core values function as your primary recruiting, evaluating and retention tools. Attention to your values will help you achieve peak performance. (AJ Slivinski, *The Leadership Code*, 2014, p. 153.)

Our core values keep us focused and on-track. From a practical standpoint, our values prevent us from falling into moral failure, protect us legally, and help us maintain our integrity. Our core values help us attract new clients and retain current ones.

As we seek strategic alliances and partnerships with other entrepreneurs, our core values will determine to a large extent their willingness to work with us.

How to Develop Core Values

- 1. Dedicate focused time.** Take time away from your normal workplace. If you have a team, engage their help. If you don't yet have a team, invite someone along with you: a coach, a professional facilitator, your spouse, or another business owner whom you trust and admire. Set aside enough time to do a thorough job in a place where you won't be interrupted.
- 2. Brainstorm.** Allow yourselves plenty of time to brainstorm in a free-flowing, anything-goes frame of mind. Capture all ideas for all participants to see. Reserve judgment and scrutiny until you've exhausted all possibilities.

3. Evaluate. From your list of brainstormed values, select only those that you can't live without. Ask: "What is it that defines us?" Or, "What is it that we want to define us?" There is no recommended number of values. Your objective is not a target number of values, but to choose values that express who you are and aspire to be, and what you want to be known for.

As part of the evaluation process, discuss how each value will impact your business and its various aspects. Also, how does each value correspond to the others? If two of your values are *speed* and *quality*, in what ways do these two values potentially collide?

Here are some questions to help you evaluate your values: (Slivinski, p. 156)

- a. How important is this value to our long-term success?
- b. To what extent can we say this is a permanent value?
- c. Is this value sustainable?
- d. How will this value help us in making decisions?
- e. What if the market changes; will we hold onto this value even to our financial detriment?
- f. In what ways does this value serve our customers?
- g. To what extent will this value encourage and generate new business?

4. Implement your core values. In your offsite meeting, discuss how to best implement your values. This involves more than printing, framing and hanging them on the wall. Talk about specific behaviors associated with each value.

You might decide to spend time focusing on a single value in your staff meetings. If you're a sole entrepreneur, you can still do this by yourself. Discuss what that value might look like in practical terms that day. Establish your core values as part of who you are. Integrate them in your marketing and in all else you do.

Not having core values is like starting out on a road trip without a destination or a plan to get there. Whether you're making a lot of money or struggling financially, money alone is a poor measure of success or failure. Instead, let your core values determine your degree of success. You'll know where you're going and how to get there.



Facebook Post

Core Values – A Key to Your Success

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Enhanced Facebook Post: Not having core values is like starting out on a road trip without a destination or a plan to get there. Read the rest of the article...



Twitter Tweet

Core Values – A Key to Your Success

Core values can make many difficult decisions easy. [blog post]

Enhanced Twitter Post: Money alone is a poor measure of success or failure. [blog post]

LinkedIn Update

Core Values – A Key to Your Success

What are core values, why do we need them, and how do we establish them? Read the rest of the blog post ...

Enhanced LinkedIn Post: How would you react in tricky ethical situations? How would you know what to do? Having a clear set of core values can make many difficult decisions easy. Read more in this week's blog post...

Video Script

A. Your standard Opening: Hey everyone it's YOUR NAME and on this episode, I want to share with you an important topic: Core Values – A Key to Your Success.

B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style): **Core Values – A Key to Your Success**

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Why Do We Need Core Values?

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Values serve as the hub of the wheel that drives the performance of your organization and from which all decisions are made. Your core values inform the public, your customers, and all other constituents what your company is about, how you operate, and how you treat people. Core values function as your primary recruiting, evaluating and retention tools. Attention to your values will help you achieve peak performance. (AJ Slivinski, *The Leadership Code*, 2014, p. 153.)

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C. Your close

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Blog Post

The Perils of Compartmentalizing

Some Probing Questions

To what extent would you...

- ❖ Treat the checker at the grocery store with the same respect you treat your best client?
- ❖ Be as gracious toward your spouse or family as you would toward a potential customer?
- ❖ Use the same language around your children/nephews/nieces that you'd use with friends at a bar?
- ❖ Maintain the same moral standards on vacation in Mexico that you would at home?

No doubt, you see where those questions are headed. The overarching question is: Do we compartmentalize our lives? If so, what does that look like and what are its dangers?

Compartmentalizing

Compartmentalizing refers to the practice of living one's life as though it consisted of different "compartments." Compartmentalized living tempts one to live by different moral and ethical standards depending on which "compartment" one is currently operating in.

We may have unintentionally established separate compartments for work, for family, for social gatherings, for recreation, and perhaps even one for religion or spiritual matters. We choose to behave and speak differently in each compartment based on what we perceive to be the expectations (or lack thereof) of those within that compartment.

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That's a "chameleon" approach to living, always adjusting morals and ethics to the circumstances, instead of holding to a value system that transcends any particular setting.

The Perils of Compartmentalizing

Perhaps some might argue, "Come on, lighten up! Everybody needs to let their hair down from time to time. Besides, I'm not hurting anybody." And so on.

But living by a sliding scale of morals and ethics is disingenuous and unauthentic. We become those who say, "Don't do as I do; do as I say." We compromise our morals or ethics for the sake of our own pleasure or to impress others. This damages our reputation and leads others to distrust us. We pretend to be somebody we are not, and others see through it no matter how polished our act is.

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You've no doubt heard it said that *people do business with those whom they know, like and trust*. But because compartmentalized living fosters duplicity, it undermines other's ability to know, like and trust us. What's the solution? Integrity.

Integrity – The Solution to Compartmentalizing and its Perils

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Regardless of the situation in which we find ourselves, in integrity, we've already settled on our value system and we refuse to compromise those values. We believe, "Doing the right thing is always the right thing to do."

Living with Integrity

Hopefully, this serves as a sober reminder for you and me to live lives of integrity. On the other hand, if this is pricking your conscience and you want to make some changes, here are some suggestions.

- 1. Decide who you want to be and the person you wish to present to the world (all of it: your spouse, your kids, your friends, your clients, your neighbors, strangers, etc.).**
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Let's encourage each other to live lives of integrity, being consistent in our character. It's not only good for business, it's good for living and loving others.



Facebook Post

The Perils of Compartmentalizing

Are you living a compartmentalized lifestyle? Compartmentalized living tempts one to live by different moral and ethical standards depending on which "compartment" one is currently operating in. Read the rest of the article...

Enhanced Facebook Post: Living by a sliding scale of morals and ethics is disingenuous and unauthentic. We become those who say, "Don't do as I do; do as I say." We compromise our morals or ethics for the sake of our own pleasure or to impress others. This damages our reputation and leads others to distrust us. Read the rest of the article...



Twitter Tweet

The Perils of Compartmentalizing

"It's always right to do the right thing." [blog post]

Enhanced Twitter Post: Integrity is consistency of character. [blog post]



LinkedIn Update

The Perils of Compartmentalizing

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A. Your standard Opening: Hey everyone it's YOUR NAME and on this episode, I want to share with you an important topic: The Perils of Compartmentalizing.

B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style): **The Perils of Compartmentalizing**

Some Probing Questions

To what extent would you...

- ❖ Treat the checker at the grocery store with the same respect you treat your best client?
- ❖ Be as gracious toward your spouse or family as you would toward a potential customer?
- ❖ Use the same language around your children/nephews/nieces that you'd use with friends at a bar?
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The Perils of Compartmentalizing

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C. Your Standard Close: Until next time this is...



Subject: The Perils of Compartmentalizing

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C. Your close

If you'd like to read more relevant and informative articles, check out my blog at www.....



2020 Vision

Sure, it's only June, but 2019 is half over and 2020 will be upon us before we know it. So, it's time to start planning for next year. But before you do that, consider the following.

As entrepreneurs and business owners we must continually look to the future. That's the nature of our work. We can't change the past, so there's no point in trying to live there. And of course, we must attend to all our work and commitments in the present and perform them with excellence. But unless we keep an eye to the future, we'll merely keep doing the same things we're currently doing. That would be okay if nothing around us changed, but that's not likely.

In 2007, when Apple announced they would be making their software development kit available to the public, entrepreneur Joel Comm got his team together to brainstorm possible apps they could create and send to market. Joel and his team came up with many cool ideas that they left for others to develop. But as they let their brainstorming grow wild, fun, and playful, they proposed the iFart app, featuring an unlimited number of flatulent sounds.

They followed through with their crazy, odiferous idea and the iFart app became the number one app for three weeks running! Joel gained more media attention from iFart than from any other single thing he had ever done. The app still sells today, and Joel is laughing all the way to the bank!

But here's the rub: when it comes to the future, none of us has 2020 vision. There is no crystal ball; no fortune teller. Joel Comm had no idea how successful iFart would become. Its success even surprised him. But that doesn't mean we can't or shouldn't anticipate what's coming, and then brainstorm, plan, and dream about the future.

Many businesses seek to build and follow a strategic plan for future quarters and years. I'm not suggesting you abandon that practice, but I believe there are other behaviors and disciplines without which the best-laid strategic plans may fail.

Following is somewhat of an unconventional approach to planning the future of your business:

- 1. Follow your nose.** Do you ever get so wrapped around trying to run your business "by the book" that you lose sight of what you truly enjoy doing? Or, to what extent has your pursuit of money taken you down a path that you no longer find pleasure in? Follow your nose. Do what you consider fun, interesting and exciting. Stop striving after money and follow your passions and the money will follow.
- 2. Anticipate opportunities.** What new thing is coming in 2020 and how could you leverage it? What significant events or technologies have been announced? Take note of these and brainstorm possible ways to capitalize on them. Do this within the framework of what you enjoy and excel at.
- 3. Eliminate distractions.** Distractions include anything that draws you away from what you truly love and enjoy doing. Or perhaps you find that you've drifted into a routine that bugs you or is unprofitable. If so, figure out a way to abandon it.
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6. Keep learning. Read much. Attend conferences. Hire a coach. Take a class. Become an expert at what you do. Never stop learning!

7. Trust serendipity. As you go about your business and life, you're likely to meet with little serendipitous opportunities. These are unplanned, unexpected and may seem unimportant in the moment. But often, these chance meetings or occurrences offer hidden opportunities and tremendous benefits. So, keep your eyes open for them and embrace them when they come your way.

With 2020 right around the corner, set time aside to form your strategic plans for the coming year. But as you do, keep the above practices in mind to bring balance and practicality to your planning.

Facebook Post

2020 Vision

Wow! June marks the halfway point in the year. That means that 2020 is right around the corner. How will you plan for the coming year? Here are seven great practices to help you prepare for the best year ever. Read the rest of the article...

Enhanced Facebook Post: As entrepreneurs and business owners we must constantly look to the future. At the same time, none of us has 2020 vision when it comes to seeing what will happen in the days, weeks and months to come. So, how do we prepare? Read the rest of the article...

Twitter Tweet

2020 Vision

Without these seven practices, your strategic plan may fail. [blog post]

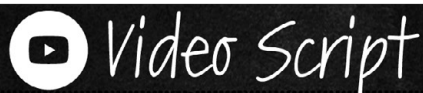
Enhanced Twitter Post: Stop striving after money and follow your passions and the money will follow. [blog post]

LinkedIn Update

2020 Vision

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B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style): 2020 Vision

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Well, there they are, seven practices that give you an eye to the future. With 2020 right around the corner, set time aside to form your strategic plans for the coming year. But as you do, keep the above practices in mind to bring balance and practicality to your planning.

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