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Donald Cooper is respected by clients in over 40 industries as both a “thought leader” and a passionate visionary in the areas of marketing, service and business excellence.

Drawing from his real life experience as a world-class manufacturer, award-winning retailer and business speaker, he has helped thousands of businesses throughout the world to add more real value to their customers’ lives...and more dollars to their bottom lines.

To subscribe to Donald’s thought-provoking, idea-generating, **FREE** monthly electronic **Newsletter**, email us at newsletter@donaldcooper.com.

His website, www.donaldcooper.com also offers free articles and business tools.

Is everyone in your business “singing from the same hymn sheet”?

When we're kids, our grandmothers are a great source of warm cookies, wonderful hugs and, if we're lucky, wise sayings that will guide us for a lifetime. In my family, when we weren't communicating effectively and things weren't getting done as they should, grandma Cooper would say, "We need to get everyone singing from the same hymn sheet."

Grandma never ran a business, but she sure got that one right. As I work with businesses, large and small, to create clarity of purpose, direction, focus and accountability, grandma’s words constantly ring in my ears.

Whether your business is large, small, or just starting out, your first job as a leader or manager is to create clarity about the value you deliver, where the business is going, how it will get there and how you'll behave along the way. Frankly, most businesses don't have that kind of clarity...and it's killing them!

Imagine a business in which the people in charge are focused on and constantly working to develop clarity about...

- 1) The **compelling value and experience** that the business commits to deliver to every customer, every day...and what that value and experience must look like in 3 to 5 years to be both competitive and profitable. Value and experiences that will “grab” your target customers, differentiate you from your competitors, make you “famous” and grow your bottom line.
- 2) **What the business commits to become** in 3 to 5 years, including...
 - how big it will be.
 - the bottom line that it will generate.
 - where it will do business, including where it will buy, sell or produce.
 - what the business model will be and how the organization will be structured.
 - the values it will live by.
 - the technology that will drive it.
 - what the organization will need to learn and the talent it will need.
 - how it will communicate with customers and prospects as a group...and as individuals.
 - who its competitors will be and what their compelling value will likely be.
 - what % of its growth will come from the organic growth of what it's doing now...and what % must come from new products or services, new locations, new markets or acquisitions.
 - what will the working capital requirements be, how much of that will come from operations, how much from outside...and from where?
 - the processes, systems and training that will be required to make all of this happen.

Is everyone in your business “singing from the same hymn sheet”? (Cont'd):

Then, imagine that this business is so well run that it attracts and keeps the very best people in the industry. And, because its leaders have clarity of purpose and direction, everyone on the team knows exactly what the business stands for, what it commits to deliver and what it commits to become...and they're all passionate to help make that happen! Imagine also that this is a business where success is celebrated and rewarded...and non-performance is dealt with.

Finally, imagine that this business gives back to the communities in which it does business and is respectful of the planet on which we all journey. Imagine the incredible power of that level of clarity and commitment. My guess is that nobody could beat them.

This, in a nutshell, is the function of leadership. Realistically, how close is your business to this extraordinary level of clarity and commitment? Is everyone in your business "singing from the same hymn sheet"? Is there even a "hymn sheet" to sing from...and, if not, what needs to be done to make that happen?

Note: If your business needs help to create the kind of clarity, focus, commitment and improved profitability that I'm talking about in this article, be sure to read the short piece below about my cost-effective solution.

For more information on how Donald Cooper can help you redefine and reinvent your business to create, deliver and communicate compelling, customer-owning Value, visit our website at www.donaldcooper.com , email us at sharen@donaldcooper.com or contact us by telephone in Toronto, Canada at 1-(416) 252-3704.