



9 pearls of wisdom

"Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power."

Here at the Palm Pavilion, we have tried to remain true to our original mission. Like other businesses, we have tightened our belts during the rough times but did not stray from the delivery of the same consistent experience – folks don't like surprises. We believe that there is something comforting about the setting here at the Palm. People want to be in familiar surroundings and be a part of an experience they can trust during times of uncertainty. The Palm Pavilion has been around since 1926. We have lived through this type of thing before. The tide will continue to come in and go out and the sun will continue to set every day over the Gulf of Mexico. Being this close to Mother Nature each day, we try very hard to appreciate what really are the important things in life.

Ken Hamilton
Palm Pavilion

Reduce expenses immediately, then monitor and correct constantly to ensure profitability. Focus on gaining business and never stop running. We are still running.

Nancy Crews
PhD – Custom Manufacturing & Engineering Inc.

Any business must fully understand what business they are really in. At Pet Supplies "Plus" we are in the human business where we must focus on and serve the consumers that come into the store.....people and pets.

Dave Oser
Pet Supplies "Plus"

The economy over the last six months has shown to be the toughest in all ten years of my existence. Maintaining your product quality, providing excellent customer service and establishing a competitive price will hopefully keep our doors open and serving our public.

Establishing a competitive price is the key to the logistics of staying in business and is the toughest to maintain. Purchasing powers have diminished. Product quality must be maintained or excel in order to maintain your pricing. Determining the cost of goods, balancing or eliminating overhead is critical.

Shop for services: insurance, telephone, internet: and reduce utility expenses as much as possible. Maintain the service on your equipment to help eliminate repairs or downtime. Organize your errands to reduce fuel costs. Taking these extra measures to reduce or eliminate overhead expenses will allow you to tune your pricing to meet market demand.

Bonnie L. Yarbrough
Celebration Cakes

In starting Salamander Hospitality I knew there was one thing that would make my business a success and that was putting the right people in the right positions. I believe it is critical to never settle on the qualities you know are paramount to finding the right person for each position, and this starts at the very top. I've surrounded myself with some of the top leaders in our Industry and it has undoubtedly made the difference. Hire the very best talent and don't negotiate.

Sheila C. Johnson

CEO of Salamander Hospitality

What I've learned is that the pace of needing to learn more is accelerating dramatically, especially when it comes to technology. And at the College, we need to think entrepreneurially about what's next, and how we can integrate into our core business of teaching and learning, and how it is being delivered and supported. When I greeted students at the start of the Spring term, I was amazed at how many students were accessing all their academic and administrative applications on their phones. Delivering our administrative systems via mobile devices is something we've been discussing, but the time between an application shifting from being a novelty to being an expectation is increasing geometrically.

James Olliver

Provost
Saint Petersburg College, Seminole Campus

Focus on the strengths of your Employees and Business Partners. If everyone is positioned to "shine" in their areas of expertise, the opportunity for success increases exponentially. If we focus on weaknesses or on just improving weaknesses, we can set people up for failure or manifest mediocrity in our business and team members.

Do the right thing and the money follows! I heard this 20 years ago and it has remained my mantra. If we maintain our integrity, honesty and the values that brought us to success in the first place, we will have continued successes no matter what!

Karen Conkel

Timberland Door

Something I remind myself of on a regular basis is that -- While things can always be better, they can also always be worse. This statement is something people know but often choose to concentrate only on the first part. This statement (in full) keeps me propelled forward to strive for better, but I am constantly reminded that very quickly things can get much worse. Haiti, I believe, is a perfect example of that. We thought we had it tough in this bad economy and housing market crash.....but then you turn on the news and see how good we really have it, even in the bad economy.

Maja Kazazic

Vela Business Solutions

When you are under a cloud of fear and concern, remember the wind of confidence and fortitude will blow it away so that the rays of the sun will shine on you again.

Mark Jones

President, Air Ambulance Worldwide, Inc.

When things get rough (and they will), when business slows (it probably already has), when the time you put in doesn't leave any left to take out, and when all you can do is scoff at your own fantastical naïveté for once believing that "if you love what you do..." (then can't bare to finish it), try this: remember what it was like to work for someone else. That's what we thought. Enjoy the ride, folks!

Robert & Scott

Vanishing Point Films

To survive, grow and prosper through this economic hiccup and realignment, our nation needs to focus on the leadership selection and development as "the" critical issue. Leaders need to ensure their team's composition is running as effectively as possible. To do such, leadership needs to constantly check and balance each position with each role and responsibility with the appropriate employee. In other words, does the needed task effectively fit the employee's abilities? Best fit of tasks and responsibilities to employee is critical to the success of the organization. People are no longer an organization's most important asset. The right people are!

Tina O'Daniels

Associate Provost of the Tarpon Springs Campus of St. Petersburg College

I feel that what keeps me going, is trying to stay focused on the future and not dwell on the past. We are constantly trying to reinvent our selves and stay positive. My staff has been very supportive on changes we have been forced to make. They are working with less staff and staying very positive. I think when the economy was so good, we became sort of lazy and felt that this bubble was going to continue for ever. I guess what is important to me is that out of all of this there will be a golden nugget that we all will grow from going forward.

Jamie Rosenkrans

Jim's Harley Davidson

It's no secret the last 2 years have been tough, especially in the auto industry. The secret is to get your business "right sized" as far as expenses without sacrificing customer care. At Century Buick GMC we have worked at combining job duties and relying heavily on key employees. We have also stuck with our amenities and destination theme, as it is still high impact without substantial cost.

Ralph Ghioto III

President, Century Buick GMC

Collaboration is not just a great end result or byproduct...it's the secret sauce in the beginning.

Andrea Henning

Executive Director, Collaborative Labs
EpiCenter, St. Petersburg College
