



Share Those Resolutions

By Sonja Carberry

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Companies announce their strategic intentions to stakeholders each year. It's a good idea, says Peter Handal, CEO of Dale Carnegie Training. Every firm, regardless of size, should make business-focused New Year's resolutions.

"It's really very important to step out of the day-to-day and look at the big picture," Handal told IBD.

Not all annual declarations are created equal. How to make sure yours is a winner? "The important thing is to be specific and make sure it's attainable," Handal said.

And don't just file those pledges away. Handal advises creating accountability by telling your plans to people around you.

Some resolutions for 2010:

- Develop internal strength. With its "Healthier Team Members, Healthier Bottom Line" initiative, Interstate Batteries is resolving to build up its 1,400 employees with on-site fitness programs plus incentive and recognition efforts.

"Interstate Batteries is investing heavily in its employees' health because we believe wellness leads to a more engaged, productive and happy team member," said Chris Willis, vice president for human resources and counsel at the car battery firm.

- Invest time. Vanessa Ogle, founder of digital media firm Enseio, plans to schedule opportunities each week to meet with vendors, customers and employees. She wants to thank them and talk about how her team can better serve its retail, hotel and stadium customers.

"One thing that's true of entrepreneurs is that we work in the business more than we work on the business," Ogle said.

She recently scheduled extra time with a client so she could discuss business in general after dealing with immediate concerns.

"I got so much out of that hour," Ogle said. "It was incredibly valuable."

- Widen your horizons. When the real estate market slowed, Amir Korangy continued publishing his New York City-based Web site and magazine, the Real Deal. He also had more downtime than usual.

Korangy used those extra hours to educate himself on business issues and revive relationships with past clients. Of equal importance, he says, was the time he spent learning to play the piano and volunteering with inner-city kids.

"In 2010, my resolution as CEO is to commit to these practices that I involuntarily picked up and incorporate them into my regular agenda," Korangy said.

- Attract more green. Chris Wallace, principal of the marketing firm SuperGroup, plans to push his firm forward ecologically in 2010.

"As a responsible citizen, I will drastically lower the overall environmental impact of my business's operation," he said. "As a prudent capitalist, I will leverage these efforts to attract green-seeking clients and gain market share from my less forward-thinking competitors."

- Sharpen that focus. "I resolve to filter out all the noise that comes with being an entrepreneur and focus on what matters in terms of accomplishing set goals."

So says Isha Edwards, brand marketing manager of consultancy Epic Measures.

Some of that racket comes from chatter on social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter. Instead of trying to keep up with them all, Edwards plans to pick the medium that best reaches her target audience "and then really concentrate on those efforts."

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