



WORKING FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

MUDGEERABA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY INC.
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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Over the past few months business in general has had an increasing test of time. We are all aware of the global economic crisis; goodness knows how it has been the main media focus of late. Taking individual stock of our own situation is the key to survival, for instance not all businesses are affected in the same manner, and some are even "recession proof." In the current climate, it is critical that you know your customers inside out and that your employees manage and service them in an important manner. Focusing on attracting new customers as well as retaining your most profitable existing is a key issue in being more effective as a business. Customer Relationship Management or (CRM) as it is classified by Microsoft is a perfect example of managing your customer base through technology. Whilst technology can be daunting at first it is an essential tool in managing your customer base, helping your employees make the right decisions at the right time, giving your customers a better overall experience. With tough times comes tough measures, the Rudd Government through the minister for Employment and Workplace Relations Julia Gillard has talked up the benefits of the ground breaking legislation that "balances the interests of employers and employees and balances the granting of rights with the imposition of responsibilities." Whilst this sounds impressive as a working model between employers and employees one has to be suspicious of the weight of the Union movement that may have impacted on the "Bill." In its report to the Senate Committee Inquiry, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, including Queensland's representation (CCIQ) has called for the Federal Government to make approximately 200 changes to these new workplace laws. Most small businesses (which are the backbone of the country) have in place "good faith bargaining" under this legislation it could spell the end to these flexible workplace agreements. For instance if an employee needs to leave work early to collect children from school and forfeit their lunch break, or leave early because they did not take a lunch break, this type of understanding could be lost. But not all of the Rudd policies are negative, for instance amongst the stimulus package is the depreciation incentive. By purchasing anything depreciable for your business before the 30th June this year the Government will grant you an extra 30% on the respective items depreciation. July the 1st onwards will be an allowance of an extra 10%, this is a massive incentive and I urge all businesses to take advantage of this no matter how large or small your purchase. Looking at the new improved and expanded Robina shopping centre and the patronage, one would have to say "what economic down turn." I believe that we Queenslanders have become budget wise and adjust our spending in the areas we feel we need to and we do this by shopping around before spending our hard working dollars.

Terry Hobson

PRESIDENT

I looked up the definition of 'Chamber of Commerce' on Google. Here are the top four definitions:

- an association of businessmen to protect and promote business interests
- chamber of commerce (also referred to in some circles as a board of trade) is a form of business network
- An organization of business people designed to advance the interests of its members. There are three levels: national, state and local
- organization that organizes businesses in town

The reason I did this was to try and explain the benefits of being involved with your local Chamber of Commerce and I think these are probably the top four reasons we exist.

- We keep you in touch via email with information relating to business from government departments and other business associations to help you protect and promote your business
- We organise social networking functions so you can get together with like-minded people and perhaps even do business together
- We are constantly looking at ways to educate, motivate, support and advance the interests of our members
- We try to organise us into some sort of business group to benefit our membership

Your committee is made up of volunteers from your business community who make every effort to help you help your business.

My passion is networking, there is a saying 'if you're not networking, you're not working!' This is so true.

Networking is not about attending a function, handing out your business cards to everyone there and grabbing a handful yourself to either throw out or spam the owners of.

Networking is about building relationships, forming trust and deciding if you would be happy to do business with this person and then recommend them to others. Remember it's not just who you know, it's who they know and they know etc. Referrals are a wonderful way to do business but you must put in the groundwork first.

Next Chamber or other function, make sure you introduce yourself to someone new and make them feel welcome. Ask about their business and listen to their reply. Learn about what they do, you may be able to help them. One group I am involved with has the motto 'givers gain', should be more of a motto for life, not just networking.

Arlene Dowdell

Some words from Zig Ziglar:

"You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help enough other people get what they want."

We look forward to seeing you at our next function.

EVENTS

Breakfast with Sergio

What a human dynamo this man was! His passion for business and business people was amazing. 45 minutes was not enough time to spend with him and I nearly got cramps from writing, he had so much to share. Like so many others his advice is to 'not participate in the recession'. This may mean making some changes in how you do business but running a business should never be a static enterprise we should always be open to change and be adaptable. (We have taken these words onboard and have doubled our business in just three months!)

A Night at the Museum

This was another interesting and fun evening held at the Mudgeeraba Museum. The volunteers were there with information and also put on a great barbeque with fabulous desserts. We combined the evening with our local Rotary group and it was a great opportunity to network with them. Must remember the mozzie spray next time, though!

Events to come:

May 29th Breakfast Brendon Sinclair, one of Australia's leading internet experts

June This will be a Networking Night, tba

Heard some great slogans for dealing with our 'recession' this morning.

My favourite was '*after every recession, there is a boom*', we should be prepared.



The Ant Philosophy by Jim Rohn

I think everybody should study ants. They have an amazing four-part philosophy, and the first part is: ants never quit. That's a good philosophy. If they're headed somewhere and you try to stop them; they'll look for another way. They'll climb over, they'll climb under, they'll climb around. They keep looking for another way. What a neat philosophy, to never quit looking for a way to get where you're supposed to go.

Second, ants think winter all summer. That's an important perspective. You can't be so naive as to think summer will last forever. So ants are gathering in their winter food in the middle of summer.

An ancient story says, "Don't build your house on the sand in the summer." Why do we need that advice? Because it is important to be realistic. In the summer, you've got to think storm. You've got to think rocks as you enjoy the sand and sun. Think ahead.

The third part of the ant philosophy is that ants think summer all winter. That is so important. During the winter, ants remind themselves, "This won't last long; we'll soon be out of here." And the first warm day, the ants are out. If it turns cold again, they'll dive back down, but then they come out the first warm day. They can't wait to get out.

And here's the last part of the ant philosophy. How much will an ant gather during the summer to prepare for the winter? All he possibly can. What an incredible philosophy, the "all-you-possibly-can" philosophy.



Your Committee

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