

Richard Gee

From: Neen James Communications [neen@neenjames.com]
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To: richard@geewiz.co.nz
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neenjames

G'Day!

That's Aussie speak for Hello!



International
Productivity
EXPERT



Why is it that when summer arrives business slows down, networks stop meeting, work attendance decreases, business development activities grind to a halt – and yet we still have budgets, goals and targets to achieve? How do you handle the 'unproductive' attitude that summer brings? How can you juggle vacation schedules? Historically, summer may have been a time for you to take it easy, do the minimum amount of activity while you focus on what you will achieve when fall comes around...not this year. Decide to make this your most productive summer ever, here are some strategies that will help you do that and continually grow your business all year round.

PS. If it is cold in your part of the world right now when you are reading this, save this ezine and read it again in 2 months time!

Update from the USA ... well Italy

One of the things I love about living in the US is it much closer to Europe so recently we took a trip to Italy with some close friends and we loved it! It is one place that should be on your list of places to visit before you die.

This magnificent country features some of the most breathtaking countryside, delicious fresh food & wine, stylish men and women, exquisite buildings and architecture and a melodic language that I could listen to for hours! Taking this vacation helped me recharge, relax and get refreshed and now I am ready for an extremely productive summer. Vacations are not a luxury, they are a necessary part of every business person's development plans. You need to make time to recharge your batteries so you can function at your maximum capacity, if you haven't taken a vacation for a while, now is the time to plan one!

JULY 2006
 highlights:
 Summer Heat
 Summer Holiday
 Summer Help



Neen making wishes
at the Trevi Fountain

Being Productive During Summer: How to Continually Grow Your Business

Take advantage of the weather. Use the longer hours of daylight savings to conduct meetings later in the day, take advantage of warmer conditions and meet people at outdoor venues and cafes, meet clients for lunch where you will enjoy lighter food and warm sunshine.

Review your business plan. Make a two-hour appointment with yourself to review all the actions in your business plan – including your cash flows and targets – and spend time determining what you need to achieve your goals for this financial year. Your business plan should not be hiding in your bottom draw or collecting dust on a shelf, it is a living document that can be reviewed regularly – make summer your time to determine your next steps.

Conduct a six-month business review. Spend two hours reviewing your business achievements for the past six months. Ask yourself these 11 questions:

1. How would I rate the past six months' business performance (1-10 with 10 being the highest)?
2. Did I achieve my financial goals each month?
3. If not, why not?
4. If not, what do I need to do differently in the next six months to meet my annual budget or plan?
5. If I did meet these targets (congratulations to you), were they big enough?
6. Have I conducted staff reviews with my team? If not, why not? And when?
7. If so, have I rewarded my team adequately?
8. Do I need to invest more in my team or personal development?
9. Is my marketing plan on track? If not, why not?
10. If not, what activities do I need to conduct to implement more marketing strategies?
11. Have I done sufficient networking to grow my business or my connections? If not, why not?

When you have completed these questions, create a series of tasks, actions or projects to implement some of your strategies to help you really achieve all your targets for the next six months.

Invest in your personal development. Have you been meaning to read the latest business book? Is there a summit you could attend? Is there an online program you have wanted to complete? Is there a web seminar that you've wanted to register for? This is a great time of year to invest in yourself, refresh your memory and learn a new skill. Summer is conducive to learning.

Conduct a summer clean. Just like a spring clean, but during the summer months. Your summer clean could include:

- Clearing, deleting or filing those read emails in your inbox.
- Unsubscribing from all those newsletters that you don't read.
- Allocating one hour to get your paper filing up to date (if you have more than one hour's worth, do one hour per week until it is all complete).
- Throwing out unwanted, unread journals that you have been 'meaning' to read, but haven't and won't.
- Reviewing your 'tasks' on your to-do list or in your Outlook file and removing those tasks that simply won't be completed.
- Spending 15 minutes cleaning the top of your desk, removing unnecessary stationery, putting away files, cleaning the dust off your family photo, throwing away empty water bottles and

RECOMMENDED
product of the month



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wiping down your computer keyboard and screen. A clean and clear desk will help you be more productive any time of year!

- Entering details into your contact management system of the business card pile that is gathering dust on your desk.

Conduct focus groups. Invite a select number of key clients to your office and ask them about your business, their expectations and experiences, and how you can better serve them. Collate the results and seek your team's input on how to action them.

Implement a product or service trial. This is the perfect time of year to try a new product or introduce a new service to your customers. Map a plan, seek team involvement and watch your customers' reactions.

Create a list of new business development targets. Once you have made your list, sort it into three groups: 'spheres of influence', those that are able to make decisions about your products or services; 'centres of influence', those that are already your advocates; and 'strategic alliances', those that you can refer business to and that can also refer business to you. Once you have your list completed, book appointments with these people to include lunch, breakfast or even a 'tele-coffee'. Create a plan within your schedule to contact them regularly. Contact could include a phone call, email, sending them an interesting article you've found, inviting them to a networking event with you, sending a parcel of products or a face-to-face meeting.

Book a 'tele-coffee' with your customers. What is a 'tele-coffee'? It is where you both make a coffee and meet by teleconference. It is a more productive way of meeting (and avoids time wasted in travel).

Visit a new networking group. Many networking groups don't meet during the summer, but those who are serious about building their businesses are still networking and still making valuable connections. Find out which groups are meeting and plan to attend at least two new groups this summer. This is the perfect time to develop new relationships and valuable connections.


To continually grow your business you do need to be mindful of the seasons but don't slow down in summer – get more productive. Use this time to get a head start on all those fall meetings you can conduct when people return from vacation, ensure plans are in place to achieve your annual results, tidy your work environment so you are not distracted by clutter, and experiment with new products, focus groups and new networking opportunities. Embrace the warmer weather for outdoor meetings and events and enjoy all that summer brings for your business growth.

neen@neenjames.com

p: 215-230-0835

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