

It All Starts with a Vision

by Lynnelle Bianco

On a personal level we call it a resolution. In business it's called a plan, a strategy or just plain 'ol goals. The beginning of the year is the most popular time to do planning, although it shouldn't be the only time you contemplate improving ourselves, our lives, our businesses and the world around us. Whatever it is you want to improve:

- Give back to the community;
- Increase profitability by 20%;
- Realize the work/life balance you crave;
- Improve your level of physical fitness;
- Expand your business to a 2nd location;

....It all starts with a vision.

I'm talking about a literal vision; to **see** yourself having achieved what it is you want to achieve.

Imagine: You can hear the applause as you cross the marathon finish line; you see your 7-digit savings account balance; you can taste the '99 Cheval Blanc as you toast your first million dollar deal; you feel the wind and sun on your face as you motor along the coast of Maine in your new 52 foot Grand Banks (a gift to yourself for meeting your 20% profitability growth goal). Your vision is your burning desire and you live your success first, in your mind.

Next is belief; your undeniable belief that your vision WILL BE. Believing that you may, that you can or that you might be able to achieve your vision doesn't cut it. You must believe, without a doubt, that your vision is possible and that you will make it a reality.

Finally you have to apply your belief. What does that mean? When you think of the work apply – you think of doing something, right? Applying your belief means doing something about it; putting your belief into action.

One of my favorite quotes is: "***Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.***" --Joel A. Barker

As business people, we tend to dismiss the discussion of vision and belief, or faith, as being "out there" or "too new age" to be a business application, but the importance of vision in a strong leader and in a successful company is undeniable. Future- focused planning, visionary leadership – these may seem like a new idea, but if you pay attention to business books, journals and publications you know that the topic of vision, visionary leadership, future-focused management, etc. has been around for years and is appearing more and more regularly today. Written in 1994, the book *Built to Last – Successful Habits of Visionary Companies* by Jim Collins, Jerry I. Porras, spent over 6 years on the Business Week best seller.

Small businesses tend to lag larger businesses in adopting new ideas. Don't continue to play catch up. Business is business, large or small. As 2006 begins, I challenge you to develop a vision of yourself and your business succeeding, achieving the results you need to take your business to the next level. Develop and protect this vision as you would any other valuable business asset. Visit this vision regularly throughout the year. Then, with your vision in the forefront, you can't help but take the actions that will move you closer to making it real. I think you'll be surprised by the difference such a seemingly "out there" practice can make.

To get you in the mood, here are some of my favorite pearls of wisdom on the subject.

Throughout the centuries there were men who took first steps down new roads, armed with nothing but their own vision. -*Ayn Rand*

Capital isn't scarce; vision is. -*Sam Walton*

If you don't have a vision, nothing happens. -*Christopher Reeve*

Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold this picture tenaciously. Never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop the picture. -*Norman Vincent Peale*

The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet. - *Theodore M. Hesburgh*

I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it is going. -*Wayne Gretsky*

Where there is no vision, there is no hope. -*George Washington Carver*



Lynnelle Bianco, President of [Bold Vision Consulting](#) brings 25+ years of professional and corporate working experience to clients. Having held senior positions in marketing, new business development and client service for global institutions — as well as owning and operating her own small businesses — Lynnelle brings real-world experience and forward looking perspectives to helping today's professionals and business owners achieve breakthrough success. ...and remember; **Be Bold!** It all starts with a vision.