

Inhale, Inspire, Innovate: The I's Have It

Deep sea divers exploring ship wrecks in the North Atlantic face severe threats to their survival. At depths of 150 feet, a disorienting paralysis clouds a diver's thinking as their brains are deprived of oxygen. Many divers panic—a recipe for death underwater. What is the first lesson divers are taught before plunging? Remember to breathe, to inhale fresh air. Perspective and inspiration to uncover the treasure quickly returns, as does the innovation necessary to maneuver creatively in virtual darkness.

Many of us find ourselves in similar situations—searching in the dark to achieve our objectives, surrounded by threats and obstacles, but always with a goal in mind. So let's remember to inhale, inspire and innovate for success in 2007.

Inhale. The hectic holidays may seem like a distant memory...but have you taken the time to slow your pace and spend time thinking and reflecting? Remember, busyness is not our goal. So go ahead and take a deep breath. Take time to consider the larger picture and create a clear vision for success. What is truly important to your business and personal success in 2007? Do your New Year's resolutions reflect this fresh insight?

Inspire. There are no two ways about it. We face difficult challenges in this industry. But the fact that you are here reading this proves you are a fighter and a winner. You are not leading your company just because it's a "job." Despite all the technological advancements of our age, and our society's focus on goal-driven productivity, you know that just completing the myriad to-do lists on your PDA isn't

responsible for your success. Rather, it is your ability to be inspired and inspire those you lead that gives you the advantage. Don't sacrifice creativity and inspiration on the altar of productivity.

Innovate. Take another deep breath and exhale slowly. Think about the ideas and actions over the years that have determined where your company is today. Chances are they were novel, involved some measure of risk and required you to dive deep. The truth is that all great business transformations emanate from innovative ideas. So don't cling to the status quo any longer. Be bold and look for creative solutions.

This year I challenge each of you to take a few minutes each day and think about not only where you've been, but more importantly, where you are going. Inhale fresh air to cleanse your mind and breathe fresh ideas into your company. Inspire those around you. Innovate relentlessly as you implement your strategic plans.



The I's have it... do you?

Sally Kay