



BUSINESSES

Companies that don't "listen", cooperate with companies that have nothing to "say"

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An opportunity-oriented business trained in prioritization actually "listens" to the market.

By George Karlaftis, Founder/Entrepreneur

Effective, inspired, consistent understanding and management of business Opportunities and Priorities constitutes the epitome of Development. It is a critical necessity and requires its own time and energy beyond the "defensive" mindsets that consume business energy in solving internal organization and alignment problems.

A business oriented to opportunities and trained in planning priorities actually "listens" to the market and moves in a community of businesses that are on the same frequency, in other words, they also listen to those impending and initially "invisible" opportunities that suit their activities.

Businesses in this Community can function globally either as customers, suppliers or partners, however, what counts is not their relative role, but coordination and shared mindset. Being on the same business frequency, what the companies exchange has meaning, functional content and a realistic perspective. Such a Community always has the prospect of synergies that are mutually sustainable and developmental as long as they are included in a context of mutual benefit. The essence of business at this level focuses on the quality of interaction that defines the shared model, which reveals and concretizes perspectives, while adopting and following a small number of essential principles.

The fundamental principle of the business must be contained in the Value Proposition in which the vision-mission and the dynamics of the contribution to the market are both condensed and organized. In other words, what it plans to offer, not so much in the sense of a product-service, but based on the formation of its **corporate identity** in the same direction as the market. As a result, the product has to be either completely different or at least differentiated compared to the competition or additionally constitute a necessary component for the target market in order to create demand. Competition is an essential element, although, how it should be considered presents an additional differentiation by revealing those companies that "listen" to the different vibrations and dimensions and how to use what they perceive and transform it into efficient business actions.

The next important principle refers to the dual emphasis on parallel sustainability and growth. Two concepts that aim at the maintenance of a business in each phase of time, but also the dynamics for increasing performance and expansion in the market without putting in danger the sustainability, as for example with reckless lending on criteria that have not been properly weighted, or concentration on leverage or even based on positive financial indicators and a climate of euphoria that bring possible positive annual performances without calculating unforeseen macroeconomic or geopolitical changes that may occur without warning. The recent experience of the pandemic or the recent introduction of new rules regarding the environment and other corresponding parameters in the context of Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) that require mandatory compliance changing the landscape while transitioning to new business balances.

The last principle comes down to the quality of the interaction of value propositions from different Companies which either converge or complement each other. Therefore, having their business antennas correctly oriented and "open", they have the possibility to create an "expanded business space" with important compositions where even essential proposals are analyzed and fundamental comments and feedback lead to the production of scalable projects of added value for each side and of course business benefit.

All of the above lead us to formalize the points towards the opposite mentality, specifically the Companies that "don't listen", while they are possessed by a rigid inertia caused by this peculiar "deafness" which sometimes with slow and sometimes with fast rates can set jeopardizing their entire business venture.

Whatever the culture of the Company may be, strategy is a matter for the Entrepreneur or equal partners, if it is not a single person. Here I think I should list my personal assessment of the three main categories of entrepreneurs:

- **Pragmatic traders:** they are updated quickly, concisely and make sure to receive reliable data by having at every moment a direct and representative picture of the pulse of the market today.
- **Visionary entrepreneurs:** being pragmatic, they constantly go the "extra mile" every moment, discerning and planning the next steps of development, transforming this momentum into multiple value today and in the near future.
- Of course, there are also **entrepreneurs** who, due to hard work and favorable circumstances, **find themselves at the "helm" of a company**, but they really do not feel the essence of their role, which they clearly understand as managerial.

Cultivating and capitalizing on business Opportunities and Priorities, as I have already mentioned, can only be done fully by visionaries or by pragmatists if they acquire vision. Thus, development acquires a foundation and the correct selection by the Business Community of those who fit into the second category, brings to the table those who chart a consistent path to business distinction.



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