

# Casey Accounting & Finance Solutions

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Casey Accounting & Finance Resources

Specialists in the Placement of Accounting & Finance Professionals  
Direct Hire, Temporary and Temp to Hire Placement  
**"Our People are our Greatest Asset!"**

## How to Adapt for Success – Change Management

Have you ever wondered why some companies are more successful than others in similar circumstances? What are these people doing right? What do the winners do differently? Only 2 companies out of 10 survive the first 3 years in business. Some of the survivors are doing business in a very competitive market; however, they have acquired specific habits and have established winning strategies, which make them successful.

Are you looking for answers to these questions? A survey by Professor Colin Coulson-Thomas, a specialist in corporate transformation, shows the experiences from over 2000 companies. The outcomes achieved by survey participants are ranked from the most to the least successful, and the approaches of the “winners” or “most successful” are compared with the “losers” or “less successful” to isolate the factors that make a difference. The results suggest that most of the critical success factors are attitudinal and behavioral.

*Continued on page two – Adapt for Success*

### Inside This Issue

1. *How to Adapt for Success – Change Management*
1. *Are You Infected with this Insidious Virus Preventing You from Success?*
2. *Important Changes for Taxpayers*
4. *Which is the Bigger Asset? People or Teams*



## Are You Infected With This Insidious Virus Preventing You From Success?

Much has been written about the forthcoming pandemic virus spread by birds. State agencies within the U.S. have received hundreds of thousands of dollars to inform and educate people about the potential dire consequences of this anticipated virus. Yet, there is an

even a more insidious virus that is now alive and thriving in the global marketplace. This virus is not transmitted by birds, ticks or even in air, but rather by those who provide a considerable amount of information necessary for us to think and make decisions in our ongoing efforts to achieve success.

Think of it for a moment. Your thoughts through the information that you take in are how this virus infects you. Your vaccination against this virus is the book ***Think and Grow Rich*** by Napoleon Hill, along with those resources that rally against this terrible disease of the mind. Only when you understand how you can eradicate this virus from you body, will you become inoculated against it and continue to be successful. **Self Improvement Tip:** There are many books that can ward off this virus, but in my opinion, this is the best one.

By the way, the name of this virus is "Ain't it Awful" or AIA for short. The main carriers of this AIA virus are the mass media and elected and non-elected government officials. What is even more lubricious is that they are responsible for the now wide spread global infection.

Now with the efforts of mass media and those in elected offices along with their minions, this virus is attempting to establish a solid foothold.

*Continued on page three – Virus*

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Continued from page one – *Adapt for Success*

Let's look at some overall differences between the attitudes and behaviors of those people in key positions who fail and succeed at bringing about a fundamental transformation in their organizations.

**First**, let's examine the most prominent characteristic attitudes and behaviors of "less successful" companies. They are unsure and unaware of the needs of others. They are cautious and fail to inspire and motivate. Losers are also reactive. They respond to events and often fail to anticipate the need for change. They confuse operational with strategic business issues. They fail to notice what is important and the biggest opportunities for performance improvement.

**Next**, let's examine the most prominent characteristic attitudes and behaviors of "winners." Winners tend to have a longer-term perspective. They are confident, positive and pro-active. They create compelling visions. They encourage innovation, trust other people, and share information and opportunities with them. They understand their customers and concern themselves with increasing customer retention. Winners value relationships, empathize, ask for feedback, and are good listeners.

**Winners have a plan.** Winners, in the challenge to change, transform and re-invent, are very different. They recognize that change can be stressful and can disrupt valued relationships. They only change what they need to change. They communicate why change is necessary.

### **Conclusion**

In a changing environment, in order to be a winner, management's first responsibility is to identify processes or behaviors that are inhibiting productivity and replace them with ones that are more effective. Once changes are identified, it is important for managers to estimate the organizational and individual employee impact on many levels including technology, employee attitude and behavior, organizational processes, etc... At this point, management should assess the employee's anticipated reaction to the desired changes as they are being implemented. In many cases, change can be extremely beneficial with lots of positives;



*Continued on next column –*

however, certain changes do sometimes produce a tremendous amount of resistance. It is the job of management to provide support to their team through the process of these changes, which sometimes are very difficult. Management must help employees accept change and help them become well adjusted and effective once these changes have been implemented.

By Pablo J. Perez, Executive and Corporate Coach, ACTIVATE GROUP, INC.

## ***Important Changes for Taxpayers***

Here are a few tax law changes you may want to note before filing your 2008 federal tax return:

### **Standard Deduction Increased for Most Taxpayers**

The 2008 basic standard deductions all increased.

They are:

- ✓ \$10,900 for married couples filing a joint return and qualifying widows and widowers
- ✓ \$5,450 for singles and married individuals filing separate returns
- ✓ \$8,000 for heads of household



### **Contribution Limits Rise for IRAs and Other Retirement Plans**

This filing season, more people can make tax-deductible contributions to a traditional IRA. The deduction is phased out for singles and heads of household who are covered by a workplace retirement plan and have modified adjusted gross incomes between \$53,000 and \$63,000. For married couples filing jointly, the income phase-out range is \$85,000 to \$105,000.

### **Standard Mileage Rates Adjusted for 2008** for business use of a vehicle:

- ✓ 50.5 cents per mile from 1 January to 30 June 2008
- ✓ 58.5 cents per mile driven during the rest of 2008

Visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more information.

"It is not your aptitude, but your attitude, that determines your altitude."  
- Zig Ziglar

Continued from page one – *Virus*

By doing so, it will turn off the innate potential of millions of individuals. Success will no longer be an option. The sale of self-improvement books will dramatically decline because individuals will no longer believe that they have the ability to overcome this malady of "ain't it awful."

Each day you can see and hear the spread of this infection. Potentially successful people are standing together sharing two of the symptoms of the AIA virus: Misery and Victimization. Of course, this virus could not have spread as quickly as it did without the entitlement mentality that became a marker for easy victims. Other known symptoms of this pandemic virus are:

- ◆ Poor me
- ◆ Class envy
- ◆ It's not fair

Henry Ford, who never appeared to have suffered from this virus, said ***“if you think you can or you think you cannot, either way you are right.”*** Self Improvement Tip: Napoleon Hill studied Henry Ford.



If you wish to have the life that you know, and more importantly, believe is possible, then make sure you have taken the following actions:

- ✓ Read or re-read *Think and Grow Rich*
- ✓ Put together a written success action plan
- ✓ Commit your dreams to writing
- ✓ Use a proven goal achievement process reinforced with a proven tool
- ✓ Incorporate written belief or affirmation statements
- ✓ Schedule time for working on your successes and time for necessary reflection
- ✓ Find a mentor or coach who will help you stay free of the AIA virus

Now is the time to fight off this terrible disease. Who knows, you actually may achieve even more success than you thought possible.

Adapted with permission from author: Leanne Hoagland-Smith, Advanced Systems.



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# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## How to Improve Persuasion Power

To upgrade your persuasive power, capitalize on these situations:

◆ **Lend a sympathetic ear.** When an employee discusses a problem, listen with patience and understanding. By showing that you care, you earn a reputation as a sensitive manager. That will pay off when you ask your staff to sacrifice to attain stretch goals.

◆ **Feed off others' enthusiasm.** When someone presents a new idea, support it. Don't look to shoot holes in what you hear.

*Example:* Your boss may want you to be upbeat about a new product rollout, so focus on opportunities rather than criticism.

*Payoff:* If you do have legitimate concerns about the project, this gives you the credibility to raise them later.

Source: Robert L. Dilenschneider, writing in *Executive Excellence*

“The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time.”

- Abraham Lincoln

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“Specialists in the Placement of  
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Professionals”

# *Which is the Bigger Asset? People or Teams*

## *Why You Should Re-Consider the Importance of Teams*

Many will agree that people are the most important asset of an organization. More importantly, however, is how well those people work together to accomplish the common goal. Whether a company has thousands of people working in various locations worldwide or just a handful working in one small office, teamwork is vital to success. So, how can you ensure that your teams are performing at their fullest potential? How do people contribute to the team differently? Have you built effective teams?



To begin answering these questions, you must learn how to really understand each member of the team to identify their work style and how it compares to others in the group. You also need to look at the inherent strengths that each person brings to the table. Not their expertise or their background, but those things they seem to be good at just because that is who they are.

Once you understand the team members, you can not only build a team with the most effective combination of strengths, but you can also learn how to leverage each individual's strengths for a dynamic team that works at its highest potential. Only then will teams reach goals that have been unattained by individuals, work at levels of productivity no single person can achieve or impact the bottom line more effectively as a group. In fact, maybe we should revisit the assets of an organization. Perhaps TEAMS are more important than people on their own?

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