

## AdvanceMe's Small Business Tip: October 9, 2008

### Efficiency Equals Profitability

Most small business owners realize that efficient practices are necessary to keep a business running smoothly. But it is also important to remember that efficient practices are the ones that typically pave the road to profitability.

[Career Coach John Long of Two Roads Resources in Atlanta](#) helps entrepreneurs and small business owners discover simple efficiencies every day. "In many ways, it all starts with organization," states Long. "Begin by establishing organized practices and realistically assessing your strengths and challenges. You can then bring efficiency into your professional choices, increase your opportunities and productivity, and ultimately, build on the profitability of each effort."



"A professional wants to avoid self-sabotage and becoming derailed from completing scheduled tasks," Long continues. "Simple hurdles, like procrastination, a lack of focus, or an inability to prioritize can seem insurmountable if you are not committed to making the most of every effort." He goes on to suggest: "Assemble a support system that offsets your weaknesses. If you are adept at big-picture vantage points, hire an assistant that is great with the details. Balance your weaknesses with the strengths of those around you."

Long offers some other simple points to increase efficiency:

- **Find cost-effective, user-friendly resources.** From website development through bookkeeping, there is an abundance of third-party resources that can make life easier on the entrepreneur. "Merchant services, banking, payroll and tax filing...these are all examples of needs that can be handled well with properly chosen professional services. Reduce your stress levels and save your concentration for other tasks," says Long. "Don't try to do everything yourself, because you will inevitably run out of steam."
- **Design a daily and a weekly schedule.** "It sounds simple, but many business people get lost in the shuffling of details," states Long. "A daily and weekly schedule helps to keep things on track, allowing you to be better prepared for the unexpected." Long believes that these schedules should not be set in stone. Instead, he suggests using them like a road map for staying on task and focused, making sure each detail receives proper attention.
- **Saying "yes" and saying "no."** As simple as it sounds, Long finds that many driven entrepreneurs have difficulty knowing when to say when. "This results in over-committing yourself to an unrealistic number of weekly tasks and activities," states Long, "which can be a recipe for chaos, burnout or both."

As Long points out, an entrepreneur helps drive profitability by understanding their own strengths and weaknesses, and seeking help when and where it's needed. While passion and exceptional skills may land an entrepreneur in the driver's seat of a small business, it is efficiency and balance that ultimately create the foundation of sustained profitability.