

# Oops! You mean there's a better way to improve performance?

Last week we discussed getting your team aligned around a critical number, ours being Gross Profit Margin. This week I want to share one or two business practices that are counter intuitive, aka an "OOPS!" in the Aubrey Daniels book called [\*OOPS! 13 Management Practices That Waste Time and Money\*](#). The book is about behavioral science, detailing the basis for how humans behave toward typical ways business is done. You might be just as surprised as I was to find that one of the most relevant, counter intuitive practices outlined here is Salary and Hourly Pay, otherwise known as Oops #6.

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# Can you find value in a blue ocean?

In last week's blog I discussed what it means to create value, and mentioned that simply asking your customers what they want is a viable way to determine value opportunities. When your customers don't know what they want, an alternative is to use the [\*Blue Ocean Strategy\*](#) (BOS).

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# Leadership exposes issues...what are yours?

A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of hearing notable business coach [Marshall Goldsmith](#) speak at the [Fortune Growth Summit](#). Marshall's work helps to make people better and is both educational and enlightening. He has successfully coached several of the [Fortune 500](#) leaders, and has done so by helping them in areas that required improvement. As we've all heard time and time again, the first step to recovery is admitting you have a problem.

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## Is Your Head Stuck In a Recession?

Watching the news these days doesn't leave one with much hope for the future, when all we're hearing is about inflation, unemployment and national debt. Reports are spreading of an ongoing recession and even a possible depression before things get better. So what is an entrepreneur to do? Constantly trying to keep your head above water can get discouraging when you have nothing solid to look towards. As much as I'd like to bury my head in the sand sometimes, I know that's not a viable option. Instead, I practice the [Stockdale Paradox](#), which is to retain faith, regardless of the difficulties, AND confront the brutal facts, whatever they may be.

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# Are You Living Your Passion?



As an entrepreneur, you are never very far from your business. No matter where you are or what you're doing, it's always with you, slipping into your consciousness. You might be in the shower, lounging on the deck, on an airplane with everyone around you snoozing or out on the

lake...your mind will still be spinning on the latest issue or the next big opportunity. When you're passionate about what you do, you have an advantage because you're energized and motivated to give it the extra thought that helps keep you ahead of the game.

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## Life is Business and Business is Life

I have recently been contemplating how different peoples' models are of how the world works. I hear how some feel that [capitalism](#) neither works nor benefits the world, and I hear how others worry about technology taking away jobs. Lately I keep hearing stories about how "business is bad" and people doing business are just out to get you. Is that really the case?

In a [recent blog](#) I talked about value creation, and explained that in order for people to give you money, you must offer them something of value that makes them want to pull out the green.



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## Is Your Focus Blurred?

Over the years, I've experienced a variety of work environments. I have to say that, no matter the environment, if I didn't put myself in a position where I could focus, I paid the price. By paying the price, I mean that I didn't reach my best productivity level in whatever I was doing and wasted lots of time that could have been better spent.



This isn't limited to time and energy, but extends to reaching goals and running a business. How many goals can you have and still make sure you can reach them all? We try to limit our company quarterly goals to just 3 if they are somewhat large so

that we retain enough time and energy to achieve them. I have run multiple businesses at once, only to find that the time and thought required to run them just distracted me and I lost focus.

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# Subtract to Get More

Business is a constant battle against competitors, trying to keep customers happy and on your side...or so it seems. For most of us, in whatever space we're trying to fill, we continuously add to our offer, making the deal sweeter and sweeter. We do this in an effort to stay ahead of the competition so the customers don't run off to the next guy. BUT...should that always be the case? What if we were to take something away that they expect? Would they still come running, or possibly even more than they did before?

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## Being Productive in a Knowledge World

Why is it so difficult for us to be productive? Why do we continue to get distracted from doing the work that matters? What is it about our human nature that draws us into the drama and unproductive activity that surrounds us?



The information and knowledge work of today is much different than what those in generations before us experienced. It used to be that the masses were on assembly lines, working day in and day out in the same routine. It didn't matter if they

didn't feel like being productive...they didn't have a choice. Be productive or lose your job. If leaders wanted to increase productivity, they found ways to make the line go faster. It was up to the workers to figure out how to keep up.

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## Four Ways to Protect Against Disruptive Technology

As a follow up to [last week's blog](#) on disruptive technology, I wanted to talk about ways of getting around the mentality that causes successful firms to be blindsided.

(On a side note, I just watched the movie [The Blind Side](#) again and it's a great analogy to what can happen in business).

[Blockbuster's](#) blind side tackle was being a step off and letting [Netflix](#) sack them.

