

# You're a Business Owner ... Now What?

By Dr. Zayd Abdul-Karim

Now you have to develop your business. I know because I've been in your shoes. The process I'm about to describe worked for me. If you give it a chance, it can work for you. Schedule an hour to consider the following information and questions. By doing so, you'll become focused on the steps you need to take to develop your business.

## Learning

Learning is the center of the development process. Do you want more results in your business and life? If the answer is yes, then the only way for you to achieve more is by committing yourself to learning. You must decide what your main learning priorities are and develop learning objectives for these priorities. Learning objectives state what you want to be able to do as a result of learning about a particular topic. For example, if your priority is to increase your revenue, then your learning objectives could be increasing your meetings with prospects and closing more sales.

Now write down your answers to these questions: *What three to five broad areas do you need to improve in order to achieve your goal(s)? What do you need to learn in each of these areas? What knowledge do you need to obtain? How will you obtain it? What specific behaviors will you perform to obtain the knowledge? (For example, reading, listening to motivational tapes or interviewing successful people.) Where will you go to get the knowledge?*

## Practicing

The only way to become better at something is to practice. If we are not going to practice, then why invest the time and money in learning? Practice means doing the techniques and processes learned over and over. This practice will ensure a deeper understanding of what was learned and more confidence in your ability to execute the techniques.

Now write down your answers to these questions: *What three to five skills and/or techniques do you need to develop? How will you develop those skills? What specific things will you do to practice those skills/techniques? With whom will you practice them? Name specific people or organizations. What organizations or environments provide the most potential or greatest opportunities for practice? How often will you practice those skills – daily, weekly, monthly? How will you track your progress in practicing those skills/techniques? What adjustments will you make to improve your skills/techniques and practice?*

## Giving

Giving away knowledge, skill, insights, perspectives, materials and time provide another level of understanding. Giving teaches you because it is another way to practice. It also

prepares a foundation for growth. It is like preparing the soil for planting. The farmer softens the dirt, removes the weeds, levels the ground and fertilizes the soil. All of this must be done before planting the seeds.

Now write down the answers to these questions: *What knowledge, skills and talents do you have to give away that would benefit someone or some organization? What individuals/organizations can you give your knowledge, skills and talents? What do you want to receive in return so much that you will give your knowledge, skills and talents away? When will you give? How often?*

### Planting

Giving is the preparation for planting seeds for the growth of your business. Planting involves making decisions about what to plant, when to plant and where to plant your seeds. Many interactions with prospects, clients and colleagues are opportunities to plant seeds about your business. Of course, once the seeds are planted, it does require following through to keep the weeds out and nurture the environment to allow the nature to run its course.

Now write down the answers to these questions: *What seeds do you want to plant? Where is the best environment for those seeds to grow? What environment or organization gives you the best possibility for growth? How will you develop the relationships in order to be able to plant?*

### Reaping

The more seeds we plant, the more fruit we are likely to reap. We can't control how much we reap and there is an inherent risk in planting any kinds of seeds. But if we avoid the decision and risk of planting seeds, then we certainly won't receive anything.

Now write down the answers to these questions: *Have you planted enough seeds to reap the amounts you want? What adjustments will you make? When will you make those adjustments?*

The consistent application and refinement of skills will develop new habits that eventually will get you what you want. The key to developing your business is to stay in the learning and practicing process. You're off to a good start.

*Dr. Zayd Abdul-Karim is a corporate coach and author of "DEEP TRANSITIONS: Jump Starting Your Business and 7 Steps in Deep Transitions: A Spiritual Guide to Peace of Mind, Prosperity, and Success. Since 1998, he has served as part-time faculty at Johns Hopkins University's MBA program. For more information on Dr. Zayd's books, CDs and seminars, contact him at [dr\\_zayd@dtsys.com](mailto:dr_zayd@dtsys.com) or visit his website at [www.deeptransitions.com](http://www.deeptransitions.com).*