

# Enterprise Network January 2009 Executive Forum

## Harvey Mackay says - Compete Creatively!

Thursday, January 29, 2009

By Suzanne Jones - Chapters, LLC



Invigorating, thought provoking, and entertaining were just some of the comments overheard during Harvey Mackay's presentation at January's sold out Executive Forum. As a best selling author, syndicated columnist and internationally acclaimed speaker, Harvey captivated the crowd as he generously shared proven sales strategies learned and refined from his decades of business experience. Attendees at the event also received a copy of his inspirational book, *Pushing the Envelope*.

Weaving insightful analogies and real world business examples into his presentation, Harvey spoke of the critical need for every business owner to focus on their corporate vision. He added, "Having a vision is not enough today; successful companies must be flexible and innovative in their thinking, and global in their approach." Harvey further encouraged business owners to engage all staff in the sales process noting that his company has 600 sales people...and 600 employees.

Harvey seamlessly shifted between today's economic challenges, what really counts in business, and why being creative helps you out-smart the competition. Relationship building is one of the keys to success and Harvey takes it one step further by insisting that each sales person complete a comprehensive 66-question survey for every customer of the Mackay Envelope Company. Harvey flexed the power of his questionnaire by sharing the answers about John Zidich, publisher of *The Arizona Republic*. John, who was in the audience, was admittedly impressed by the detail and accuracy of the information.

One of Harvey's business cornerstones is differentiating his company from the pack and never settling for the expected. He underscored this belief by relaying a story about Ted Koppel, a renowned broadcast journalist. Harvey had played tennis with Ted and, in typical Harvey style, knew a standard thank you note would not suffice. Harvey sent a four-foot high tennis racket and huge tennis ball along with a poem describing Ted's exceptional tennis prowess. Creativity counts and Harvey urges everyone to avoid the predictable and boring, and tap into their creative side. Make all contact with customers and even vendors memorable and distinctive. He further warns not to become trapped by the following creativity killers, "it's not in the budget; great idea - let's form a committee; the competition does/does not do it that way; or, let's run it by legal."

Harvey is a firm believer in believing in your self – even when no one else does. Being in business makes for lots of bumps along the way but the smart entrepreneur learns from those bumps. Truly successful people tend to be risk takers and are goal oriented. Harvey believes that a goal is a dream with a deadline and staying focused requires you to write down, measure and evaluate your goals.

More Mackay's Morals for out-managing, out-motivating and out-negotiating your competition:

- *Persistence always pays off* – don't give up on your dream!
- *Practice makes perfect* - never put a ceiling on how good you may become.
- *Ask for help* - no matter how good you think you are, you can't do it all by yourself. Even the Lone Ranger had Tonto.
- *Keep learning* - Transform your car into a school and listen to motivational or self-help CD's. Tiger Woods started listening at the age of six and look at him now!
- *Knowledge does not become power* until it is used; and ideas are useless until they are applied.

In closing, Harvey urged everyone to take a microscope to their business and see where immediate improvements can be made to products and/or services, processes, personnel, and markets served. Make the changes now to stay in the game and “dig your well *before* you are thirsty”!