

BALANCING TOMORROW, TODAY™

by Stacie L. L. Morgan, Ph.D.



Welcome to a brand new column designed to help you balance all of the things you have to do with what you really want to do! This column will rotate its focus on what our community members are trying to balance at home, at work, and in our businesses. I want to hear from you, so feel free to email me and let me know what you find difficult to balance and I'll take a crack at it.

Do you have a vision of the value your organization could provide our community and the world in ten, twenty, or thirty years? If your answer is "no," you may not be balancing tomorrow, today in your organization. You may be wondering what providing value twenty to thirty years from now has to do with what you do in your business, church, or association today. The answer is "a lot!"

Think of the old saying, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there." We all know this is true when traveling. Now think about how this applies to your business or organization. If you don't know how you can provide value in ten, twenty, or thirty years, then how do you know if you'll have any customers in the future either?

We live in a dynamic business environment. Even in Northfield new competition can suddenly surface. Technology changes, lifestyle changes, and unexpected events can also alter buying habits and impact your success and profits. To insure the long-term success of your business, church, or association, you need to make sure today's actions support tomorrow's demands.

Many people ask me, "Does this mean you expect me to plan the next ten years or more in order to remain competitive?" My answer is always, "No." I don't want you to plan that far, I just want you to think that far.

The next question that usually comes up is, "But I don't even plan to be with this organization in ten years, why should I think that far?" And I explain that understanding what customers will likely value in the seemingly distant future can help you emotionally detach yourself from today's fires and provide you with a fresh perspective on what you have to offer today. It also helps you build a strong legacy of value for those who come after you in the business, church, or association.

Here are some tips to help you begin balancing tomorrow, today in your organization:

- Look at trends and events in the world, even if they have no apparent relationship to your organization.
- Think about what the future could look like in ten, twenty, or thirty years based on these trends and events.
- Ask yourself what people (customers) might find important in those future scenarios.
- Determine what your organization might offer that could fulfill some of the needs of the future.
- Now look at what you could do today to help you achieve success today that would also build toward your success in the future.
- Let me know how it goes!

No matter what your business, directing your success takes thinking time. It is worth the investment. You can dramatically increase your profit and success by making sure today's efforts take you toward a competitive tomorrow.

Remember, balance is a process...not a destination.

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