




Management Concepts Series – 2010

* Common-Sense Guidelines for Successful Organizations *

Management Concept #13 <i>Do What You Can When You Can</i> ... you'll be surprised what a difference it makes!																			
<p>Active Management Pillar Applicability</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>He (or she) who does not when he can often finds he cannot when he will.</i></p> <p>I have no idea who said the above but anyone in business, project management, nonprofits, sports, and any other form of organized results-driven human activity should think about it.</p> <p>Some things you have control over and some things you don't. Both can bite you. However, if you have handled those things you can control, it is much more likely that when the unexpected or uncontrollable comes along, you will be able to deal with it.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #cccccc;">Things you can control</th> <th style="background-color: #cccccc;">Things you can't control</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Operational Effectiveness</td> <td>The Weather</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expense Management</td> <td>The Electrical Grid</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doing the right thing</td> <td>The Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Risk Mgmt / Business Continuity</td> <td>Earthquakes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Product Management</td> <td>The Market</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Succession Management</td> <td>Illness and Death</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Process Controls and Records</td> <td>The Laws</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Informed & Reasonable Business Decisions</td> <td>The Future</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>When bad things happen that are not within your control, they can either be annoying or disastrous depending on how solidly you have nailed the things within your control. Here are three common scenarios:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Garden Variety Lack of Preparation. This is seen when operational units or projects simply aren't thinking ahead. When the crunch comes, we spend our time dealing with items that could have been prepared during the quiet times. Example: Emergency storm crews requiring hotel rooms. If handled ahead, a few phone calls will take care of it. If done during the crisis, several hours are lost to basic administrivia and not spent handling the core issues. (Does the name Katrina ring any bells?) The Sucker Punch. This is the double whammy. It usually involves an organization setting itself up through bad operational practices or over-extension. Once the fertile ground has been plowed through these or similar practices, some triggering event occurs (i.e. a turn in the economy or the market entry of a sharp competitor) and the organization doesn't have the reserves or depth to recover. Examples include: Unsupportable expense to income ratios, highly leveraged debt, and risky product decisions. (Can you say: Subprime Mortgage Crisis?) 	Things you can control	Things you can't control	Operational Effectiveness	The Weather	Expense Management	The Electrical Grid	Doing the right thing	The Economy	Risk Mgmt / Business Continuity	Earthquakes	Product Management	The Market	Succession Management	Illness and Death	Process Controls and Records	The Laws	Informed & Reasonable Business Decisions	The Future
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3. **Basically Bad Business Leadership and Decisions.** These are usually the result of management inability to confront root causes. For whatever reason, the management decision makers are making the wrong decision when the information to make the right decision is available. We are not referring to impossible decisions which next year may look brilliant or ridiculous. These are the decisions that are fundamental and basic and can be made correctly today. Examples:

- a. **Product:** Lack of attention to ongoing product development anticipating future markets,
- b. **Accountability:** Inability to hold themselves or others accountable to performance,
- c. **Operations:** Failure to address fundamental quality, operations needs
- d. **Misdirection:** Diversion of energy to grand schemes when the foundational business is unstable or inadequate.

To recap:

Take care of what you can when you can. Then, when things you cannot predict go wrong:

1. You will be as prepared and solidly grounded as possible to weather the storm, and
2. You will have time to concentrate on solving the problem rather than the things you could have done before.

About Agovia Consulting

Agovia is your partner in crafting common-sense plans, execution governance, and management practices that are laser-focused and, by design, create your results and your success. We help you solve your problems today and help assure your success tomorrow through management practices built on outcomes, results, and achievement.

Managing to Success

Success requires the alignment and coordination of many factors. Enterprises must be competent at, not only the elements of their core mission, they must also have the ability to create and maintain the infrastructure that surrounds and supports that mission.

What We Do

Agovia is a management consulting firm. It's what we do. Picture us a management fitness coach. We help you develop and strengthen the skills you need to succeed. We have provided consultation and solutions to multiple industries including: Information Technology, Insurance, Universities, and Homeless Services. We bring you the support, advice, and driving facilitation that allow you to stop "planning" and start getting results.

Services

- ❖ **Positioning for the Win**
- ❖ **Identity Development (Mission & Vision)**
- ❖ **Team Effectiveness Coaching**
- ❖ **Strategic and Tactical Planning**
- ❖ **Planning and Governance Training**
- ❖ **Organization Turn-Around**
- ❖ **Retreat Facilitation**
- ❖ **Runaway Project Services**
- ❖ **Problem Solving – A Cultural Effective Approach**
- ❖ **Conflict Mediation**
- ❖ **Team/Function Start-Up**

Trust yourself

Experience tells us that most of the time you do know what you are doing. You are the expert in your core domain area. The challenges businesses often encounter are nuts & bolts issues: organization, clear vision, discipline, management infrastructure, and communication. Sometimes you just need a catalyst.

We can help.

We listen.

We pay attention.

We work with you

