

[Company Name] Will Achieve [Insert Goal] by [Insert Date], 2009.

Creating Strategic Goals for Your Brand in a Recessed Economy

By Suzanne Tulien, Principal & Co-Founder

*“The basic goal-reaching principle is to understand that you go as far as you can see,
and when you get there, you will always be able to see farther.”*

- Zig Ziglar

How many of you feel a great sense of accomplishment when you are able to scratch off a “to-do” item or two on your goal list? I know with me it generates a sense of ‘movement’ forward and with my personality, being a ‘Type-A’, I seek those kinds of incremental accomplishments on a daily basis. It keeps me positive and excited about what’s next and allows me to celebrate accomplishments, no matter how small.

In keeping this point, there is real power behind building your brand through conscious goal-setting. I am not just talking about writing a bunch of tasks on a sheet of paper or Post-it® noting them on a wall in your office. I am talking about strategic planning coupled with actioning. These two concepts are worthless alone, but priceless when they are teamed up together. And when those goals compliment and affirm your overall brand, your results become exponential.

With the current state of our economy, it is more important than ever to streamline our time and focus efforts in our business in order to maximize the results we desire. And when the leaders within a business sit down in a deliberate goal-planning session and follow the process outlined below, they consistently achieve more than they ever realized they could.

The Brand Ascension Group has recently been focusing on our strategic plans for 2009. Our Brand DNA Platform is ‘CONSCIOUSNESS, INSPIRATION, and GROWTH,’ and we have used it to guide us to continue to be innovative in our methodologies and in how we deliver to our clients. At this point we are ready to take our business to the next level.

So how are we going to do this? We enrolled in a high-level business development program to hone our skills, discover our gaps, and leverage our strengths. The first thing we needed to do was to get crystal clear on our business goals by mapping out specific areas we believe are our strengths and focusing our goals in those areas (no more than four big goals for 2009).



So, take another look at the title of this article and take a stab at filling in the brackets to fit your 2009 growth goals! Good luck!

For example, a good portion of BA Group's business has been consulting to mid-market companies. One of our primary goals for 2009 is to expand our reach to more companies (in the small business market) to help them understand and leverage the power of strategic, conscious brand-building strategies and practices. With the pace of business today, the economic challenges in 2009 and the desire for everyone to maximize their time and dollars in more efficient ways (including us), the virtual (online) training environment is an obvious choice to accomplish that. So one of our GOALS is to increase BA Group's 2009 revenues (to "x") through online ebusiness services (e.g., virtual training).

We believe the above goal is "win-win" for all as it enables us deliver this proven methodology through a new vehicle—ebusiness and specifically the virtual (online) environment in a way that is highly flexible, motivating and affordable for small businesses. Not to mention, it provides us the opportunity to more fully live our passion through the use of state-of-the art virtual technology, reduce travel, and increase our reach to help more businesses build their brands with a proven process!

This specific goal is also highly aligned with our own Brand DNA, as it reflects one of our STYLE attributes which is 'EXPERIENTIAL' (as we will deliver this online course in a highly experiential way). The goal is also congruent with several of our core VALUES; "Learning & Growth" and "Passion."

Once we declared this 2009 goal, we identified and agreed on our Key Performance Objectives (KPOs). These are a list of specific performance deliverables to meet the goal. These KPOs describe what we need to complete in order to achieve the overall goal. For example; one of those KPOs, among others and directly related to the above goal, is to 'successfully launch our new "Ignite Your Business Brand DNA" webinar training course.' Now, we have a tighter focus on what will enable us to achieve our primary goal.

This leads us to the next step, which is the outlining of all the steps we can think of that will have to be done to achieve the KPO (i.e., launch the Brand DNA webinar course). Digging deeper, it becomes a set of action steps broken down into even smaller increments so that they are easily taken on and completed, one at a time. Once this is done we have a clear, step-by-step action plan for this KPO that is put into a reasonable timeline and tasked out to the person(s) who best fits the skill set to accomplish.

Now the final step...ACTION! We begin with one action at a time. And before you know it, the KPO is achieved, then soon after, the primary goal! Wow! Does that feel great or what? It's funny how this works, because once you finally achieve one goal, more often than not, we are already focused on achieving the next (as referred to in the opening quote)! Make sure you take the time to acknowledge your accomplishments with your employees as this is the time to become aware of the 'movement' of the business and take pride in what you have done.



We encourage you to declare and define your 2009 goals and related key performance objectives (KPOs). . It's important to make sure the goals and KPOs for each are a) specific in what you want to accomplish, b) can be measured (i.e., how will you know you are successful?), c) are attainable (i.e., are they realistic, yet stretching?), d) relevant to your overall brand and business strategy, and e) have a time-frame for completion. Once you've outlined your KPOs for each goal, make sure you define the incremental actions that serve as the building blocks to accomplish. These action steps are critical to creating a continuous motion towards innovation, implementation and evolution of your brand. Make sure that not only the goals you specify are congruent and true to your brand, but the methods of actioning your goals reflect the STYLE, CORE VALUES, and STANDARDS of performance you have set for your brand. When that is ensured, your brand's growth is unlimited!



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