

Breakthrough Strategies for 2023

by **MICHAEL SIPE, President — CrossPointe Capital**

As business leaders we face a complex and chaotic market environment next year. Our businesses will be buffeted by a range of external political, legal, regulatory, economic and cultural forces, the confluence of which we have never experienced. After 2.5 years of relative isolation, business leaders from across our region are gathering at the **Central Oregon Business Forum** to learn, share best practices, build valuable connections and prepare to thrive in the year ahead. The program will include presentations from local business leaders on top-of-mind issues for local business leaders.



Our three topics are:

- **The Workforce Drought —**
Presenter: Matt Ertle, owner of PrideStaff and G.A. Rogers
- **Cyber Security for Small Business —**
Presenters: Jordan Smith CEO and Erin O'Donnell, vCIO of Velox Systems
- **Managing Cash Flow in Stagflation —**
Presenter: Kevin Palmer, CFO of Bright Wood

The goal of the Forum is to have each attendee leave with at least one breakthrough strategy to drive exceptional results in the difficult year ahead. We'll do this through unique, directed topic-based peer-peer roundtable discussions where attendees will both share and receive best practice ideas focused on the three Forum topics. We'll do this using one of the most powerful tools I've used in my consulting work with business leaders over the last 30 years to propel dramatic results.

The tool is called the Innovation Matrix. It allows us to make distinctions between three different categories of business strategy that every business owner needs to understand, but that few have ever considered in this way.

- **Competitive Strategies.** Despite the apparently attractive sounding name, Competitive Strategies are merely the baseline practices that are required to meet minimum marketplace standards in a given industry. All too often, I see business owners touting a practice in their business as a major competitive advantage, when, in fact, many, if not all their competitors are doing the same thing. Nonetheless, it is important to become aware of and implement what I call Competitive Strategies, in order to be a credible player in a particular marketplace. For poker players, consider it like having to ante up in order to play. Attendees at the Forum are highly likely to discover Competitive Strategies that they need to implement immediately to reach marketplace standards that may have slipped their notice. Likewise, many will discover through peer-peer discussions that some practices they think are special and unique about their business, are actually quite commonplace and far from unique. This is a very useful revelation.

- **Unique Strategies.** I distinguish Unique Strategies as those competitive practices that you employ in your business that no one else in your industry or marketplace uses. Note that a strategy could be commonly employed in one industry and unknown in another. This is where the value of peer-peer interaction produces tremendous results,

as ideas are shared cross-industry or cross-market. For example, the owner of a manufacturing business normally employs inventory control practices. Service-based company owners rarely think about inventory management the same way, if at all. However, both owners in a peer-peer discussion could share ideas from their respective industries on maximizing cost efficient and timely throughput that could be transferred or adapted to the other. These are powerful discussions that can almost instantly transform a business, as a practice routinely employed in one setting gets applied creatively in a new setting. Forum attendees should absolutely



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expect to leave with at least one Unique Strategy. Realize, however, that Unique Strategies, as I define them, stop being unique and merely become Competitive Strategies once even one more of your competitors copies you, as they inevitably will. Welcome to business.

- **Breakthrough Strategies.** Breakthrough Strategies are what the name implies. These strategies are so innovative that deploying even one of them can dramatically reposition a business and cause unprecedented results. Breakthrough Strategies can be found for all the areas of a business: marketing and sales, customer relations, vendor relations, business processes, technology, employee relations, supply chain, finance, etc. Breakthrough Strategies are so innovative that they are not easily copied and thus can produce marketplace leadership for years to come. The guided peer-peer discussions will spur Breakthrough Strategies across the room. This is not an experiment. I've been doing this with clients for over 30 years. Your Breakthrough Strategy could come from something a presenter says. It could come from the peer-peer discussions. Perhaps the event will trigger an idea you received elsewhere. Maybe the discussions will simply motivate you to implement something you've known you could do, but, for whatever reason you have not yet acted on. Regardless, it all works. Breakthrough Strategies can be intentionally produced. You'll experience exactly how to do so at the Forum.

Join us for breakfast and sharpen your competitive business practices — your Breakthrough Strategy awaits. Space is limited; to learn more and register, visit CentralOregonBusinessForum.eventbrite.com.

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