

The Business Connector

A Quarterly Newsletter from AmSpirit™ Business Connections

Altruistic Income

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As ambitious business people, we never stop striving to be more successful – getting more income or achieving a higher stature. To get there, there are two things we all need. Whether we are an entrepreneur, high-level executive or rank-and-file peon, we simply need an opportunity and an advantage.

With an opportunity, we could prove ourselves – demonstrate that we can effectively communicate or show that we are able to manage, motivate and lead others. If only we could somehow get an opportunity.

With an advantage, we could separate ourselves from the competition – have a “leg-up” at promotion time or better position ourselves to close that key account. If only we could somehow get an advantage.

Opportunity. Advantage. If we had either, or better yet, both, we could not only realize that greater success, but also all that comes with it. But neither opportunities nor advantages are easy to get hold of.

Opportunities only seem to be given to those who have proven themselves. So, we continue to miss out on so much because there is so much we have not done.

Gaining advantages is something we all hope for and dream about. Then reality sets in. In the heat of our daily battle, it is difficult to focus on achieving an advantage when we are consumed with simply holding the ground we have.

Perhaps this is what makes success so special – the two vital elements to achieving it are so hard to obtain. Or are they? In actuality, a plethora of opportunity and advantage exists day in and day out. Where? Simply by volunteering.

Volunteering should neither be considered a distraction nor an idle consumption of our time.

“Volunteer? I am not looking for another distraction or drain on my limited time.”

While this response is understandable, it is not an accurate depiction of volunteerism. Volunteering should neither be considered a distraction nor an idle consumption of our time.

Consider this, every community program or non-profit organization is stretched beyond its resources on every front. Certainly financial gifts are always welcome, but what each desires most is the time, talents and experiences of others. As a result, these entities are full of opportunities.

Want an opportunity to manage others, or hone communication skills? Or want some experience in the areas of strategic planning, financial management, team building or event planning, just to name a few? While these opportunities may be lacking in our current situation, all of these opportunities are pretty much available somewhere in volunteering.

How would these opportunities translate to our job or our business? Perfectly. Skills are skills and experiences are experiences. It does not matter where we obtain them.

Additionally, these little acts of altruism can also provide us a much-needed advantage that goes much further than the skills and experience we gain. Consider this, when we volunteer, we are not doing so all alone. When we give our time and talents to other organizations we pull ourselves out of our own little world to work shoulder-to-shoulder with others who are doing the same.

These new contacts fortify and diversify our network. Instantly our professional value increases, as these people will connect us to potential clients, business partners and employers. Additionally, these new contacts will provide us new ideas and information. Finally, our interaction with them stimulates ambition as we benchmark ourselves against new and interesting people. All of these distinguish us from our contemporaries

Yes, we all want more success, along with the greater income and higher stature that come with it. And, yes, we know that we need opportunities and advantages to get there. But what we get out of life is merely a function of what we put into it.

So we all need to find an organization or community program where we can give of ourselves. Volunteering – at any level, for any organization – is one activity where we can both give and get at the same time. ✓

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