



Stepping off the Ledge of Big Business Without a Safety Net

By Nancy Capistran

A business friend of mine was contemplating stepping off the ledge of “big business” into the unknown without any safety net. This would be unsettling for even the bravest of us. Having spent seventeen years with two of the nation’s largest investment firms, she had learned quite well how to weigh and measure a lot of different pluses and minuses for her clients. She used this same protocol for herself and ultimately made the calculated decision that it was time to listen to her gut and venture out on her own. She was forward thinking and strategically intentional about combining an impressive, diverse brain power of a string of stars – her business partners and their leadership team. The combined competencies of this exceptional team were nothing short of awe-inspiring. Making good decisions from “go” created a solid foundation from the start. They positioned their market niche carefully. They had strong individual brand recognition and extensive meaningful connections. The norms of reciprocity with social capital are something that this firm valued and put much attention towards. The team’s social network was the reason for the firm’s instant success and continuous growth. Their collaborative relations allowed for a number of great opportunities to rapidly grow its health.

My business friend was a consummate entrepreneur, so she knew that she could be structuring a lethal combination when she brought together a team comprising “center of the universe” superstar egos. A team of people who believe that they are “important” could be a huge barrier for working effectively together. Often these types of personalities put their own agendas and their own gratification ahead of others. I’ve witnessed this situation firsthand and it erodes the effectiveness of the organization as a whole. Overactive egos give people a distorted view of their self-importance. This dynamo team could have easily become hyper-competitive, which would have resulted in highly aggressive, counterproductive behavior. My friend made a point of keeping this topic front and center in their everyday world so that it didn’t become a fatal flaw for this new firm. It is imperative for leaders to be able to collaborate with their eyes wide open. This allowed for more effective communication and better alignment with objectives and goals, creating enhanced individual as well as combined accomplishments.

These superstars realized that they needed to work together to think through the best ideas, otherwise nothing productive would get accomplished. This dream team was able to surpass its five-year aspirations within the first six months of the new business being established.

It goes without saying that real success cannot be obtained without the capacity to leverage extraordinary professional and personal relationships. No one does it alone. Building and nurturing robust relationships in all aspects of our lives frequently leads to successful outcomes. We are social beings and maintaining healthy relationships is essential for how we each function within society. The common thread for the most successful businesses, whether they are a start-up or a large international organization, is the human

beings behind the name of the business. Investing in a high-quality team, rather than pivoting to the best idea, will lead us to the greatest outcomes.



About the Author: Nancy Capistran is a best-selling author, an award-winning, internationally certified executive coach, motivational speaker, and trusted advisor. She is Principal of [Capistran Leadership, LLC](#), and [Crisis Interception, LLC](#). Nancy's best-selling international leadership book: [Open Your Eyes and LEAD](#) shows readers how to become a positive force in the world and how to balance and manage omnipresent tensions while striving for leadership excellence. Capistran shares inspirational stories and advice from her 30+ year career to help both seasoned and emerging leaders develop intentionality while maintaining their core values and beliefs even when life's pressures dictate otherwise.