



- I. Huddle Up -- Change vs. Relief
- II. Pep Talk -- Monthly Quotes
- III. MVP Award -- Avanti Restaurant Solutions with Mark Rossi, CEO
- IV. Game Schedule -- 4th Quarter Push
- V. On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK

I. Huddle Up -- Change vs. Relief



Relief is one of my favorite emotions. Think about it. The great wash of emotion when you can't find your child in the store and then catch sight of two familiar little legs sticking out from under a clothes rack. Or when you need to communicate something but don't have time to talk, and you get the person's voicemail and can just leave a message. Yay! Or when the check comes in, and not a moment too soon. I love relief!

But relief should never substitute for needed change.

The Character of Crisis

In the last few weeks of this financial crisis stuff we're all facing, I have had several opportunities to speak to organizations on change and handling the unknown. The six- stage process I run folks through is compelling and helpful. But I am disturbed at how many people don't really want change - they just want relief.

I want to challenge you faithful readers to examine your leadership style, not against the backdrop of media headlines but in your own heart of hearts. Crisis always reveals character, and I want you to set yourself up for real growth as we face an unknown even Ben Bernanke and Alan Greenspan can't predict.

Let's diagnose. How are you handling the need for change right now? Are you reacting, or are you responding? Are you making changes - for simple relief or for real change? Are you taking action that will lead to lasting change and sustainable growth, or are you blowing smoke just to gain a reprieve, and then go back to business as usual when the crisis is over?

Avoiding the 'Off Ramp'

Remember, relief for relief sake (vs. relief until real change can happen) will "off ramp" your success in the long run. Keep relief as the reward to true change instead of a means to itself. So I ask you to truly challenge your motives today.

Let's face it, you need to trim all the fat you can, and hunker down to the bare minimum. But *how you do it* will determine your long-term success or failure as a leader. Right now businesses are being shot at, and most of us are just hoping troops won't get badly wounded, instead of mapping a strong strategy to win the war! If you want your people to follow you into battle, you need to invest in them. Part of that investment is money and time; the other is respect, trust and communication. We need to seek lasting change via truth and trust. If you have been putting off investing in your people and building your team, telling yourself "it's good enough," now

is the time to get serious about it and lead like a leader!

When you have team trust, you can lead the discussions around to where the organization is feeling the pain, and then you all can share in the ownership and accountability. I have had a several client experiences this month with CEOs facing real tough times.

One client gathered the entire organization together to discuss the situation and to report back to the executive team with solutions, department by department. When the inevitable layoffs happened, the CEO received thank you notes and emails from those leaving.

Another client with a smaller operation last week gathered his team and told them, "We have a great pipeline for Q1, but it is going to be tough for the next few months and we need to think of some solutions for meeting our numbers." He called me back to report in: not only did the meeting go great, but the employees came back as a group and said, "We've been talking, and we will each take a day off without pay until January to help bridge the change. "

I have to admit it brought tears to my eyes because I knew how hard this CEO had invested his life this year to build his team.

Who Are You Becoming?

That is the payoff for leaders who have invested in their people all year long, and now it's "payday." During the hardest times, your people rally around you with respect instead of you isolating to figure out how to simply seek relief and stop the bleeding alone.

As leaders we are expected to have solutions and lead confidently the vision we have set forth to the world. That does not mean we have to know everything and to solve every problem! Leaders influence those around them to greatness. They always do the right thing. I want to suggest that in times like these, simply seeking relief is not as wise as seeking truth, change, and trust with your people.

These are the times that reveal your character as it is today and forges your character for tomorrow. You will either fly with eagles, or bob with jelly fish. If there was ever a time to know yourself and work on your emotional intelligence and people skills, it is now. So do not let another month go by!

If not now, when? Don't listen to the news and react with fear. Listen to yourself, your people, the vision within you, and respond with doing the right thing for the right reason in the right time. That may mean making some hard calls, but who you are becoming in the process is what is at stake here. *Who are you becoming?* It is a very important question I hope you all will ask.

Here for you!

Shandel

II. Pep Talk -- Monthly Quotes

It marks a big step in your development when you come to realize that other people can help you do a better job than you can do alone? - Andrew Carnegie

Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning how to dance in the rain. - Gary Lee Walker

If your talented players are also your hardest workers, you've got a chance for real success . And if those top players also have a genuine humility, you have a change for something special. - Jim Tressel

As the challenge escalates, the need for teamwork elevates. - John C. Maxwell

Doubt can only be removed by action. - Goethe

To develop others, start with yourself. - Marshall Goldsmith

III. MVP Award -- Avanti Restaurant Solutions with Mark Rossi, CEO



I met Mark Rossi in 2007 at the EO Global Leadership Conference in San Francisco. He is the president of EO Sacramento and we hit it off instantly talking about culture, team, and results! I started working with Avanti Restaurant Solutions 3rd Quarter 07 and in one year I am totally impressed with how this team of people has done so much more with less. I love that! Better results with less people, less hours, more focus and more fun! They personify what a team is and should be as they live their values daily using them to make decisions and drive results. They put to use the 6-stages of sustainable growth and organizational change like none other. They "get" it! Mark is a classic entrepreneur full of passion, energy and vision still he is a true

leader because he cares deeply for his people and invests heavily into their professional and personal growth. It is a cool company that I believe has only seen its entry into greatness. Restaurant owners, you need them! Proud of you Avanti - GO! You can visit their website: www.avanticorporate.com

Here's Mark...

In August of 2007 during our first session with Shandel we had seven people, 5 project managers, 1 sales person, 1 administrative person. One could feel we had a special group, but the pain point was an unsettling barrier between co-workers. We dove right into working on team-building, or what I consider to be the "touchy-feely" stuff, and to my surprise everyone participated very openly. We all learned things about each other that really helped us understand the other person's "back" story.

We also did DISC assessments of everyone and went through an extensive session on the dos and don'ts in communication. The DISC stuff sounds a bit perfunctory to any business coaching scenario, but Shandel's passionate, comprehensive presentation of it really made an impact. So much so, we will not hire another person without giving them a DISC assessment, and making sure that it checks out with the "benchmark" we set for that position.

Armed with hard data from the DISC assessments which pacified our highly analytical S's and C's, and empowered our I's and D's with some actual data to make a smart decision, my team connected in a way they never had.

We began a planting process. A new meaningful set of core values everyone participated in creating: Connect and Communicate, Insist on Integrity, Thing long term, See it through, Desire to grow. These values govern our performance reviews, hiring and firing processes, and our customer prospecting efforts. We re-established and re-invigorated our Vision: "To become the industry's answer to your next new restaurant". We aligned and rallied behind our newly defined purpose: "To Inspire Family Connection." And we are trying (successfully I believe) to live out these mantras and values every day.

Then something interesting happened... A team member decided to leave because they weren't receiving the proper compensation. It was no coincidence this person had the largest separation between her natural and

adapted style on her DISC assessment. Translation, she wasn't in a job she felt comfortable in, nor was she in a job where she would succeed. So the only decision was to let her move on to a place where she could achieve success.

This was an example of what I call the "natural selection" process that occurs from aligning your team. The people who don't fit find a reason to "out" themselves and in this case, saved me the heart-ache of having to act, and we progressed by replacing this individual with someone who checked out with not only my gut, but with all the DISC requirements for that position.

The other two persons no longer at Avanti were terminated, but they were terminated in a very logical, productive, measured way. Because we took the time and established a strong set of core values that everyone believes in, it didn't take long to figure out who wasn't living up to the core values or who didn't want to live up to them. This made the termination process much less painful. We were no longer terminating on emotion and "knee-jerk" reactions, but based on a set of measurable criteria.

Once the pruning process was complete, we ended up with five people creating more revenue than seven did. I can also say unequivocally the people in this building belong here and are sitting in the right seats. Everyone is moving in the same direction toward a common vision and purpose, aligned to our core values. I spend very little time, money or energy managing people now and spend more time developing new business and searching for what's around the next turn.

Interestingly enough, because of the work we have done, these tumultuous times haven't dictated what we do with our personnel (knock on wood, knock on wood). That work has already been done. The result has been a new corporate client for future business and many more strong prospects who will become our partners in the future. I feel very confident my team is prepared and as "lean and mean" as it can be for what lies ahead.

Today, everyone here wants to be here, and personifies someone I respect and admire. We are all doing everything we can to further our brand and position in the marketplace. I'm sure we're in for some difficult times ahead and I'm concerned and planning for those times, but I'm not flying off the handle with emotion and worry. In a sick/weird/entrepreneurial sort of way, I want this economy to test us so we can prove just how great a company I believe Avanti truly is.

And don't do drugs.... That's it.

Mark Rossi

IV. Game Schedule -- 4th Quarter Push

Last Quarter Efforts - Have you kept your intentions and completed 80% of your 2008 goals? If not, it is time to get focused, drop the excuses, and take action. I know for me I have had many things get in the way of accomplishing my one main goal so this last quarter gives me a deadline to focus on. Are you with me? Never give up on living by your values and discovering your purpose. Perhaps consider the January [Life 301](#) class for the extra support and clarity you may need in the new year.

"ASK SHANDEL" I love to hear your comments on the newsletter via the blog. If you are not a blog subscriber check out www.shandel.com and get regular updates from the radio show "Ask Shandel" and other stuff.

For Your Company: Building The Extraordinary Team Workshop - Are you being the best leader you can be when it comes to your people? Is your team as efficient and functional as you desire? Are you certain your team has clear communication & priorities? Are you maximizing each person's time, talent, and energy? [Brief overview here.](#) Contact [Jenny](#) for more information to bring this workshop to your team.

For You: Know Yourself; Understand Others *Self Study Course* - Want to maximize your understanding of your

communication and behavior style as well as what motivates and drives you? This course helps take you to the next level of your self-discovery process. For more information check out our product page at www.truelifecoaching.com

[Testimonials and more details on Life 301](#)

V. On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK

Thank you for taking the time to read this month's edition of *The Coach's Time Out*. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those whom may find it beneficial. If you desire to subscribe, please visit the front page of our website or send an email to ss@truelifecoaching.com with the word SUBSCRIBE.

If you would be so kind to forward this to a friend - see below for an easy click to help you pass it on.

Life's a blast - go for the 2 EXTRA points!

Shandel Slaten

Your Life Coach

www.truelifecoaching.com

206 718 6914

Be You. Be Real. Be the Best You can Be...Today!
