

Creating Momentum from Urgency

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A couple of years ago, a lady in our small town was facing financial devastation. She had been diagnosed with cancer 7 months before and was having trouble keeping up with medical bills and general living expenses. A good friend of mine is a well-known musician, so we decided to put together a benefit concert at a local watering hole to raise money for her.

The immediate problem we had to hurdle was scheduling. We only had two options for a venue and both were booked up for the next 90 days; much longer than we wanted to wait. The only option we had was the upcoming Friday night, which gave us only 3 days to find musicians, get organized and promote the event. Since our local newspaper comes out once per week, on Friday, we certainly could not rely on that to get the word out.

We went to work. We put together flyers, assembled email blasts and talked to everyone we saw for the next three days, encouraging them to come to the concert and bring a donation. I will confess that by the time Friday night arrived, we were cautiously optimistic that we would have a good turnout. We were also mentally prepared for the possibility of a bust. Three days is not much time to organize, promote and hold an event.

By the time the concert began the room was three quarters full and within the next half hour we reached standing room only. We ended up passing the hat several times and collected a few thousand dollars. Even more money came in during the next week from people who could not attend the concert but wanted to help.

At the end of the day, I believe a large part of our success came from the fact that we had a lot to accomplish in a very short period of time. The circumstances we faced forced us to get highly focused and work at a fever pitch to pull this off. This created rapidly expanding momentum that caught everyone's attention and exploded the day of the event.

Here's my point: if this principle works for a benefit concert, it will work for you. Every time I take charge of a problematic business and turn it around, we start by identifying the problems, getting highly focused on the solutions and then ramping up the energy and activity level with a laser sharp focus on those solutions.

Are your sales down? Set an enormous goal for "this week" and funnel every ounce of your energy into accomplishing it. Then do the same next week. Build expanding momentum at a dramatic rate and you will see an explosion in your success ratio. There is no secret to success. Just hard work and focus.