

PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

“GENERIC” DELEGATION TRAINING MODULES

LIST OF PRESENTATION TOPICS

1. Overview of the Industry

Give a comprehensive picture of the industry, including its historical development, political influences, economic trends and basic challenges.

2. Building a Successful Business

Outline the essential components of a successful business, including a brief summary of your services or products, advice relating to the business' growth (failures and successes) and obstacles to future growth.

3. Business Organization and Management

Explain the organizational structure and principal management decision processes of the business, including an organizational chart.

4. Strategic and Business Planning

Discuss all elements key to successful strategic planning and control, including identifying objectives and developing short-term and long-term goals and projections.

5. Financial Planning

Describe how your business projects results, predicts costs, solves cash flow challenges, remains profitable, forecasts and controls investments, raises capital, and combats decreasing revenue.

6. Personnel Management

Describe human resources management in detail, including recruiting, hiring, monitoring, motivating, retaining and firing or laying off employees.

7. Sales and Marketing

Describe the business' sales and marketing plan (short-term and long-term), including specific techniques and strategies, evaluating your market, and customer care and service.

8. Corruption Issues Affecting Business

Address public/bureaucratic corruption and fraud in the US, including examples of cases, current laws that protect business against corruption and fraud, and other ways business can fight corruption.

9. Business Ethics

Cover the importance of ethics in business, including creating and implementing a code of ethics and the role of an ethics officer.

10. Associations and Lobbying

Convey the importance of professional associations, including types of associations, the benefits and limitations of associations and lobbying groups, and, if applicable, how to join/form a professional association.

“GENERIC” DELEGATION TRAINING MODULES

1. Overview of the Industry

Industry Background

- Please provide an overview of the historical development, structure, functions and types of activities in the industry and its component parts in the US.
- What is the significance of the industry in today's economy and society?
- What is the importance of Federal regulation and self-regulation in the industry? What is current government policy toward the industry?
- What are the various types of business entities with which a company in the industry must deal?
- Is consolidation occurring in the industry?
- How does the industry plan to deal with the effects of current U.S. low inflation, when expenses continue to creep up while at the same time it's difficult to pass along those costs to consumers?
- How sensitive to national/international economic and political changes is the industry?
- What are the future trends you foresee for the industry? How will demographics, consumer preferences, spending patterns, political or economic conditions in local markets, environmental issues, and lifestyle changes have an impact?
- What is the typical educational background and career path of an employee in the industry?
- Are there any licensing, registration and continuing education requirements for professionals in the industry in the US?
- What sorts of volunteer, philanthropic or charitable activities are most common for industry employees in the US?

Current Industry Issues

- What are the basic issues and challenges in the industry today?
- Do you consider the industry mature? If so, how will companies increase their market share?
- Will the initiatives of the current administration and Congress in Washington affect the industry?
- Please describe the issues of insurance, liability and litigation in the industry.
- Please describe the US corporate and individual income tax system. What major problems does the industry have with it? What changes are anticipated?
- Is the Internet changing the way the industry does business? How are computerization, the Internet and other telecommunications developments used?
- How do increasing globalization and technology advances influence the industry?
- Please describe the influences, positive and negative, of the environmental movement on the industry and US business in general.
- Please describe the current turmoil in the financial, banking, insurance, accounting and other business sectors in the US. What are the major issues, such as excessive executive compensation, booking of “phantom” income, lack of proper corporate governance, inadequate directors’ diligence, accounting for stock options and other derivatives, the negligence of outside auditing firms, and corporate and personal greed?
- How do these uncertainties affect business in the US and internationally? How do they effect your industry?
- What impact do they have on economic health and security, public trust of business, and general quality of life?
- What can be done? What outcomes do you hope for? What do you expect?

2. Building a Successful Business

- What are the necessary ingredients for building a successful business?
- What is your company's expansion history? Describe the various phases in your company's growth.
- What have been your failures?
- What have been your successful endeavors?
- What would you say have been your “Key Success Factors?”
- If you could begin over, what would you do differently?

- What services or products do you offer? Why have you selected these?
- Who are your major clients? Are you content with the make-up of your clientele?
- Why do customers choose to use your company with whom to do business (e.g., product knowledge, service, advertising, broad selection of services or products, price, customer relationships, etc.)?
- What advice would you give someone beginning a new business in your industry?
- What is the importance of public image in your business? How do you create and maintain it?
- What does “excellent customer service” by employees mean in your business (e.g., promptness, courtesy, accuracy, good grooming, follow-up, knowledge of laws, knowing customers’ names, etc.)?
- How do you instill, monitor and maintain a culture in your organization that values customer service?
- How do you manage change and conflict in your workplace?
- How does your company use Total Quality Management (TQM)?
- Is it critical to your business to use up-to-date technology? What kind?
- How do you use the Internet? Do you have a Website? Who designed it, and who maintains it? What are your positive and negative experiences with the site? How is your business involved in e-commerce or business-to-business (“B2B”) transactions?
- What are the key obstacles to your business’ further growth?
- How important is it to understand new international directions and themes in your industry?
- Do you adhere to any international standards? How do you train your personnel in these processes and standards?
- How big a geographical area do you serve? Do you want to expand? How?
- Do you have any plans to diversify, outsource or alter the nature of your business?
- Describe your “corporate culture” and how it differs from that of your competitors.

3. Business Organization and Management

- How is your businesses organized—e.g., partnership, corporation, sole proprietorship, etc.?
- What do you consider your most important business principles, vision and guiding values?
- Do you have a Mission or Vision Statement?
- Who has set the standard for these principles in your firm? What is your firm’s leadership attitude?
- Define your organizational structure. Is this a common structure for your industry?
- Describe the key management decision processes and the roles of each decision-maker in your firm.
- Explain the principles used to delegate responsibilities within the company.
- Is management practice more hierarchical or more team-oriented?
- Have you been able to establish adequate channels of communication within your company? How have you done this?
- Who do you feel offers essential outside counsel and assistance (e.g., bankers, accountants, marketing experts, lawyers, government officials, technology experts, academics, and so on)?
- What is your company’s physical lay-out? Where have you placed administrative offices, parking, employee facilities, professionals’ offices, meeting rooms, reception, production areas, etc.?
- Who manages the general administrative and accounting systems? How are these functions organized?
- Have you done anything to reduce the amount of computer data-entry required and the paper flow in your business?

4. Strategic and Business Planning

- Discuss the elements of good planning and control within your business.
- How and by whom are company business objectives determined?
- Do you do strategic planning? Who is involved? What is the time-line of your strategic plan?
- Please describe to the Russians how you might use SWOT analysis (“strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats”) in your strategic planning.
- If you have acquired another business, please describe that process.
- How do you plan future space, equipment, supplies and personnel requirements?
- Do you collaborate with other firms on any projects? How are those alliances formed? How are they structured? How do you divide responsibilities? Have these ventures been successful?

- What equipment, computers, software and other technology do you use? Can you recommend any good software packages for financial management, client billing, planning, project management, personnel records, etc.?
- What kind of insurance do you maintain, and what are the coverage limits?
- How do you protect your business and property from vandalism, robbery, theft by employees, etc.?
- What magazines or journals do you read to learn good business ideas? Are there any other sources of information you use?

5. Financial Planning

- What is your financial planning and budgeting process like, and how do you use it?
- How do you project the financial results of your business?
- How do you predict the cash requirements for your business over the next year?
- How do you deal with financial and cash flow challenges that face many small- to medium-sized firms?
- What has been your company's experience developing a Business Plan to obtain external financing?
- If available, please show the Russian delegates a copy of a Business Plan.
- How do you finance the opening of a new location, renovation, expansion, a new product and so on...by borrowing money, selling stock, or from your retained earnings?
- What percentage of your sales do various cost categories represent (e.g., labor, equipment, supplies, rent, utilities, selling costs, etc.)? Are there industry averages for these ratios?
- How have you focused on cost-cutting efficiencies to improve longer-term corporate profitability?
- Do you use economy-of-scale measures such as global sourcing, unified purchasing systems, and regional purchasing and logistics efforts? What have been the results?
- How do you forecast, record, manage and control your investments in land, supplies, labor, buildings, equipment or inventory?
- Do you prefer to lease or buy (real estate, buildings, equipment, etc.)?

6. Personnel Management

Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining Personnel

- Can you describe your hiring standards and policies, and give some examples?
- Do you use part-time, contract or seasonal employees?
- Please describe your "affirmative action" initiatives.
- Do you hire minors? The elderly? Non-US citizens? The handicapped? "Interns" from schools? What are the advantages and disadvantages of employing personnel from these groups?
- How do you organize and carry out recruiting campaigns? Do you travel to colleges to search for promising applicants? Do you participate in Job Fairs? Use employment agencies?
- What databases do you use for identifying, recruiting and selecting potential employees? What software programs? What Internet resources?
- Where do you advertise for job applicants? What is your "message?" Can you show the Russians some of these ads?
- What kinds of personal skills and attitudes are required for your business (e.g., attitude, honesty, work ethic, performance, training, etc.)? How do you screen applicants for these traits?
- Do you always get references from previous employers? What questions do you ask them?
- What questions do you ask employment candidates? What questions are illegal to ask?
- What are "behavioral interviews?" Do you use this process?
- Please describe your interview process, from start to finish.
- How do you interview job candidates in other cities or areas of the country?
- Do you administer any pre-employment or periodic tests to personnel, e.g., skills, aptitudes, drug, psychological, physical, medical, etc.? Why or why not? What are the legal issues involved in testing? What are the issues of privacy?
- In general, what means of recruiting and selecting personnel have been most effective?
- Do employees need any certifications before they come to work for you?
- What are your major difficulties in retaining good personnel? What are you doing about this problem?
- Are you a "union shop?" What challenges does this present?

Employee Benefits

- What are typical compensation structures for each group of employees? How do you establish these?
- What role do salary, bonuses, stock options, profit-sharing plans, commissions and other incentives play in your compensation structures?
- Do you have an employee retirement plan? An ESOP (employee stock ownership program)? Life insurance? Health benefits? What benefits package do you offer employees?
- Do you have an EAP (employee assistance program)? What sorts of issues does it help personnel with—e.g., health problems, chemical dependency, work-life balance, psychological counseling, personal problems, child-care, personal financial management, career management, etc.?
- Do you have an “ombudsman” to represent employee issues?
- What programs are in place to enhance employee satisfaction, such as suggestion systems, recreation programs, company newsletters, company parties and events, or contests?
- What labor regulations (local, state, national) you are required to meet? What agencies monitor these? Who on your staff ensures compliance?

Employee Performance

- Do you set employees' objectives? Do you have written standards, individual job descriptions and personnel policy manuals?
- How do you motivate your employees? How do you measure and evaluate performance?
- How—and how often—is performance feedback provided to the employees?
- On what factors are promotions based?
- What would you say is your biggest problem with employees, e.g., high turnover, poor customer service, dishonesty, lack of technical skills, poor grooming and dressing, etc.? How do you address this?
- If you have to discipline or “fire” an employee, how do you plan for and carry out that process?
- Do you have a leadership development program?
- Will you please describe to the Russians any team-building exercises you use?
- Does the HR department work with employees on “career development?”
- Have you established mentoring or “shadowing” programs? What have been the outcomes?
- How do you train your employees? Who creates the training program?
- Can you show some of your training materials to the Russians?
- How is your staff's work scheduled? By whom? How long in advance?

7. Sales and Marketing

- What approaches and techniques does your company use for successful marketing in your area?
- Do you develop an overall marketing plan? Specific plans for certain customers or services?
- What is your market share? How do you evaluate your potential market share?
- Does your company advertise? In what media? What is the “message”? How effective is advertising for you? How do you measure effectiveness?
- What product or service characteristics do you emphasize to your targets, e.g., superior quality, flexibility, price, design, speed of delivery, etc.?
- How do you differentiate your services from those of other firms?
- Have you done any market studies to determine the characteristics of your customers?
- How do you analyze your target market and its buyers' behavior?
- Do you use a “consultative” sales approach?
- How do you set your prices? Do you offer volume discounts? Cost-plus billing? Hourly rates? What are your billing terms?
- How price-sensitive is your business? What are the constraints on your pricing strategy (e.g., general market and competitive factors, the economy, the client's ability or willingness to pay, etc.)?
- How important is after-sales service in your business?
- Is customer loyalty a significant factor in your industry? How do you retain customers? What makes customer relationships successful?
- Do you feel you have superior customer-care capabilities? How do you monitor and maintain quality customer service and satisfaction? Who is responsible?
- Are you satisfied with your marketing and post-sales efforts? If not, what would you like to change about them?

- What are your major marketing challenges today?
- What will be your marketing strategy for the next five years?

8. Corruption Issues Affecting Business

- What are some of the more prominent examples of bureaucratic/public corruption in your city/state? On the national level? How was the corrupt activity discovered and made known to the public? Were the officials prosecuted?
- *For lawyers/prosecutors* - What is your experience prosecuting government officials involved in corrupt practices? Please give some examples. What are the methods to investigate and prosecute governmental corruption in the US? Was there specific legislation that was at issue in those cases? How effective are the current laws against corruption?
- What can be done by legislators to insure a transparent society governed fairly by the rule of law: e.g., administrative reform, independent audits and controls, improved information technology, transparent public sector procurement procedures, development of a professional civil service with high standards of ethical conduct, safeguarding the traditions of free press, etc.
- What governmental agencies, professional associations, or other organizations have you found especially helpful in dealing with matters of corruption?
- Please talk briefly about Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) corruption in the US. What types of business have you found to be especially likely to be involved in corrupt practices? Briefly describe what has been done to fight or deter this corruption. What are the consequences?
- What role does the public play in fighting corruption? How can it play a bigger role?
- Briefly talk about transparency in SMEs. Have you observed that any companies encourage disclosure of unethical practice, and protect (or even reward) the disclosers? How can a company insure that this does not create a negative culture of paranoia and “whistle-blowing?”

9. Business Ethics

- Do most businesses adopt their own, specific code of ethics? What agency or entity sets those standards? How are business ethics codes enforced?
- How might a company design an ethics policy that is preventative rather than reactive-that is, resolves ethical questions before they become a problem
- What, in your view, are the most important ethical rules in business? What, in your view, are the most frequently violated ethical rules in business?
- In practice, what should a company do if an employee, customer, supplier or other business partner makes an unethical or illegal proposal?
- What is the role of Board of Directors’ corporate governance codes? How effective are they?
- Do you know of any companies that have “ethics officers,” ombudsmen, compliance programs or business practices offices? How do they operate, and what have been their results?

10. Associations and Lobbying

Associations

- What industry association do you represent or belong to?
- What does the association do? What services do you offer members?
- What does one have to do to become a member?
- What consequences do the membership face for acting outside of association standards?
- What other kinds of trade and professional associations exist in this industry?
- Do associations have codes of ethics? If so, how were the codes established and enforced?
- What role do associations play in the fight against corruption?
- How do associations represent the interests of its members? How does the association’s membership ensure that the association is acting on their behalf?
- How do associations determine their position on controversial issues concerning their members?
- How do you start a new association? How do you charter a local chapter of an established association?

Lobbying

- Who lobbies on behalf of your industry? Who pays for the lobbyist’s services?

- What are the standard methods of lobbying to legislative bodies, government officials, etc?
- How much money does your company spend annually on lobbying/ or how much does your association spend on lobbying each year? Can organizations receive donations to be used for lobbying efforts? If so, how do organizations account for these funds? What types of tax exemptions are available for organizations involved in lobbying?