

## Are You Protecting Your Most Important Asset?



*The most important asset in your business is YOU. True, your employees are important, but you come first. Without you, there would be no business and no employees. With understanding this comes the responsibility of looking after that asset.*

"A healthy business requires a healthy leader, both in mind and body. Good health leads to good decisions," says Amos Avitan of AVITAN Business Resources.

We all know it's important to eat a healthy breakfast every morning, get enough sleep, exercise regularly and take regular vacations. **But, in addition to the basics, make time to read and listen to music.**

A study conducted at UC Berkeley shows that, besides being a great way to unwind, reading boosts your analytical thinking, helps you stay focused on your goals, and much more. So keep that muscle working!



Brand-new Canadian brain-scan studies conclusively show that the greater your emotional

response to a tune—whether it reminds of of a blissful moment or a cherished friend—the bigger the rush of the “reward chemical” dopamine you get.

*"You may own many assets, such as vehicles, real estate, a boat, and other toys. Like most owners, you are protective of these assets and service them regularly. You need to put yourself on top of that list of assets," adds Amos Avitan.*

## AVITAN Specialty Workshops

Recently, we kicked off our Specialty Workshop series with a May 4 session in Vancouver, BC, and one on May 10 in Edmonton, AB. The "Communication" themed workshop, led by Amos Avitan and Bob Trenchard, was very well received. Many were surprised at how much they learned and the importance of 'thinking before speaking.'

For information on upcoming events, visit us at [www.avitanevents.com](http://www.avitanevents.com).



*Lots of interaction at the workshop: Amos Avitan (center) answers one of many questions asked by the participants.*



**AVITAN**  
7<sup>th</sup> annual  
CONVENTION

A conference for owners and their wives.

Crescent Beach, BC • June 24, 2011

Avitan Annual Convention is finally here! On June 24th, 2011 we will gather for the 7th time at the oceanfront Beecher Place in sunny Crescent Beach, BC. Come and join us for this fun & informative day on the coast!

Visit us at [www.avitanevents.com](http://www.avitanevents.com) for detailed event information and directions to the venue.

## AVITAN Level I Course



*Left to right: Harry Derbitsky (AVITAN trainer), Jesse Klassen (Jedan Brothers Contracting), Dan Klassen (Jedan Brothers Contracting) and Amos Avitan.*

Last month, two more contractors—Jesse Klassen and Dan Klassen of **Jedan Brothers Contracting** in Pitt Meadows, BC—completed our Level 1 classroom-style course. After 11 months of training, brothers Jesse and Dan successfully passed an intensive final exam and received their certificates. Congratulations to both!

For more information on our classroom-style training courses, please visit our website at [www.avitan.ws](http://www.avitan.ws), click on "Calendar of Events" and then on the "Classroom Information" icon.

## Using Negative Ideas to Generate Change

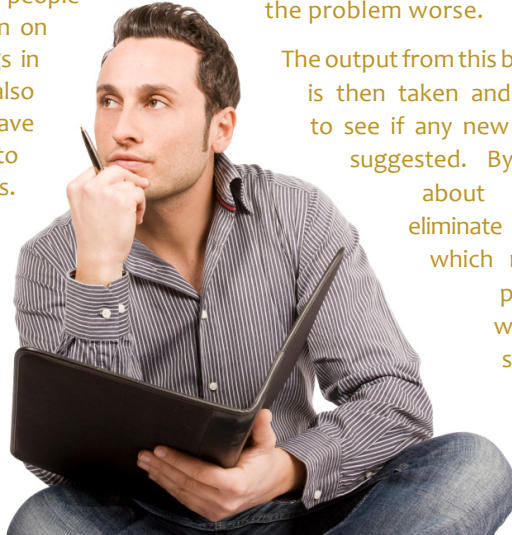


Most of us are familiar with the brainstorming process—the problem is stated, and people in the group say whatever ideas pop into their minds. Someone takes notes, and judgment is deferred.

Although brainstorming is a good technique, it has some drawbacks. It relies on people using their imagination on how to improve things in a positive manner. It also requires them to have enough knowledge to come up with solutions.

A potentially better approach is 'negative brainstorming.'

What this technique uses is the human tendency to see the negative side of things. When



a topic or problem is put forward, it is often easier to come up with reasons why it won't work or why the problem cannot be solved.

So, the next time, try being negative to get a positive outcome. Instead of brainstorming for possible solutions the team brainstorms for everything that could make the problem worse.

The output from this brainstorm is then taken and explored to see if any new ideas are suggested. By thinking about how to eliminate the things which make the problem worse, new solutions can be found.

## Important vs. Urgent —Know the Difference



*Experienced managers learn to respond to the things that are important, rather than what is urgent.*

While that might sound backward, consider how many things seem "urgent" in the moment: phone calls, sick workers, crew disagreements, nit picky customer changes messing up your job projections and costs, lost paperwork, etc. You can spend your whole day responding to one crisis after another.

What is important is to recognize the cause of the crisis and respond to that. Fix the cause, and the crisis it spawns disappears. People get sick, so you have a crew day work call-list ready. People butt heads, so you learn some basic conflict-resolution skills. Customers always have changes, so you have Change Order Forms ready to go.

By dealing with the "important," with proper training and systems, the day to day "urgent" is greatly reduced.

## Ward Off Colds With Wii

Simply being active for about 30 minutes per day, five days a week, boosts your immune system cells so much, you're half as likely to come down with a cold as your couch-potato counterparts, the British Journal of Sports Medicine reports.

Bonus: If you do get sick, your symptoms will be significantly less severe. Indoor exercises—including Wii Fit, stair walking, hula-hooping or jumping rope—are just as effective.

## Earthquake Safety – Are You Prepared?



*In the light of the recent disaster in Japan, we all should know what to do when an earthquake strikes.*

For example, don't hide under a table or in a doorway. Curl up next to a large bulky object such as a sofa or a bed. Why?

According to Doug Copp of ARTI, the world's most experienced

rescue team, "when buildings collapse, the weight of the ceilings falling upon the objects inside crushes them, leaving a space or void next to them—NOT under them. This space is what I call 'The Triangle of Life.'

The larger and stronger the object, the less it will compact. The larger the void, the greater the chance that the person

who is using this void for safety will not be injured."

**Some tips:** 1. Never go to the stairs. They will continuously bump into the rest of the building until structural failure of the stairs takes place. Get near the outer walls of buildings or outside of them for the best chance of an escape route.



2. If in your car, get out and lie next to it. If a bridge or a building collapses on the car, a void next to it will save your life.

3. If you're in an office with lots of paper, duck next to a large stack of paper/newspaper as it doesn't compress.

4. Share this advice with as many people as possible—it can help save someone's life!

## Get the Recognition You Deserve



In our society, we promote fast problem solving. We learn to fix one thing and 'bam' go on to the next one. Then another and another. Pretty soon we lose perspective and wonder if any of what we do is really worth it or even makes a difference.

Acknowledgment and recognition are the things that make our efforts seem worthwhile. But when you're the boss, it's hard to reach around your own shoulders and give yourself a heartfelt "attaboy!" pat on the back.

But you do need this, so ask for it from those you trust. When you feel you've handled something particularly well, brag a little to your friends and loved ones. Let them know how proud you feel, and take in their pride and support of you. Buy a round and declare that you did one heck of a job that week, and cheers to you!

Being a good manager to yourself can help make the difference between burning out and thriving. Giving yourself the same great management skills you give your employees and crews is something you absolutely deserve.



## It's All in How You Spin It

An inter-office softball game was held every year between the Marketing and Support Departments. This year, as hard as the Marketers tried, the Support staff whipped them soundly.

Following is the "spin" the Marketing put on it, showing how they earn their keep.

Posted on the bulletin board after the game:

"The Marketing Department is pleased to announce that for the recently-completed Softball Season, we came in 2nd place, having lost but one game all year.

The Support Department, however, had a rather dismal season, as they won only one game all year."



## Is Your Computer Making You Fat?

*Want to lose weight fast, without changing what you eat? Quit multi-tasking.*

That's right, sitting at your computer, catching up on email and the latest video of crazy dog antics while you eat lunch could be making you fat. You not only eat more when you're in front of the screen (any screen), but you'll also eat more sweet stuff later.

Why? If you're distracted while you eat (the participants in the study played video solitaire), you have a fuzzier memory of what you ate. Somehow, that leaves you feeling less full and wanting dessert. Thirty minutes later, the solitaire players ate twice as many cookies as the distraction free group.

### Here are some rules:

1. No peeking at small screens. Don't just shut down the computer at mealtimes, turn off your smart phone, iPod and any other distractions, except the people you are eating with.
2. Cut back on the big screen. Overweight women eat half their calories in front of the TV. Canadians sit glued to the tube about five hours a day. Cutting TV time in half and doing something else instead (doesn't matter what) burns 120 extra calories a day. That's 840 calories a week!
3. Practice mindful munching. Slowing down and focusing on each mouthful makes the meal memorable and reduces dessert cravings later.

## Smile! It's Good For You



People who make a habit of flashing their pearly whites—even when they don't feel like it—outlive those who smile less, according to a Wayne State University study.

A big smile isn't only an indication of how upbeat you feel, it also prompts the release of feel-good brain chemicals!



# Spotlight on Clients



Alartco Windows & Doors Mfg. in Edmonton, AB, have launched their new company logo (designed by Avitan) and they are excited.

During the first day with their new business cards, a sales rep came in and said “Hey, you got new cards. NICE!” But the best part was owner Candace’s reaction: “Very stunning! It makes me want to write a lot of letters to show it off!” That’s precisely what the new marketing tools (aka business stationery) are for! Go Alartco Go!

Kudos to Westmark Construction in Nanaimo, BC, for undergoing a thorough Avitan Operational Review and Analysis. We’ve noticed, over the years, that it is often the ones who are doing well that have the strongest desire to do even better. We expect great things for Westmark!

Taking advantage of Avitan’s marketing training course, Teresa Stange of Time Line Construction in Edmonton had this wonderful feedback for us: “Thank you for your good thoughts. I very much enjoy (the course) and you really do inspire me and I feel like there is nothing I can’t do–talk about an excellent mentor!!!!”

## Your input is always welcome!

Got Good News? Heard a great joke? Know of a topic you’d like to see in our newsletter? Please share with us!

Contact: Hana Bilikova hana@avitan.ws

Tasa Construction in Burnaby, BC, continues to forge ahead, and are stopping at nothing as they build 3 market segments concurrently. Is that the sweet smell of success wafting from John’s truck??

In addition to their management and business training, Heidelberg Landscaping in Abbotsford, BC, is working with Avitan to completely refresh their web site. And it is looking good!! Should be ready to launch very soon.

Congratulations once again to Jesse Klassen and Dan Klassen of Jedan Bros. Contracting for completing their Level 1 Contractor Business training, an 11-month classroom-style course with Avitan.

Thanks to everyone who attended the recent “Communications” workshop as a part of the Avitan Leadership series. Your participation during the day was excellent—both in Vancouver and in Edmonton.

# Gadgets & Tools

## All-In-One on Your Wrist



This Bluetooth-enabled timepiece pulls all your phone alerts right to your wrist. Tethered to your BlackBerry or Android handset with Bluetooth, the inPulse watch displays texts, e-mails and your call log on its 1.3-inch screen, so your phone can stay tucked away. \$150; [www.getinpulse.com](http://www.getinpulse.com)

## Drive On

Rockwell’s drill (Rockwell 3Rill) is the first 12-volt compact tool to double as a heavy-duty driver. For big, load-bearing screws, an anvil weight provides up to 800 inch-pounds of extra torque.



\$180; [www.rockwelltoolsdirect.ca](http://www.rockwelltoolsdirect.ca)



# ales Skills

Three men were at the funeral of Joe, their co-worker.

The first man, the crew foreman, says “You know, I just remembered I’ve owed Joe \$100 for a long time. I’m going to pay him back now by leaving the money in his casket.”

His honesty motivated the estimator who said “I’ve owed Joe \$200 for over a year now and so I’m going to leave two one hundred dollar bills in his casket as well.”

The third fellow, the salesman of the company, looked at the other two and said “Funny you should mention that. I owe Joe \$500 for something he did for me awhile back and I too want to honor my responsibility. Why don’t you each give me the money you owe him and I’ll leave him my cheque for \$800 in his casket to cover all three of us?”