



Marketing Munchies Podcast Transcript

Season 2, Episode #5

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Announcer: Welcome to the Marketing Munchies Podcast series hosted by Dr. Bridget Behe. Each week Bridget and her guests will share information, insights, research-based findings, and her 30 years of experience to help your horticultural business connect better with current and future customers. Now, let us join our host, Dr. Bridget Behe.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Hi, and welcome back to the Marketing Munchies Podcast. I am your host, Dr. Bridget Behe. This week I want to talk about the power of vision. You know, as I start teaching the horticulture management class here at Michigan State University, I usually start off with a couple of video tapes by Joel Barker that talk about paradigms and the power of vision.

If you look up vision or a vision statement, you will find the definition has something to do with an aspirational description of what an organization wants to achieve. The statement often will guide your choices and actions. I have known for a long time that vision statements can be really powerful. If you think about a vision for your company, a vision for your family, or a vision for yourself—even a vision for your week or your day—the vision statements or taking some time out to craft or to create a vision really can act like a powerful magnet. The vision statement can help you make choices throughout the day, the week, or the year, because those choices are either going to be consistent with what you want your vision to become or they are going to take you a step away from your vision.

I was fortunate enough to be at a presentation from the Zingerman's Company. They have a separate subdivision called the Zing Train. The presentation was on visioning by Ellen Gilbert. It was really an interesting presentation. At the time, I had not really thought about some of the specifics that she presented at the Great Lakes Trade Expo on Creating Vision Statements. Now, I think one of the most interesting things that she shared was that you can even create a vision statement for the day. When you start out the morning and you think about what is going to be a successful day for me or what is the end of my day going to look like? What will I have accomplished? I have been using this exercise quite often as I think about some of the things that I want to try and get done during my day and also my week. She talked about including emotion and writing in present tense and using rich details, which is something that I have always advocated.

What I have my students do in the management class, especially for their business, is to think about what they want that business to be or have accomplished in five years or so. It is a really powerful exercise whether you are doing it for an individual or you are doing it for a business. Vision statements really are not strategic plans or mission statements or something you hire somebody else to do, but they really can be powerful directives—especially as you keep them in mind. Either, you look at them, or you think about them, or you reflect on them in the morning

just for a few minutes before you begin your day. I have always been a big believer on vision statements and trying to think about big things that I want to put into my week.

Then, we make choices about how we spend our time: what we do first and what we put off, what we procrastinate, or what we attack. But, vision statements, I think, are one of the best tools we can have to help us get the work done that we really want to accomplish. Maybe, at your business, you start small, and you think about vision statements for a couple of days a week. Maybe you move to creating a vision statement for what you want to get done that week. What are some of the most important things that get done or some of the pressing things, some of the things that will increase or enhance your profitability. Then, I think, get the management team to sit down and start working on a vision statement for where you want the company to be in one and three years. It gets harder to see a concise vision more than a couple of years out, because the pace of business changes so dramatic.

Vision statements are very very powerful tools, because when we create them, they make us stop and think about: what is it that is important for me? What is it that is important for this business to accomplish? What do we want to say that we have done after “x” amount of time? There is a really cool exercise that I do when I teach *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, which is a book that Stephen Covey wrote—probably the best management textbook that I have ever seen. His Habit Number 3 is “First Things First.” This really is the habit of living your vision. When you put the big rocks in the fish bowl, you decide what is important. You put those big things in your week, and you dedicate specific time to doing them. You are more likely to get those big things accomplished. But, if you put the fish gravel or the fun in your week first, it gets really hard to find the room to put those big rocks in. Usually, it is the big rocks or the more important things in our life that really help us accomplish our goals or help us achieve that vision.

In the words of Dwight Eisenhower, “Most of us don’t plan to fail, we fail to plan.” Visioning, to me, is one of those couple-a-minute activities—except if we are doing it for the whole company. It is one of those couple-a-minute a week activities we can do that can make all the difference in the world.

I am going to encourage you to think about vision statements. Whether that is for you on a single day. Whether that is for you and what you want to accomplish over the next year, or what the management team at your business wants to accomplish over the next year or two. Give vision statements the chance. Be specific. Be measurable. Have a time period associated with them. Be descriptive. Include emotion. Draw as rich of a picture as you possibly can in your mind. Put that down on paper, and then, make the commitment to do what you have set out in the vision. Make your choices be consistent with that vision, or maybe it is time to sit down and craft that vision again.

Thanks again for joining me this week, and I hope to have you back another week!

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Announcer: Thank you for joining us on this week's Marketing Munchies Podcast. For more information or to download the transcript of this podcast, please visit, connect-2-consumer.org. That's C-O-N-N-E-C-T, dash, the number two, dash, C-O-N-S-U-M-E-R, dot, C-O-M.

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