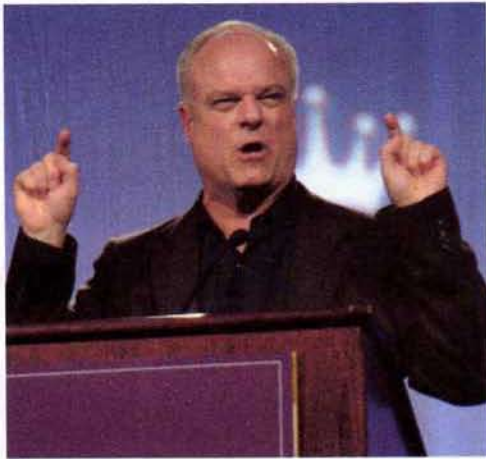


# Play to Win Newsletter



Most industry dynamics are defined over time by the classic marketing and economic principles such as investments to entry, category elasticity, current customer needs, current capabilities, existing supply chains, as well as product portfolios. This landscape causes most companies to focus on incremental efforts to build share, drive comp sales, acquire new business, reduce their cost structure and make current business more productive. These are all important annual business priorities that if achieved will maintain and even grow Brand market share and profitability in most industries.

Playing to Win is not just about how to exceed the annual business priorities and incremental year over year growth objectives. This “outside the chalk lines” approach outlines a new way to unlock your industry and show you how to bring your brand alive in new ways with employees as well as your clients/customers. We will highlight Brands that created “game changers” and created breakthroughs to win. It will also highlight an approach on how to discover your Brand leverage that will enable you to ladder up your position in the industry.

Successful Brands that have broken through in their industry begin by discovering a higher level customer need that is not intuitively obvious. Most companies are so focused on their day-to-day operations that these broader, higher order emotional customer needs are not fulfilled. The gaps in the market are not readily apparent. Your customers can’t even identify them and they know that they are needed only when they see the new creative.

What are the successful Brands able to do that sets them apart? How are the mature industries redefined in a new way leading to breakthrough growth? How can Marketing, Motivation and Branding be combined in a new way to win? How do you bring your Brand (company) alive for every employee and customer winning both their minds and hearts?

One of my favorite television shows is called “The Situation” which is a news and entertainment show airing nightly on MSNBC featuring Tucker Carlson. I love the name of the show because it always tries to answer the question: “What’s the situation?” Most corporations and Brands are not able to get out of the incremental starting blocks because they can’t agree on “the situation” and the stark realities that face their business. The most important trait of any successful senior executive leadership team is a consistent, clear and realistic understanding of their business. What are the threats, opportunities, financial realities, and the underlying marketplace causes that have put their company and Brand where it is right now?

In the classic movie suspense thriller, “Jaws” in 1975, police chief Brodie (Roy Scheider) says the famous quote “We need a bigger boat.” He was dealing with a reality facing his team on the high seas. Most senior executive teams won’t admit when they “need a bigger boat” because there is not a common view or shared understanding of the underlying causes driving their current business results and their true industry position.

How do you begin to provide the leadership and motivation necessary to understand “the situation”? How do you make sure your senior executive team is on the same page? In the 1976 classic movie “All the President’s Men” the deep throat character played by Hal Holbrook tells Bob Woodward (Robert Redford) to “follow the money.” How is shareholder wealth created in your business? The way to understand the answer to that question is to “follow the customers” literally. Brand winners “follow the customer”, watch the customer, learn from the customer, live with their customer, find “what matters” and formulate their strategies based on where they have the most leverage for profitable revenue growth.

How do you ladder up your industry and your Brand’s role in it? Do you and your team have a common view of reality and the industry space you occupy today? Most brands do not and that leads to incremental marketing approaches. Winning companies and Brands are created when companies rediscover their industry and the role they play in it. They define parameters of Brand permission, discover higher order customer needs, and utilize their capabilities to create sustainable Brand leverage leading to “breakthrough” growth.

**Please contact us and let’s build a “Play to Win” blueprint for success.**

Jim Welch