

# KENNETH B. LERMAN

## Business Growth Consultant

email: [lermank@kenlerman.com](mailto:lermank@kenlerman.com) • [www.kenlerman.com](http://www.kenlerman.com)

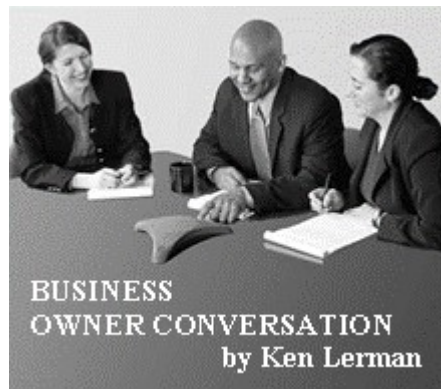
1668 N. Sagebrush • Wichita, Kansas 67230

Office (316) 733-5800 • Fax (316) 733-5077

## Eliminate Your Customers' Pain – You Take on More Pain

From the November, 2009 issue of *East Wichita News*  
by Ken Lerman

In 2010, a wise comparative business strategy should include removing the pain of your customer and, at times, taking on some real pain for yourself. Stretch, grow, learn, leap, broaden your abilities and business talents. Through continuous improvement, you become more valuable to others.



Many of your business competitors – small and large – will fall asleep on their Sunday couch this fall and winter watching the most boring lackluster professional sports known to man. You should get yourself and your business active, smarter, even more lean. Become less comfortable with your *status quo*! Take on some pain. Learn to do good, new, smart things for current and new clients who have the intelligence to perceive your valuable benefits. Get smarter, better-performing customers, suppliers, employees and associates.

Encourage your talent to become more valuable to themselves and to your customers. Invest in your talent's growth and education. Have them educated by your better-performing suppliers – especially by suppliers who are selling new, expensive assets that promise to make you a leaner, greener, and more efficient producer.

You become the teacher to your employees, your customers and suppliers. Share “your pain” with suppliers and ask them to take it away.

For real growth and gain, business goals should be definable, measurable, doable and require stretch – stretch on everyone's

part, internal and external to your business. Step up: stretch, push and challenge your business to be more and do more for others. First time experiences can still be fun.

### Surpass Mediocrity – Do Better

Surpass mediocrity and your performance and value will be well spoken of in the market. We have become a “dumb downed” nation. We accept anything and call it great – just look at our celebrities, leaders and restaurants. All you need to do is surpass the performance mediocrity and BS of larger category leaders and you will win. Do more than is expected, always, in service, quality, performance and price. “Creating value” is how things get sold over and over again.

Enhance your value. Turn your customers into heroes by showing them how to become more valuable to their customers through your value added business performance.

## **Embrace Change**

Ensure you are providing real value that is current, relevant, wanted and perceived as value by your customers.

Business success is a moving target. Your business must move to it. We are learning in the U.S. to change as the market changes. Stay current, relative and competitive. Several months ago in "Question Your Customer," I provided you the "face to face" questions you should be asking your customers that identifies their current and relevant needs, pains and desired value added. Now is the time to move forward on this recommendation.

In a collaborative manner, face to face, solve your clients' problems. Have your people work with their people. Document and merchandise your collaborative solves and successes.

Promise, deliver and learn how to effectively merchandise all the value your "business brings to the marketplace. Many say they do – most businesses don't.

## **Become Smarter**

Finally, consider this. Your business solutions, marketed successfully are as valuable as you are intelligent about your business, your customer's business and the market you compete in.

Become market intelligent. The more you know the more valuable you are. Get face to face with important influential people in business and throughout your communities. Learn from them.

Engage in new meaningful conversations with everyone you deem intelligent – young and old. Become smart and influential yourself.

If you are in agreement that your business will grow through its identification and elimination of customer pain – and that this valuable performance and service which you provide might cause you some pain and discomfort – then you are in smart company.

"Make and sell what the customer wants, not what you want. Continuously raise your standards of performance. Be painfully honest in your evaluation of your own business performance." – *Edward Deming, Total Quality Management*

*Ken Lerman is a national business growth consultant, a national speaker, management trainer and author for U.S. business across a diverse range of industries. He can be reached at 1668 N. Sagebrush, Wichita, KS 67230. Visit [www.kenlerman.com](http://www.kenlerman.com). Email Ken at [lermank@kenlerman.com](mailto:lermank@kenlerman.com) or call 316-733-5800*