

Sometimes the Right Business Strategy Requires You to Shoot for the Moon



When is the right time to make a change in your business strategy? Must all the stars be aligned? How will you know that it's the right time? Well, we can take some advice from the ancient Greeks. They had some interesting ideas about time. The Greeks had two words to describe different types of time. *Chronos* and *Kairos*. *Chronos* is sequential, linear time; time you can quantify. The time measured by clocks and calendars. The time of step-by-step thinking and planning. *Kairos* is when it all comes together and the opportunity to act is ripe. Serendipitous. It demands poise, intuition and responsiveness. *Kairos* is qualitative, the appointed time, "now or never."

When making business decisions, we usually try to establish criteria based on the pros and cons of any given situation. Then we make plans for which to follow. But sometimes, opportunity knocks and we must step out and take the risk of acting right now. Such risk means modifying the plans we already have in place and trying something different. The objective is to keep the business moving toward the vision we have painted in our minds; however, different situations provide different strategic opportunities. As Roy Williams, of the Wizard Academy states: "If making a fortune was a step-by-step process, we'd all be rich. But it takes more than *Chronos* to rise above your circumstances. Success requires a sense of *Kairos*, knowing when to pounce."

Chronos leadership is the sequential, systemic style of managers. This style is tactical in approach, process oriented, goal oriented and structured. The *Chronos* style is most effective in creating organizational improvement, where consistency matters most, and when following the defined process will create the best results.

The *Kairos* style of leadership is needed when innovation becomes critical to stay ahead of the competition. This style is intuitive, creative and change oriented. The *Kairos* style is most needed when an organization is stuck in a rut and new ideas are needed, or in a time of crisis when the organization's survival may depend on innovative problem solving.

Do you refer to the vision you have for the company when you want to determine whether to change your business strategy? A clear vision can keep your decision making more effective. You'll know which way to lead. If you have not thought much about your vision for future business success, you might want to revisit it and determine if your vision is still relevant and accurate. The vision you have should describe what you want the organization to be—including its culture, clientele and atmosphere. The vision should inspire a desire for constant learning and innovation as you adapt to the changing world. It informs your business strategy.

As you review your business success strategy, consider how often you are using the *Chronos* leadership style and how often you are using the *Kairos* leadership style. Is your reliance on the Chronos style holding you back? Or do you find that a little more use of the *Chronos* style will mitigate too much fool-hardy risk taking? In a market economy, where innovation is a critical component for maintaining your business' competitive edge, having a healthy dose of *Kairos* is essential. The important take away message is that you believe in your gut and allow yourself and your employees the ability to pounce when you find yourself face-to-face with a great opportunity. Shoot for the moon from time to time. At the very worst you'll still find yourself landing among the stars.

About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business success expert. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Through a collaborative mentoring process, she and her clients create workable strategic business plans and success initiatives, while improving their workplace processes. She is frequently featured in the media and contributes blog posts for www.AllBusiness.com and www.WomenOnBusiness.com. Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Watch her on YouTube videos [here](#). Also, join her [Facebook Group](#) for insights on how to successfully build your business to work for you.