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FREE
Small Business
Advisory Guide:

16 Critical Questions Every
Small Business Owner Must
Ask Before Hiring Any IT
Company



**“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run
Faster, Easier, And More Profitably”**

Are You A Manager... Or A Leader?

Modern leadership guru, Warren Bennis, said, “Managers are the people who do things right and leaders are the people who do the right thing.” To run a business well, you need both. Employees, finances, sales, marketing, operations and, yes, I.T. all need BOTH a manager AND a leader. But that doesn’t mean *you* should be the one doing both.

Why Leadership Is Your #1 Job

Bennis’ idea is this: You need management. True. Managers budget, organize, react to situations and solve problems. They ensure things get done, monitor the day-to-day, and enforce the rules. They are the tactical part of your business. You probably do a fair amount of managing things now. But just like everyone else, you only have 24-hours in a day. So some management tasks can and should be delegated, hired, or outsourced.

Bennis, who was cited by Global Gurus International as one of the top 30 leadership experts in the world, defines leadership differently. Leaders establish direction, align people, and motivate and inspire to *prevent* problems. Like it or not, *everything* in your business – good and bad – ties back to the leader. Unless and until you grow leaders inside your company, the leader is most likely you.

5 Ways To Differentiate A Leader From A Manager

Are you more of a leader or manager? Here are 5 leadership traits adapted from two of Bennis’ books, *On Becoming A Leader* and *Learning to Lead*, to help you decide...

- 1) **Managers set standards for performance; a leader sets a benchmark for excellence.** Do you dictate a status quo or do you paint a picture of what the “ideal” is? Do you merely communicate what’s “acceptable” or do you encourage “exceptional”?
- 2) **Managers want employee compliance; leaders seek employees’ commitment.** Let’s say you decide to streamline a process. To do so, you purchase new software. Do you just provide training on how to use the software or do you work on communicating the reasons why you’re doing it so employees willingly and happily dive into training?



Get More Free Tips, Tools, and Services at Our Website: www.XPERTECHS.com

Shiny New Gadget of the Month



The HoodPC

It's a hat. For your laptop. If you've ever tried to work outside on a bright sunny day, you know there is one factor that makes it nearly impossible to see the screen – the glare.

Try as you might to angle or maneuver your laptop, you just can't see the darn thing when the sun is beating down on it.

The solution? The HoodPC. For under \$40, this little laptop hood is the solution. It blocks the sun's glare so you can easily view your laptop screen, even when outdoors. Here's how it works...

Right out of the bag, the HoodPC pops into shape and fits a 16" laptop. With the help of 2 sets of snaps, you can secure the HoodPC to fit either a 15" or a 14" laptop as well.

Spring tension in the HoodPC keeps it in place. When you're done, the HoodPC folds flat in a few seconds. Tuck it back into its convenient travel case – and that's it.

Think your laptop will look silly with a hat on? Maybe. But if it means you get to enjoy the great outdoors while taking care of business ... who cares?

More information about the HoodPC can be found at www.hoodmanusa.com

3) **Managers have subordinates over whom they have formal authority; leaders have followers who are inspired to perform at their best.** Leaders recognize that continual improvement in ALL aspects of their business is critical to their success.

4) **Managers try to avoid risks or minimize them; a leader looks for opportunities.** Maybe it's an investment in a new technology, or a decision to expand your business. Whatever the case, managers will tell you why it won't work. Leaders will tell you why it can.

5) **Managers enforce rules and policies; leaders challenge red tape and bureaucracy when necessary.** Sure, you should have and enforce an acceptable use policy for your computers. But if any of your policies prevent someone from helping a customer or generating sales, put on your leadership hat and throw that rule away.

One Management Task You Can Take Off Your Plate

Your computer network, phone system, software and all things I.T. can suck up your time and resources and be a royal pain – IF all you do is manage it. Checking backups, maintaining critical patches on the computers, updating anti-virus software and fire-wall protection, and dealing with issues that arise; these are all management tasks that can be outsourced.

As a leader, you can deal with I.T. differently. You look for opportunities to improve your company with technology, you use it as a way to help propel the vision for your company, you deploy it to reach your goals. Then you hire someone to handle the rest..

FREE Business Advisory Guide:

16 Critical Questions Every Small Business Owner Must Ask Before Hiring Any IT Company

Ready to offload the management of your computers and network? Do not hire ANY computer consulting company until you read this. You'll discover:

- How to avoid the single most expensive mistake most business owners make when hiring an IT company
- The surprising reason most small businesses fall victim to sub-standard support
- An easy way to help you find the right IT expert for you

Download Your FREE Copy Now:

www.xpertechs.com/freereport

Ask the xpert

Each month, our technology experts will answer questions submitted by you—our readers! **This month we will troubleshoot wireless connectivity and shortcuts to help you work faster in Windows!**

Q: I cannot connect to the internet or Wi-Fi access point from my laptop. What is wrong?

A: Believe it or not this is a common (and usually easy) issue to diagnose ...

For the rest of the answer, and to submit a question that would be perfect for one of our engineers to answer, visit:

www.xpertechs.com/askthexpert



Three elements of our XPERTECHS project Approach to 'Make it Right':

- **Overall Assessment of Business Needs and Current Technology Environment:** Review and understand our client's business requirements. Analyze and proactively address existing issues and problems before they escalate.
- **Utilize the Best Tools and Technology:** Application of proven technology and reliable tools to deliver the highest quality solution. Incorporating the best technology for our client's long term success.
- **Exceed the Minimum Requirement:** Our technology services and expertise are delivered to a higher technical standard than the 'minimum code'. When implementing and delivering solutions to our clients only the best infrastructure is applied.

From Mike, the Project Manager ...

Project Quality: 'Make it Right'

Greetings from the XPERTECHS Project Management Office. As a new segment to our monthly correspondence the X-PMO will focus on how you, the business owner, manager, and technology user can drive and maximize the value and success of your projects.

Many organizations and small businesses we serve have faced (at one point or another) the aftershocks of a poor quality install, upgrade, or other technology project. If you are one of these businesses please keep reading – If you have not faced such issues – keep reading to stay that way! This month the focus is on our approach for ensuring your business maximizes the quality of its technology.

Our approach: 'Make it Right'. This unofficial slogan of our XPERTECHS team is also a popular phrase and subtitle for HGTV's *Holmes on Homes: Make it Right*. This show stories Mike Holmes (clad in overalls and a crew cut), the expert contractor and business owner of Homes Construction, Inc. as he helps ordinary homeowners with their very troubled remodeling projects. Episodes begin as Holmes inspects a potential job site and discusses with a homeowner the troubles they have. Often the homeowner has already spent tens of thousands of dollars on a project or repair which is incomplete, leaking, or worse. The show continues on to detail Mike's process to 'Make it Right' as he identifies areas where quality workmanship could have prevented future issues.

The "Make it Right – the first time" mantra essentially creates a project or service atmosphere where a solution does not settle for what the Holmes on Homes construction crew calls "minimum code" or 'minimum allowed by law to get the job done'. To deliver on this approach it is necessary to identify and resolve issues as they are discovered and not 'plaster' over them. Fixing underlying problems ensures a strong foundation and quality end result. As a small business this requires a partner with dedicated resources and expertise to identify and solve issues proactively. At XPERTECHS we meet this commitment by looking at each solution both strategically with a client's business needs and physically from the ground up to ensure *all* areas are addressed (*see left for our three key elements*).

Lastly, as each Holmes on Homes episode ends, the crew and homeowner review the results of a quality job. Recalling the issues encountered, the time invested, and money spent it is clear in the end that there is no substitute for doing it right the first time. Technology can provide a competitive advantage and great value to your business – if you 'Make it Right'.

Does your technology solution need repair? When it comes to our clients technology we are dedicated to 'Making it Right.' If your company is considering or planning a technology project or investment, contact our dedicated project management desk at PROJECT@XPERTECHS.COM

5 Ways To Keep Your Laptop Running – Without Plugging It In

On the road, in the airport, at a client's site, or simply at home on the couch. These are places you can't – or don't want to – plug your laptop in. Want to keep your laptop running as long as possible without searching for an outlet? Here are 5 tips to help:

1) Keep your screen dim. A laptop's backlight requires a lot of power. Reducing the brightness conserves battery life.

2) Turn off unused hardware. Your Bluetooth and your Wi-Fi receiver can both be turned off if not in use. Unplug your external mouse or other device. And mute the PC's sound system. Not only will it save power, it avoids annoying everyone else around you.

3) Don't multitask. Run as few programs as you can get away with. Stick to one application (word processor, browser, or whatever) if possible. (If online keep your antivirus and firewall on in the background.)

4) Avoid multimedia. Save your photo editing and video watching for when have AC power. These tasks suck up immense battery life. To listen to music, use your iPod (or similar device).

5) Sleep, standby or hibernate. Sleep mode (a.k.a. "standby" in XP) keeps your PC on. It still uses power, just less than normal. Hibernate uses no power initially, but a lot of battery life to start back up.

6) Use extended capacity battery. To find out if your laptop has an extended capacity battery, or for pricing information, call us at (410) 884-0225.

Poor Patching Is The #1 Security Threat For Business PCs

According to Symantec's 2009 security review, the biggest single threat to computer security is a user's failure to apply new security patches when they become available. A "patch" is simply a software fix to a known security bug in a software program. Once a vulnerability is discovered, software vendors scramble to develop a patch to prevent hackers from using this to access PCs – but their release of a patch is also a "go" sign for hackers who then scramble to write viruses designed to exploit PC users who haven't gotten around to patching or updating their system.

As you might expect, online criminal opportunism is at an all-time high. One well-written virus can spread and attack millions of PCs in minutes, giving these cyber criminals access and control over your PC - often without YOU ever realizing it until it's too late. And since most of us are storing and using our PCs for banking, making purchases, and storing other sensitive information, you're more vulnerable than ever.

The Two Most Common Applications Attacked

Surprisingly, PDF-based download exploits rose to account for 49 percent of online attacks. Internet Explorer was the second most attacked application, accounting for 18 percent of web-based attacks. Incredibly, the Internet Explorer vulnerability in question is the Microsoft Internet Explorer ADODB. Stream Object File Installation Weakness that first came to the world's attention in *August 2003*, and was patched the following July – and that means that a whole lot of people AREN'T patching their computer regularly.

Your PC Isn't A Toaster

The main reason systems get attacked is because too many people treat their computer like an appliance: they turn it on and conduct ZERO maintenance. While it's important for everyone to keep their network secure, it goes double for you as a business owner because the costs of restoring a compromised network escalate quickly when compounded with corrupt data, downtime and possibly the embarrassment of notifying your clients their information was compromised by a hacker under YOUR watch. If you are currently an **XperCARE** customer, you have nothing to worry about. But if you're NOT on this plan and you don't have someone updating your firewall and security settings DAILY, it's only a matter of time before your system gets compromised.

SOLUTION: Let Us Protect Your Business

For more information on how you can completely offload the worry of maintaining your network to a true team of professionals, call us today. We have various plans for all budgets and needs: (410) 884-0225

