

DOWNTIME ASSESSMENT

Right now is a good time to take a step back and figure out what you can fix, enhance, or overhaul to make your business run more smoothly. As you look across the major divisions of your company, ask yourself these questions:

PRODUCT

- Do we need to make changes to current products?
- Can we expand or contract offerings?
- Are we set up to make anything that might help fight the coronavirus pandemic?

CUSTOMERS

- Are their needs changing?
- How can we better serve them?
- What do our customers/clients need to hear from us right now, during the current crisis?
- Are we as responsive to customers/clients as we need to be in this challenging time?

EMPLOYEES

- Do we have the right people on the bus?
- Are they in the right seats?
- Do our evaluations truly reflect employees' performance? If not, what is the issue? Do we need to move to a better evaluation tool? Do leaders need to do better at holding people accountable?
- Is there anyone who needs to improve performance or even be moved out of the organization?
- How effective are our hiring and onboarding practices?

MARKETING

- Are our materials and messaging up to date? Do they truly reflect what we do? Look closely at each area:
 - Website
 - Social media
 - Email marketing
 - Traditional advertising
 - Publicity
 - Print (catalogs, direct mail, etc.)
- Do we need to increase our marketing? (This is counterintuitive in tough times but makes good sense when you consider being well positioned for the economic comeback.)
- Are our marketing partners truly meeting our needs, or is it time to explore other options?

TECHNOLOGY

- What needs upgrading?
- Are our systems outdated?
- Do we have the right security measures in place?

FINANCIALS

- Where are we most profitable? How can we maximize this area?
- Check expenses. Are there things we pay for we no longer need?
- Check loan agreements, credit cards, banking arrangements. Do they make sense?

OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS

- Evaluate the organization from top to bottom. Make a list of everyone we utilize. Does it make sense to bring some of that work in-house?
- Should we outsource some of the work we are currently doing in-house to outside consultants? (marketing, HR, accounting, etc.)
- Do our existing relationships with consultants still make sense?

FACILITIES

- What needs fixing or freshening up?
- Should we reconfigure offices?
- Are we even in the right workspace? [For example, could we downsize now that we're starting to see how some of our employees can work from home?]

TRAINING

- How can we effectively use this time to get our training up to date?
- What holes do we have in terms of skills?
- Do we do a good job of training middle managers and other leaders?
- What about “soft skills” like communication, collaboration, teamwork, and problem-solving?

SUPPLIERS

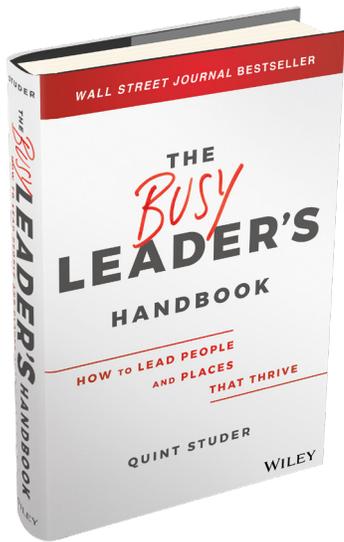
- Are suppliers truly meeting our needs?
- Are there better options?
- Do we have good relationships with our suppliers?

DISTRIBUTION

- Are we smart about this?
- Do the agreements we have in place work best for where we are right now?
- Do our shipping choices make sense?

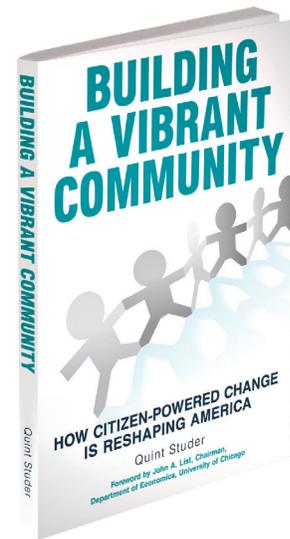
STRATEGY

- Where is the puck going and how can we meet it there? [We may not know for sure, but we can look at best-case scenarios and make some judgment calls.]



***The Busy Leader's Handbook:
How to Lead People and Places
That Thrive***

[Wiley, 2019, ISBN: 978-1-119-57664-8, \$28.00] is available at bookstores nationwide, and at Amazon.com and other online booksellers.



***Building a Vibrant Community:
How Citizen-Powered Change Is
Reshaping America***

[Be the Bulb Publishing, 2018, ISBN: 978-0-998-13111-5, \$24.95] is available at bookstores nationwide, and at Amazon.com and other online booksellers.



Quint Studer is the author of *Wall Street Journal* bestseller *The Busy Leader's Handbook* and a lifelong businessman, entrepreneur, and student of leadership. He not only teaches it; he has done it. He has worked with individuals at all levels and across a variety of industries to help them become better leaders and create high-performing organizations. He seeks always to simplify high-impact leader behaviors and tactics for others.

Quint has a great love for teaching his insights in books and has authored nine of them in addition to *The Busy Leader's Handbook*. His book *Results That Last* also made the *Wall Street Journal* bestseller list. *Building a Vibrant Community*, published in 2018, is a blueprint for communities seeking to revitalize themselves.

Quint is the founder of Vibrant Community Partners and Pensacola's Studer Community Institute. He currently serves as Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the University of West Florida, Executive-in-Residence at George Washington University, and Lecturer at Cornell University.

To learn more, please visit thebusyleadershandbook.com, vibrantcommunityblueprint.com, and studeri.org.

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