

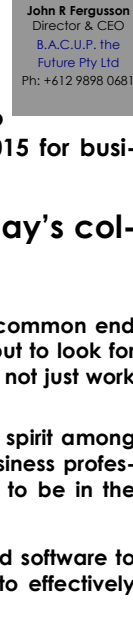


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Executives, Are You Prepared For 2015 & Beyond!
Today, Most Businesses Are Chasing a World in Rapid Change
Do You Know How to Take Advantage?

John R Fergusson

In this issue I am running a kind of personal executive checklist for those who want to be sure they are ready for the challenging changes coming in 2015 for businesses locally and abroad.

1. Why there is no place for the "Lone CEO Ranger" in today's collaborative environment!

Collaboration requires of you to work together with the rest of your team towards a common end goal. You probably have to therefore be not to operate as a "Lone CEO Ranger", but to look forward to accomplish business success, and doing so collaboratively. But why can you not just work alone, and still be successful?

The fact of the matter is that a collaborative work environment fosters a cooperative spirit among individuals within the same organisation. This in turn gives birth to a new breed of business professionals, known as e-professionals where they get to work together without needing to be in the same geographical vicinity.

Executive coaching in Sydney experts make use of specially designed processes and software to help support various project management functions. This would include the ability to effectively take care of various assignments, share work processes, and manage given timelines.

In addition, achieving a positive final outcome of working together collaboratively, requires putting together the necessary documentation and project plans as well as having said deliverables and deadlines in place.

"People don't resist change. They resist being changed!"
— Peter Senge

It can be difficult to make a success of your business if an individual within your company does not cooperate. In part, this could be the key reason why some would prefer to be the "Lone CEO Ranger". How do you go about creating the perfect collaborative working environment?

One way is to make sure that all involved are accountable for their actions or non-actions. Bringing onboard executive coaching in Sydney specialists might be all you need to get certain individuals to cooperate and make things work. This will ensure that teams will work together towards achieving what is referred to as a shared goal. It will be recursive process where one or more organisations club together in making shared goals a reality.

Individuals within the organisation can draw from the expertise of others who would be knowledgeable in key aspects that will ensure the continued existence of the business. Something that is not possible when running an organisation as a "Lone CEO Ranger".

Besides, the team would have a deep desire that will propel them towards achieving the same common goal. What is more, they will share their knowledge and find ways to make things work to the overall benefit of the said organisation. Teams have the ability to obtain better overall recognition, access to more resources, and experience greater rewards than what would be possible when going it alone.

After all, collaboration between teams fosters better communication within your organisation, and even the supply chain. It is sure is an effective way of coordinating different ideas coming from various individuals who happen to specialise in a given area. Bringing executive coaches onboard to make this happen proves to be the best way forward in today's collaborative environment. This is a powerful way to strive towards increased productivity and significantly boost everyone's morale, which includes their resilience to all kinds of challenges.

In summary it can be said that collaboration is one of five co-working core values; openness, collaboration, sustainability, accessibility and community. It is much easier to share documents on places like SharePoint where everyone gets to work together on projects and proposals in real time from virtually anywhere.

"Unless you are prepared to give up something valuable you will never be able to truly change at all, because you'll be forever in the control of things you can't give up."
— Andy Law

2. What are the differences of a pioneer, a leader, a follower, a manager, a worker in today's business world and who needs the most help? You may be very surprised!

What comes to mind when you hear the term "pioneer"? It may or may not come as a surprise to learn that they are the first ones to open up new ideas or thought processes and blaze new trails for others to follow. On the other hand a follower is someone who looks up to either a leader or manager to show them which way they should go, and what needs to be done. Workers would just do what they are commissioned to do, and follow a set job description or system.

The main surprise for all would be the key differences between a manager and a leader as they are often the ones who you should pay close attention to.

You may want to laugh if you hear us say that some managers are often referred to as a babysitter who has been given a title. The manager may have been an ex employee of the same firm, or they may have come into the company as an outsider. Whatever the case may be, certain people within the organisation may want to quit as they do not think that the new manager is fit enough to be one, and certainly do not deserve the title.

On the other side of the scale, managers are often glorified frontline workers who get paid a little more than the average subordinate while having to take the brunt of the blame for any mistakes or problems. They are seen as potential leaders! This is the new way of thinking that executive coaching in Sydney specialists would like to bring to the plate and incorporate into the minds of business leaders.

Leaders on the other hand are looked up to in more ways than one. They would utilise effective management skills and be the ones who would have a higher ranking in the workplace, have more responsibilities as well as better job titles with the prospect of a prosperous long term career.

Unlike most would think, leaders and managers are not the same. Managers who are effective at what they do would:

- Schedule and plan
- Hire people, develop their skills, and fire where needed
- Direct various operations
- Control costs and ensure production runs smoothly
- Maximize work output for the company they are in
- Act as a/the perfect role model by being involved in production work themselves

On the other hand, leaders would think more about the future of the company. Then again, managers tend to follow manuals where leaders would go with their own innovation and vision. Managers are often work horses, while leaders tend to think and are creative and will be prepared and equip themselves to go where no one has gone before, often pioneering.

B.A.C.U.P. your Future...

Your future is about to change in 2015! R U 2?

B.A.C.U.P. the Future is here to confront the holy grail of your company and your boardroom secret business. You can only be successful in a world that you can control, and that, you must do within yourself before you will be able to do it without. Otherwise you will not know the pathway and will wander all over the place relying on experts, your board, spouse, partner, guesswork, luck and other fictitious unintelligent nonsense – the panacea of the masses. The right help is here – now! Your future depends on insight and foresight's applied future knowledge. Learn it now!

3. When you are not doing well you need good friends & colleagues – Right! Wrong – You need someone to tell you the truth like an Executive Coach.

As we are only human, we all try to avoid conflict and remove a sense of awkwardness by not telling the truth when our friends ask us for our honest opinion. This is especially the case if you are not doing well in your business and prompt your good friends/colleagues on their opinion as to what you are doing wrong.

On the other hand, someone like your doctor, or in other instances, executive business coaches, will tell it like it is. Your best bet would be to get a better understanding right from the word go as to where you are going wrong. Even though it may prove to be unpleasant at times, you would be better off in the long run. A little discomfort now will certainly save you from a whole lot of discomfort later on.

While your closest friends/colleagues tend to sugar coat bad news by telling you what you want to hear, outsiders like executive coaching in Sydney specialists will tell you nothing but the truth. Listen to what these professionals tell you, and ask relevant questions.

Why You Should Not Ask Good Friends or Colleagues for 'Their Candid Opinion'

Let us see why it is not such a good idea to ask good friends/colleagues for their honest opinion regarding your business and your future:

- Friends do not want to offend you whenever possible and they are often emotionally involved. As they may see that you are already very worried and feel hurt, they do not want to cause you even further pain, by telling you the cold hard facts.
- Another key factor often overlooked is that your friends do not have experience in business related matters, and would not know where to begin to tell you what is needed to make the necessary changes. Even if they were in the same situation you are in, would they be able to get it right?

With executive coaching specialists, you know that you are in capable hands and that you will be offered a candid opinion. No offense intended, but what is the use of going to your friends who may prove to be incompetent and taking a wild guess as to what is actually wrong.

Whenever you are at a crossroad with your business, in desperate need of help, going with an expert would be in your best interest. Executive coaching in Sydney specialists will assist you in making the right decision so your business can soon move into a more productive stage. Besides, who knows what waits for you around the corner? It is only through consulting with professional business coaches and consultants that you are more likely to succeed.

4. Why it is considered "smart" to consult outside sources like Executive Coaches when your market is weak

You may have considered going with reputable outside sources to help turn your business around while the market is weak. If that is the case, then we want to congratulate you for steering in the right direction. Professionals deal with complaints coming from employees and clients. This is the new way of thinking that executive coaching in Sydney specialists would like to bring to the plate and incorporate into the minds of business leaders.

You are currently this way doing through taking you on a 6 month tailored made coaching programme to both challenge and support you as business leader.

The reasons why it is considered to be a smart move are as follows:

- Executive coaches in Sydney are fully qualified and highly experienced
- You will benefit from a one-on-one business coaching where nothing is left to chance
- The CEO of the coaching firm is equipped with a solid entrepreneurial business experience, and knows what works and what doesn't.
- You and your team are fully supported through various on site sessions while you are actively running your business.
- Various meetings are conducted where the executive coaches would give their candid input with regards to your company's strategic goals.
- The content of your business plans, goals and aspirations remain one hundred percent confidential.
- Recommendations are given on which books, additional courses and activities you should embark on to further improve your success as a business owner.
- Various assessments are given to help you to learn more about which leadership style and values would be best to ensure business success.
- You are provided with the necessary tools needed to ensure you lead your team effectively, which will demonstrate how you should go about to inspire, set direction, and communicate your various thought processes.
- Executive coaching specialists will assist you to align your company's values, and in creating a work-life balance

"Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." John F. Kennedy

Honest discussions will be held with you to determine what is standing in your way of realising certain success in markets that are weak. The root cause will therefore be uncovered.

All in all, utilising the expertise of outside sources such as Executive Coaching in Sydney specialists is considered as a smart way to adapt to new ways of doing business.

They will help you establish important criteria to ensure business success in a weak market such as:

1. What your business goals are, and how to go about to accomplish your goals within a short time period.
2. Assist you and your team do a reality check to see where you are currently within the competitive business environment, and what is still needed to reach your goals.
3. Activities that you think will fill the gaps to help you come out strong

And a whole lot more...

"To Lose Track of Time is a State of Distraction - Don't Waste Time Looking for the Lost Track - Forge a New One!"

©John R Fergusson
More Information **"Don't Cheat Your Future"**

Executive consultants discovered what works and what doesn't, and they have the ability to guide you as business owner to realize your SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely) goals.

Making use of their expertise is an excellent way to make progress towards a new way of doing business. Professional coaching consultants will put a marker in place to assist you in measuring your progress along the way. Soon enough, you will learn as to what is needed to succeed during our turbulent times.

5. How to know when your board and executive team need to be changed

You cannot hope to change your organisational culture if you have no idea where you want to see yourselves within the next year or two, or what particular elements within your company need to change. It is like the Australian national airline (Qantas) who finally decided in 2014 it was time for change, and created a new look where not just the uniforms were given a makeover, but it also marked the beginning of a new chapter where everyone, both in the air and on the ground, will work together as one.

There is certainly no need to wait until "junk status", where your company becomes obsolete due to sticking to tried and tested ways from the past, only to realise that it is now almost too late. It is time you take a long hard look at what works for you and what works against you. Instead of spending too much time trying to prove who is right, the time can be used to challenge yourselves in finding different ways of doing things.

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go." T.S. Eliot

A lot of time may be spent on building your team by working with certain members of the team on an adhoc basis, but it does not get you anywhere in terms of discovering better, more improved methods that would change the way your business operates forever, and for the overall welfare of everyone involved.

What if various team members come to a set decision, but end up waiting on Moody's (Managing Director decision makers) giving go ahead for their move? A forward leaning plan? This kind of attitude will only hamper the organisation's efforts to move towards certain success that they so rightly deserve.

Often times, it is so much harder for organisations that are already established to unlearn their old ways and behaviours before they get to accept new ones. If this is the kind of behaviour you see being displayed within your company, then you know it is time for change.

The most important criteria's to bring about change within an organisation would be training and executive coaching.

Lets take a look at each one in turn:

- Executive coaching - It is imperative that executives within a company need to be shown what is needed to lead proposed changes, which often starts out with altering their own behaviour. What is more, they need to support the change one hundred percent, and believe that it is really needed.
- Training - Individuals within the organisation must be trained so they get a full understanding of what exactly is expected of them in the process. They need to know how to practice the new behaviours once defined. In this regard, training is extremely useful as it demonstrates how to successfully apply new behaviours.

In addition, keeping everyone informed about the proposed changes will ensure they are fully committed, which in turn will lead to successful change.

It might be an idea to enlist the services of executive coaching in Sydney specialists who will demonstrate how you can change the structure of your organisation in order to support as well as accomplish your business goals. Even though it would require time, proper planning, commitment and a willingness to execute plans made, it can be done.

Most people become too comfortable with the way things have been. It is imperative to take the time to do a reality check to see where you are currently within the competitive business environment, and what is still needed to reach your goals.

"A man would do nothing if he waited until he could do it so well that no one would find fault with what he has done." British Preacher (1801-1890)

6. Executive Coaching is not an option in this current business world – it's an imperative.

A prominent business owner found a way to turn things around for his company. He went to the trouble of enlisting the services of executive coaching and consulting specialists who helped him design a coaching program that he got buy into. The results were in little as a few weeks. The coaching team managed to pull it all together in just one day. In the morning they spent the time planning the way forward, and in the afternoon they designed the action plan and outlined the various steps that had to be taken. The very next day, the first client signed up.

On looking back, the business owner had a tinge of sadness as he remembered how hard it was in the past to even beg to think of signing up any clients. It was a huge learning curve, and he kept pondering whether it was worth pursuing his business interests.

So, getting a 14 new clients with the help of an expert coaching team boosted his confidence tremendously. He got to see that is no longer an option, making use of outside help, but a necessity. Previously, time was spent building a list of prospects through using newsletters, workshops, and networking with others. Needless to say, it was a slow process which landed him a small amount of clients. It was only once the coaching program was used, that his business started to really grow.

Part of the thinking process that executive coaching specialists in Sydney get you involved in would include:

- Business owners need to analyze where they intend going with their business, and how they will get there. In addition, it should be very clear what their role would be. The more clarity as to where you are heading with your business, the better the end result would be.
- Can you clearly describe what you would do with their clients once they signed up? After all, a leader does what it takes to make things happen. It is a case of following through on what you started and riding over any perceived obstacles to help you get there. Persistence is key! While you are at it, executive coaching specialists advise that you should always have compassion for others and not go all out to gain at the expense of your customers.

The fact that coaching is not just something that you should regard as optional, but a definite need, can be illustrated by what executive coaching specialists in Sydney help you accomplish with your business in the long run. For instance, they assist in helping you take stock of what is wrong in your business currently, and help you find ways to overcome your nagging frustrations and obstacles that are preventing you from realising the success you could be having.

In essence, your eyes will open so you get to see what you really want to achieve on both a personal and professional level. It is imperative to succeed in the current company if you want your business to survive and grow in leaps and bounds. Executive business coaching and consulting is the tool that would assist in exploring your various frustrations, and coming up with definite solutions for solving you what should be doing to make it in the current business world.

Besides, business owners have an urgent need to master certain skills to allow them to take their business to a whole new level in our dynamic business world.

"The dangers of life are infinite, and among them is safety."
Goethe

7. A wise and compelling executive coach is both your immediate "adversary" and "ally"!

Working with a wise and compelling executive coach is definitely in your best interest as they will assist you to produce the change and results you are after, in your life, business, and relationships. Not only will this deepen your learning and enhance the quality of your life, but it will also improve the performance of your business, or any other area in need of improvement.

What is more, coaching serves to accelerate your progress through providing you with a better sense of focus on an area that is the most important in your life. In addition, a wise coach should not just be your ally, but also be your greatest adversary in that they need to tell you in no uncertain terms what needs to be done to pull you out of your current predicament. This way you get to recognise what really matters, and how to quickly make an about turn with regards to your current bad habits.

If your current executive coach does not have the guts to tell you what you do not want to hear, then they should be fired!

Executive coaching in Sydney specialists are the kind of business coaches who do not hold back from telling you the way it is. As a matter of fact, they do not just coach parts of your business, but the whole of it. This type of coaching, where both the good and the bad is candidly revealed, requires the kind of executive coach who does not just sport the necessary expertise and credentials needed, but has the ability to establish a personal rapport with their client, which is crucial to the survival of your business. For this reason, executive coaching in Sydney offer you a wide array of different approaches and styles.

If you are working with a wise business coach that has it within themselves to offer critique when needed, then you can be absolutely sure that whatever they promise you will really unfold.

In turn, business owners should guard against being difficult when working with coaches whom they view as an adversary. It is human nature to react in a defensive way and even pull out as you feel you do not want to face harmful truths. Just like no one likes being criticised for too long when starting to feel uncomfortable, the same is true when it comes to getting drilled by your coach for not doing things a certain way.

A good coach will do what it takes to keep you on track, and not allow you to take a half-hearted approach to contributing to the future success of your business where you need to be persistent and follow through on the advice and action plans given.

Soon enough, you will accept the wise and compelling coach as an expert in their field and show them the necessary admiration and respect they so rightfully deserve as they did not hold back from telling you the truth, whether good or bad.

Contact me at: reception@fcla.com.au

Future Class Leadership Academy at B.A.C.U.P. the Future Pty Ltd Ph: 02 9898 0681

"No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself or get all the credit for doing it."
Andrew Carnegie

In this section:

Taking real care of your business next year!

► 2015 ◀

The Most Important Lessons You Can Learn From The Sony Hack

Adam Levin
Former Director New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs; Chairman of Credit.com and Identity Theft 911

Angelina Jolie [may have been all thorns](#) when she ran into Sony's Amy Pascal last week after the hacker group Guardians of Peace leaked the co-chair's email rant about the *Maleficent* star, but while the gossip mill grinds and the spin doctors do their best to stop the bleeding at the company, the real lesson here revolves around a question of corporate culture.

It is important not to underestimate what happened. While I doubt the hack could sink Sony, it's not the sort of thing that makes for smooth sailing. The idea that such a thing could happen at a company with so much to lose beggars the imagination. The failure is beyond epic, a big plot twist with a third act that's yet to be written, but one that might include a boardroom bloodbath. And it is beginning to seem like that was the intent of the perpetrators.

This was an enterprise-level disaster. So many things that had gone wrong to turn this fortnight of the living dead news item into the Christmas gift of keeps on giving to the world of entertainment news.

The amount of information snatched is dumbfounding. Scripts were leaked, heretofore unreleased movies found their way to pirate sites, the Social Security numbers and details regarding compensation of Sylvester Stallone, Brad Pitt and other celebrities were let loose online, the [Social Security numbers](#) of 47,000 current and former Sony employees were publicly posted and thousands of controversial emails were unearthed. The financial damage could fall into nine figures -- and if the attack was not launched by weapons-grade hackers (or even if it was) the mess leaves a lot of serious questions regarding the future of doing business in the age of the super hack. Anyone who runs a business -- whether it's a mom-and-pop shop or a multinational behemoth like Sony -- needs to pay close attention to what's happened here, and begin to take data security seriously.

Though even the FBI has said that few companies -- as few as 10 percent -- could have prevented an attack like the one that targeted Sony, one has to wonder what would have happened were there better data security protocols in place. Companies need to remember that claiming helplessness in the face of an unprecedented event is a slippery slope. This was an enterprise-level problem. The teachable moment here is that security has to be practiced at that level and must be woven into the very fabric of daily life at the office; it has to be part of an enterprise's corporate culture. A good top-down corporate culture may have helped mitigate many of the problems that the company now faces.

1. Modelling Corporate Culture

Any time a hack is perpetrated, corporate leaders will wind up in the spotlight, whether their personal emails were leaked or not. Company leaders in general, however, must learn to demonstrate a level of sophistication, nuance, sensitivity and respect when communicating internally, especially when those communications involve high-profile people -- like celebrity actors, for example.

Gossip and backbiting are all too common in corporate America's electronic communications, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to correct that. One might even argue that the lack of respect exhibited in emails is often manifested elsewhere in companies -- specifically in the lackadaisical attitudes toward data security that allowed the personally identifiable information of both [employ-](#) [ees](#) [and](#) [talents](#) [to](#) [be](#) [stolen](#).

One take-away from the Sony hack is that there's no guarantee your email won't at some point be leaked. To be sure, few companies put up the Kling likes like Sony would come out looking bleak. Is it unreasonable to ask for spousal behaviour throughout your organization? Of course it is. Given the reality, however, it's wise to assume you'll eventually be hacked and be shown for what you are. So be good... or, at the very least consider picking up the phone if you have something to say that you wouldn't want to be broadcast on the evening news.

2. Emphasizing Ownership

In the case of Sony, films were stolen, as were a lot of other assets, including scripts, budgets and even contract negotiations. How can this be prevented? The first step for companies is to truly take ownership of their assets. Ownership is a state of mind that requires upkeep and vigilance to protect what's yours. Ownership creates security. Ultimately, this starts with corporate leadership, since fostering a sense of ownership among employees is a trickle-down process.

3. Staying Shipshape

A strong corporate culture is a work in progress, constantly evolving. It stays ahead of the curve as a result of clear leadership and a culture where employees feel invested in their work, i.e., they take ownership of the tasks assigned to them. Nothing like the Sony hack -- where the enemy is well-armed, fully weaponized and in war mode -- may not be avoidable, but a state of readiness predicated by a healthy corporate culture that puts security first is the only way such an attack can be properly contained and managed.

Whether North Korea (or a proxy) attacked Sony Pictures to stop the release of *The Interview* or if some disgruntled ex-employee turned latter-day Lex Luthor has an ax to grind with Michael Lynton, the reality that any company -- whether it's the size of Sony Pictures or a local wedding videographer -- can be put out of commission in such a spectacular and specific way is something no one can ignore. In the same way the Target breach changed the way Americans viewed [identity theft](#), the Sony hack will forever alter the digital landscape of corporate America.

This reinforces the big lesson that's been around since the days of Peter Drucker: Culture eats strategy for breakfast.

5 Things Your SEO Strategy Needs to Focus on Entering 2015

Jonathan Long
Founder and CEO, Market Domination Media

Yes, it is that time of the year again when everyone starts to predict what SEO will look like in the coming year. Google's algorithm is constantly changing. There are [public updates](#) as well as refreshes and tweaks that occur on a regular basis. Rather than throwing out theories or predictions, I want to discuss five things that you should already be focusing on as we enter 2015.

1. ROI Should be the Metric You Track, Not Keyword Rankings

Determining whether or not an SEO effort is successful based on keyword positions is completely reckless. Ranking reports that show your website is ranking high for a bunch of keywords looks great but it doesn't always translate to leads, sales and revenue. In fact, some SEO companies will target low competition, virtually useless keywords, just so they can tell you that you are ranking #1 on Google.

As a business owner, which statement would you want to hear from your SEO company?

- "Great news! Your website is number one on Google for the keyword 'tree widget information' but we don't know if it has produced any revenue. Buy, hey congrats - you are number one! Woo hoo!"
- "Last month's infographic was responsible for earning 72 inbound links and it also pulled in 67 leads, 18 sales and 17,360 in revenue."

Is a fancy keyword ranking report more beneficial or knowing what your return on investment was? If you aren't measuring the success of your SEO effort in terms of ROI now is the time to start.

2. Earning Links Instead of Building Them

Inbound links are going to remain the biggest signal, or vote of confidence in terms of authority and trust, that Google uses in their algorithm. This isn't going to change. Not in 2015 and probably not in the years to come.

For the past couple of years the focus has turned to building high quality links. Well, this has evolved into a hybrid SEO-Public Relations approach, and watch for more companies to [combine their SEO strategy with a more traditional PR approach](#) moving forward.

Earning a single link on a high quality relevant website is valuable for multiple reasons including SEO, attracting referral traffic and brand exposure. Look for traditional PR and SEO to work hand-in-hand in 2015.

3. Optimize for Mobile Traffic

Back in 2012, ComScore predicted that [mobile traffic would exceed desktop traffic](#) in 2014, and they were correct. You can take a look at [this infographic](#) for more information from that report. Google loves responsive websites and they make it pretty clear that they feel the best user experience is achieved via a responsive design. There is now a "mobile-friendly" notation next to websites in the mobile search results that Google deems to be mobile friendly. Bing has also made it public that they prefer a single responsive URL. Is your website mobile friendly? Run it through [Google's Mobile-Friendly Test](#) to quickly find out.

4. Pay Attention to the Red Headed Stepchildren Yahoo, Bing and DuckDuckGo

Every year the million-dollar question is, "Can anyone step up and compete with Google and capture a larger percentage of the search volume?" Will this happen in 2015? While Google will remain top dog, there have been some recent events that signal that some of the other search engines could capture a bit more of that share in the coming year.

[Firefox ended their deal with Google](#), and Yahoo is now the default search engine for the browser. Google's deal also ends with Safari in 2015, and reports have both Bing and Yahoo trying to link that deal. The option to switch default browsers in iOS 8 and OS X from Google to DuckDuckGo also exists. You need to have visibility across all search engines since options other than Google are becoming available.

5. Smarter More Defined Social Media Presence

Years ago social media was simply a platform to share content, so businesses would sign up for every social platform available. It is now a very powerful marketing channel and customer service channel. Your social audience expects you to engage with them on a more personal level.