

QUICK PRINTING

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Oh, The Thing You Can Do!

Staff Writers

Determine one thing you personally can do the next few months that will have a major impact, and devote your energy and attention to ensuring its complete success.

You've known Ted's work since your childhood, though you may not know about Ted. Born in Massachusetts, he studied at Dartmouth and Oxford, and spent 15 years in advertising before venturing into films. Ted also wrote a book, which seemed like a good idea, except to the 27 publishers who rejected it. Someone finally accepted it, so he wrote more books, one of which you've most likely read...several times.

Here's an excerpt you may recall:

I sat there with Sally.
We sat there, we two.
And I said, " How I wish
We had something to do."

If that doesn't ring a bell, consider this:

You don't know him as Ted.
That's the name he did loose,
When he took up the pen
And became Dr. Seuss.

Theodor Seuss Geisel ultimately wrote and illustrated 44 children's books, which have sold 200 million copies. *"The Cat in the Hat"*—featuring Sally, her brother, their protesting fish, and the mischievous feline visitor in the red-and-white stovepipe—debuted 50 years ago, and made Dr. Seuss a household name.

Here's a refresher in case it's been awhile since you read the story with your children or grandkids. The cat arrives uninvited while Sally's mother is away from the house on a rainy day. He briefly entertains, but makes a big mess. Then he releases Thing One and Thing Two, and things really get out of hand.

Ah, Thing One and Thing Two: Rambunctious little creatures, destroy everything they touch, wreak havoc all around them. Yet, just as the cat cleaned up Sally's house by the time her mother returned, you have the opportunity to clean up a part of your quick printing business by the end of the year. All it takes is releasing your personal Thing One and Thing Two.

Ah Yes, Printing!

When it comes to trying to improve their situations, small business owners often do too much, or do nothing at all. They implement multiple ideas at one time, or they become overwhelmed by the thought of the task at hand and run in place.

Neither approach leads to a significant change in their results. A better way is to determine one thing you personally can do the next few months that will have a major impact, and devote your energy and attention to ensuring its complete success.

As an example, let's assume your biggest personal challenge is continually getting pulled into the daily "fires" of your quick

printing business. An hour here helping out bindery, an hour there making deliveries, and an occasional hour running copies, and before you know it, it's been weeks since a strategic thought crossed your mind. To get off the treadmill that has you wearing too many hats—and being energy drained most of the time—it's essential you rise above the production woes and start focusing on the big picture. In this instance, your Thing One might be: "Start delegating more."

So let Dr. Seuss be your guide to improvement. Think about the Thing One that will significantly impact your own performance the rest of the year and write it below. Then use Thing Two to hold yourself accountable.

Thing One: _____

Thing Two: I will focus on Thing One every day.

You know your printing business best, and you've identified Thing One as your highest priority. Commit to achieving it, no matter what or who gets in the way. Tear out this page, and each morning until the end of the year read Thing One and Thing Two. You'll be amazed at the thing you can do!

To write "*The Cat in the Hat*,"

Dr. Seuss skillfully used just 236 different words, each carefully selected from a list that beginning readers were learning in school. Skillfully limiting yourself to one big thing over the next quarter will allow you to write an entirely new story for your quick printing business. Plus, you'll like the ending a whole lot better.

Remember your statements
Of Thing One and Thing Two.
From now through December
They're the focus for you.

David Handler is the founder of Success Handler, LLC, and previously served as a senior executive at ICED. Since 2003, he's led clients in the quick printing industry to explore their professional and personal dreams. This month, he presents "*Wearing the Right Hat*" at the NAQP Owners Conference. To start focusing on your Thing One, send an email to coach@successhandler.com or visit www.successhandler.com. For our curious readers, David used 371 different words to write this article.

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