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Two-Minute Warning

With the 4th quarter upon you, it's getting late in the game to play catch up. You may have to accept this year 'is what it is.' Of

Ideas For Success | *October*

Baylor University – located in the heart of Texas – is credited with being the first school to align its annual alumni reunion with an athletic event. Thus, later this month, the campus will celebrate its 100th Homecoming football game.

Homecoming is a big tradition at the high school I attended 100 miles north of Waco. As my alma mater in Fort Worth approaches its 50th anniversary, the Alumni Association decided to start a Hall of Fame... and asked me to serve on the seven-person selection committee. Many worthy candidates were nominated. After weeks of discernment, the committee selected three for the inaugural class.

On Friday night, at halftime of the Homecoming game, I'll have the honor of announcing the inductions of: the school's long-time athletic director who also taught hundreds of kids Driver's Ed; a husband and wife tandem who were high school sweethearts; and an alumnus who came home and spent three decades as a science instructor before succumbing to ALS this summer.

Like any school that's graduated students for a half century, mine has alumni who played pro sports, made it in Hollywood/on Broadway, wrote bestsellers or became highly successful in the business world. Yet, the first inductees into its Hall of Fame are two educators and a couple who donate their time to help the next generation.

In your business, there are superstars who continually shine and outperform. They play big roles in your success and probably reap the rewards. There are also those who show up, do what you expect and rarely make a big splash; yet, you couldn't get on without them. As the year winds down and you're thinking about who deserves what recognition in this challenging economy, be sure to consider the 'regular folks.' Like offensive linemen in a high school football game, they'll never make headlines, but their contributions are worth celebrating.

Words of Wisdom A highlight of the NFL and MLB Hall of Fame ceremonies is the acceptance speeches. Inductees thank everyone from their first coach, to longtime teammates, to friends and family. One thing they typically make clear is no one – in sports nor business – makes a Hall of Fame without a strong supporting cast:

"Nothing great has ever been done alone...We're all a part of a team in some capacity throughout our lives. We are all a piece of the puzzle. We are not the puzzle itself. When we realize that, we're better people." ~ Rod Woodson, August 2009

course, it's never too late for a rally (See: Steelers, Super Bowl XLIII), so encourage your team to continue playing hard and dedicati themselves to creating some last-minute heroics. You might just pull off a big surprise.

Also, now is the time to start planning for 2010. No sense waiting until the ball drops on New Year's Eve to start thinking about what you're going to do if: a) the economy stays the same; or, b) things turn around. (Want help? Send me an [e-mail](#) with "Success Plan" in the Subject line and I'll share my easy-to-use document that walks you through creating a one-page business plan.)

A client recently shared insight I'll remember when it comes to strategy: "It's important to treat every year like another 2009 is just around the corner." Keep that in mind as you think through the game plan for your business.

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Occasionally, especially during challenging times, business leaders charge ahead to find the right answers...because, after all, "That's what they pay me to do." Take a tip from the greatest of the great athletes: Your teammates are there for a reason...and you'll achieve more by being a better team player.

[ET Phone Home](#) Movie lines often become part of our lexicon. (Think: "Win one for the Gipper" or "Show me the money") When I read the recently released American Film Institute list of the Top 10 quotes in movie history, it dawned on me that business leaders like you mistakenly might utilize them in the wrong settings. So, in the interest of providing a public service for loyal readers, here is the list and the situations you'll want to avoid:

10. "You talking to me?" (Taxi Driver) – The next time a reporter interviews you these should not be the first words out of your mouth
9. "Fasten your seatbelts. It's going to be a bumpy night." (All About Eve) – Never say this after telling your client, 'Let's take my car'
8. "May the Force be with you." (Star Wars) – When someone comes to you for help, they're counting on just a little more insight
7. "All right, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my closeup." (Sunset Blvd.) – If you're invited to attend a function with local dignitaries, don't shout this to the photographer snapping photos
6. "Go ahead, make my day." (Sudden Impact) – Tell your CSRs this is the one thing they never say to customers
5. "Here's looking at you, kid." (Casablanca) – If you find yourself in front of the Supreme Court in the next few months, this is not, I repeat not, how you congratulate Justice Sotomayor
4. "Toto, I've got a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore." (The Wizard of Oz) – When you land the biggest contract in company history, make sure this doesn't precede, "Was that out loud?"
3. "You don't understand! I coulda had class. I coulda been a contender. I could've been somebody, instead of a bum, which is what I am." (On the Waterfront) – This is not what your banker wants to hear when you're asking for financing
2. "I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse." (The Godfather) – There are better ways to respond when your accountant asks what you're going to tell that IRS auditor
1. "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." (Gone with the Wind) – You'd like to say this to someone at least once every day, wouldn't you? One word: Don't

Until next month, continued success in all things.

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