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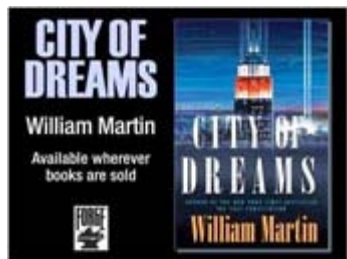
## Ideas For Success | *May*

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### Ship Happens

My favorite business writer also has a new book. In *Linchpin*, Seth Godin shares the story of Steve Jobs telling an Apple engineer who

The world's best historical fiction writer – William Martin – released his latest adventure last week. I discovered him three years ago by grabbing his previous novel in an airport bookstore before rushing to a flight; now I've read all his books. Kathy and I traveled to Boston in 2008, and spent an evening with him.

*City of Dreams* will likely reward Martin with the rare honor of having a best seller in five decades. Of course, the publishing industry has changed greatly since he first made the list, and I noticed he's using social media to promote this new book. I e-mailed him to find out how that's working. Here is part of what he wrote back:

*I haven't mastered Twitter and don't think I want to. And I haven't pushed too hard on LinkedIn. I decided to use Facebook. I've figured it out. It's easy to post things there. I refuse to tell you what I had for breakfast... but I'm able to tell about my characters when I'm writing and about my events when I'm promoting.*

Social media is all the rage, yet my clients keep asking, "How do I use it to help my business?" They struggle to figure out the connection between communicating closely and achieving results. I remind them it's still in the infant stage, and encourage them to explore and test. You should be doing the same.

[Please click here](#) to read William Martin's full comments on social media and to enter for a chance to receive an autographed copy of his newest novel *City of Dreams*.

**Communication Gap** - There is a closely watched gubernatorial race unfolding here in Texas. Incumbent Rick Perry – who inherited the office in 2000 when Mr. Bush headed to Washington – is seeking to lengthen his record as the state's longest serving governor. His Democratic challenger Bill White recently completed three terms as mayor of Houston. They're conducting respectful yet spirited campaigns.

A few weeks ago I heard this comment from Mr. White's spokeswoman: "We have a plan, and we're executing on that plan. Part of the plan is to not discuss details of the plan."

While the context of her quote was about informing the media, she unintentionally identified one of the biggest challenges to leaders' effectiveness. Think about how many times you've seen a strategic initiative come up short of expectations. Now consider how often one of the primary reasons was – to quote a famous movie line – 'a failure to communicate.'

Forgetting to share your plan with your entire organization sets

hesitated to release code: "Real artists ship." The point is that all the planning in the world does little, if you can't get things out the door.

In her monologue, Betty White mentioned she had a live television show in 1952, because "we didn't know how to tape things. I don't know what this show's excuse is."

Godin mentions *SNL* in his book, saying it "goes on each week, ready or not... Sometimes the show suffers, of course, but on balance, it's the shipping (built right into the name) that actually makes the show work."

Want to improve results with your team? Go live! Create firm deadlines and hold all accountable to hitting them. Zero excuses. No mulligans.

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you up to be greatly disappointed. One of your primary roles is to ensure each person understands the vision and purpose of the plan and – this part is really important – his/her individual role in contributing to success. Skip this step and you won't be pleased when the final ballots are tallied.

**Words of Wisdom** - When I saw Betty White's Snickers ad during the Super Bowl, my first thought was 'She's still alive?' Now, thanks to a push from half a million Facebook fans, the 88-year-old hosted *Saturday Night Live* and scored a ratings hit.

*"I didn't know what Facebook was, and now that I do know what it is... it sounds like a huge waste of time... At my age, if I want to connect with old friends, I need a Ouija board."* ~ Betty White

She went on to say: "We didn't have Facebook when I was growing up... seeing pictures of people's vacations was considered a punishment." Keep this in mind: Facebook for business isn't the same as Facebook for friends.

**Momentary Pause** - On May 2nd, I was sitting in the Kansas City airport, across from a family fighting back tears. When the gate agent announced final boarding, only one of them walked toward the plane. Even though he was wearing a t-shirt and jeans, his short hair and firm build revealed his profession.

We spoke briefly in the jetway as he attempted to hide his watery eyes, and I thanked him for serving our country. We soon lifted off and I found these words flowing from my pen onto a napkin:

The young man in 12A behind me  
He looks to be all of 19  
Left a young bride crying in the terminal  
It was the saddest goodbye I've ever seen

He's heading off to Afghanistan  
Risking his life as a Marine  
I'm going home to my wife and three children  
Because he sees call of duty as routine

More than 1.3 million military personnel have perished in combat since the American Revolution – 5,464 in the War on Terror including five today. This year, two Marines from our small community made the ultimate sacrifice: Cpl. Nicholas K. Uzenski died in January; Cpl. Jeffrey W. Johnson was killed last week. They were 21 years old.

On Memorial Day there will be lots of baseball, hot dogs, apple pie and celebration. Amidst the relaxation and shopping, please remember why this holiday exists – and say a prayer for the families who gave their loved ones for your freedom.

Until next time, continued success in all things.

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