



THE CASE OF THE VANISHING TECHNOLOGY

Are you vulnerable to this hazardous, expensive problem?

The first hint of trouble...



Here's a typical scenario.

About 18 months ago, I visited a successful high-tech company. Sales were down.

But, management viewed the situation as temporary. Besides, they were designing new products — they had “strong hopes” for either getting more venture capital or being acquired by a rich company.

Meanwhile, they had to “downsize” because of declining sales.

Then things got worse!

Sadly, in less than 1 year, they terminated 68% of their employees and friends.

Worse, they lost much more than “just” people! They lost their technology *plus* the money they spent to develop that technology.

Why?

Because their technology walked out the door with each employee terminated ... thus, without those particular employees – and what only they knew – they were disorganized, literally out-of-business and didn't even know it! (They still had hundreds of employees!)

Typical of many companies, much too little of their technology was organized and written down. Nobody could pick up the ball when people left!

Without *product documentation*, without written *standards* and *procedures* (and *technical processes*, *strategic plans*, etc.) — without adequate documentation they were

faced with reinventing their own “wheel!” (Sound familiar?)

Did they survive?

Were they able to reinvent their wheel, or sell the disorganized company with its undocumented technology?

No.

Their building now stands empty, another needless casualty of what I call, “Vanishing Technology.”

They, like many, discovered that the hazards of inadequate documentation are an even BIGGER hazard when times are tough!

Why it happens over and over again...

Actually, most business managers don't understand the connection between product development and documentation — and how to get the most out of them.

The fact is, you will produce better products, faster and cheaper, if you understand the part that documentation plays in product and business development — and how you can integrate it into the process of building of your successful position in the market place.

This is not a new idea. Yet, ideas are one thing; action is another.

The plain truth is most people hate to write documentation. Because for most people it's hard, tedious work that demands a lot of time, discipline, and rigorous attention to detail.

That's why most people delay writing any type of documentation as long as possible! Many, wait until the last minute, then give the

problem to a “writer” and tiptoe silently away. (Good Luck!)

Can you afford the risk?

Are you risking the loss of your most valuable assets, people, business processes, and intellectual property?

Here’s what a manager told me about his own tragedy, which plagues America’s companies today:

*“Due to our downsizing, our most valuable assets ... our people ... our business processes ... our intellectual property ... literally walk out the door. Without those particular employees and what only THEY knew — we’re *****ed!!*

“Worse ... sooner or later, they will work for our competitors!”

-- D.H., Manufacturing Manger

If you’re the boss, it’s on your shoulders! What do you do now?

How do you protect yourself from Vanishing Technology?

You can protect yourself from Vanishing Technology by applying the business development techniques I have named “Profitable Venture Tactics” (PVT).

You can use PVT to enrich your business whether you’re a small startup or a huge corporation.

If you are downsizing, use PVT to help retain your best people, your business processes, intellectual property, and energize your remaining staff!

“You can’t shrink your way to greatness.” -- Tom Peters

PVT can help you build your business to survive the hard times! (But, it is best to act before your company becomes a “sinking ship.”)

If you’re enduring uncontrolled growth, you can use PVT to gain balance. PVT helps you accelerate product development. You can inspire new action in project management...

...You can create new products for changing markets. You can change low production into high performance. You can streamline production for manufacturing problems.

PVT helps you turn dissatisfied customers and skeptical executives into loyal fans.

And, Profitable Venture Tactics help you relieve the pressure and worry — so you can sleep at night.

Why Vanishing Technology happens repeatedly...

I’m sure you recognize that the problem of Vanishing Technology is not new. Imagine the frustration of watching companies sink like leaky ships. You point to the leaks. But, their crews say,

“We have no time to patch leaks. We’re too busy sailing for the gold.”

When you suffer Vanishing Technology, your company is like that sinking ship. And you know you cannot sail a leaky ship...very far.

To develop a “seaworthy” business, you — or someone — must write the right stuff to help you build your business like a leak-proof hull.

Documenting your business is the work of “business development.”

Yet, when business booms people say...

“We don’t have time to write ... too many projects ... it is not a priority now ... we’ll get to it later... yada... yada... yada...”

But, have you noticed when there's a business bust, people have plenty of time to write CYA Memos and resumes?

Bottom line: Nobody writes the documents vital to your business!

That's why you see Vanishing Technology happen repeatedly.

What can you do?

To prevent Vanishing Technology, you must develop your business to survive hard times.

This means you must curtail dependence on "key people" and their tacit "tribal knowledge." (If your business needs exceptional people, you cannot hope to produce consistent results.)

This means you — or someone — must write down your key business processes! This means you must work ON your business as you work IN your business. As they say, "Publish or perish!"

You must develop and document a result producing system — a SYSTEM that amplifies ordinary skills and abilities into extraordinary results.

Profitable Venture Tactics can help you create the right documentation to integrate four steps to success:

1. Organizing,
2. Planning,
3. Developing, and
4. Operating your business.

Summary

Are you risking the loss of your most valuable assets ... your people ... your business processes ... your intellectual property? The plain truth is most people hate to write documentation... And this leads directly to Vanishing Technology.

When you suffer Vanishing Technology, your company leaks like a sinking ship.

By applying the business development techniques I call "Profitable Venture Tactics," you can protect yourself from Vanishing Technology and build your business like a leak-proof hull.

Documenting your business is the work of "business development." This means you must work ON your business as you work IN your business.

Don't let Vanishing Technology stunt the growth of your business!

I will tell you more about Profitable Venture Tactics next week.

To Your Business Success,



Mike Hayden, Principal/Consultant

Your partner in streamlining business.

Senior Management Services

We take the pressure off.

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