A dramatic photograph of a rocket launch at night. The rocket is the central focus, ascending vertically and surrounded by a massive, intense plume of orange and yellow fire and white smoke that billows upwards. The background is dark, with some faint lights visible in the distance. The overall scene conveys power, energy, and the start of a journey.

# SALES FUEL

BY DEBBIE DONALDSON

*The truth about what it takes to launch and  
navigate a fast growing business you love.*

In this book you'll learn the formulas for filling  
YOUR business with the right fuel for success.

– *Debbie Donaldson*

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## **FROM THE AUTHOR**

If you believe as I do, that loyal repeat-customer advocates are the fuel that powers your business, you're in the right place.

I've been in sales, management and publishing most of my career working with successful entrepreneurs.

It was during my time working for Inc. 500 company owner John Wendorff that I learned three critical ingredients in the formula for launching and navigating a successful fast growing company.

His company grew from \$3 million to \$15 million in revenue during my tenure working for him. The first ingredient in the formula wasn't just creating a company culture, he created a customer culture that every employee became a part of.

The product was magazine quality newsletters for REALTORS to use in their marketing. But instead of selling newsletters, he taught us how to improve the lives of our clients and their communities. He also taught us how to recruit them to our cause.

By consistently providing something of value to their customers each month through a typical 6-year buying cycle, our clients found they increased referrals from

their customers which created a more consistent income stream.

Our client's newsletters were a monthly reminder of the great service their customer had experienced and were loaded with helpful hints for maintaining and increasing the value of their homes.

We turned our customers into advocates by offering gifts to agents and brokers for making presentations and collecting orders from others in their office so we didn't have to personally be in every real estate office across the country. By rewarding our repeat-customer advocates the company grew even faster.

The second ingredient to his formula was being willing to fail. I apologized once for implementing an idea that wasn't successful. The answer to my apology was..."if you don't fail occasionally, you're not trying hard enough."

The third ingredient is radical and very different from any other company I've known. Management team members were included in a monthly revenue and expense analysis.

The goal of the review was to make marketing shifts and increase the marketing budget when sales revenue was over projection. That's right, the owner didn't simply pocket the excess, he reinvested in successful marketing

campaigns during the year. This kept us growing at about 30% most years.

It was a tough decision to leave this company and one of my favorite business mentors several years ago when my husband and I relocated to Las Vegas.

I've successfully launched new products and have been on the teams launching new businesses using these valuable lessons.

There are no limits to the success of an entrepreneur who implements the unique business growth formula outlined in SALES FUEL.

Enjoy the ride,

*Debbie Donaldson*

# **FORMULA #1:**

## **Creating a Customer Culture**

## Who's Buying You

When they told us business isn't personal, they were sadly mistaken. There is a more satisfying way to build a customer base that loves your company, products and you.

A few years ago I was having lunch with a customer who told me a good friend of theirs had gotten a tattoo on the lower part of her back. Tattoos are common and that location is popular with women so I wasn't surprised. He then said, "can you help me get women to tattoo my company logo on their backsides?" I was shocked by that question until he told me the tattoo his friend had gotten was a Harley-Davidson logo.

Although I'm not a motorcycle enthusiast, I understood immediately why people brand themselves with a company's logo, but I couldn't describe logically what I knew instinctively at that moment in time. It was more than customer loyalty, it was more than brand loyalty, it was more than product loyalty.

My customer was the marketing director for a corporate law firm and had been joking when he asked his tattoo question.

His question intrigued me, so I started digging a little deeper into what inspires someone to identify so

completely with a company that they are willing to brand their own bodies.

After researching several companies and consulting several experts on the topic, here is what I concluded...

Being willing and excited about branding our bodies with a company's logo is a display of hero worship. The hero offers a new and better way. The hero is a likeable leader that inspires belief in the new and better way. The hero points out the enemy that wants us trapped in the old way. The hero talks about the enemy's faults and how the hero's new way protects followers from the pain and suffering the enemy inflicts.

When the hero draws enough people into their movement, a community forms with its own magnetic culture. The hero is first in line as a protection from the common enemy.

It's clear on the Harley-Davidson website that their mass movement is freedom. They have even registered their slogan...It's time to live FREE [ER]

**ALL FOR FREEDOM AND FREEDOM FOR ALL®**

Although their slogan may have evolved over the years, their appeal to be free, a bit of a rebel and take to the open road attracts people from all professions, ages, income brackets and countries. You may not be

celebrating your 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary the way Harley-Davidson did in 2018 at events in Milwaukee and Prague, but you can begin to create a culture that keeps your customers coming back for generations.

The Harley-Davidson heroes in the beginning were the creators, but I believe the hero now is the motorcycle and what it represents. It represents freedom (the new and better way). The enemy I believe Harley-Davidson protects their enthusiasts from is limitations. Notice they do not use people or competitors as their enemy.

You can see this in action in the videos on the Harley-Davidson website. Here is a link to one that has all the elements of creating a customer culture:

[https://www.harley-davidson.com/us/en/about-us/more-roads.html#intcmp\\_HP-BB-MoreRoads](https://www.harley-davidson.com/us/en/about-us/more-roads.html#intcmp_HP-BB-MoreRoads)

Many companies are focused on the newest trends in company culture, but have never given thought to creating a customer culture beyond the basic customer service that every client expects.

You may be thinking...my company is too small, too new, too unique, too (fill in the blank) for me to begin to instill a customer culture. What Harley-Davidson and other companies attract within their customer culture are loyal repeat-customer advocates. Ken Blanchard and

Sheldon Bowles call them Raving Fans in their best-selling book by the same name.

Loyal, repeat-customer advocates are the fuel a growing business needs to thrive.

These loyal, repeat-customer advocates believe in you, your company, your products and inspire their friends to join them in their beliefs, creating a customer culture or what some call a mass movement.

###

## **Implementation Questions**

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**Are you willing to be the hero for your company?**

**What is your new and better offer?**

**How will you give your clients a reason to join your mass movement?**

**What is your common enemy?**

**Why will they follow you and encourage their friends to join them?**

## The Hero

Every mass movement needs a hero. Someone inspiring, someone to look up to, someone to follow. Someone vulnerable. Someone their followers can relate to. Someone who has faced and overcome similar struggles. If you are an entrepreneur with a small, new, unique business, your role as hero is even more important...and effective.

This is the part that may feel the most uncomfortable. This is the part where you learn just how personal doing business is today.

A likeable hero is strong, vulnerable and authentic. Do not be tempted to put actors in your place as the hero.

A book written by the former CEO of Starbucks is a perfect example of the role of a business hero. Howard Schultz in his book *Onward: How Starbucks fought for it's life without losing its soul*, exemplifies all the elements of creating a customer culture.

It tells the story of Schultz creating his dream, relinquishing the reins, then reclaiming his leadership role to save the company. All for his dream of providing a better coffee experience for customers and saving the jobs of the employees that are committed to providing the Starbucks experience. If you want a first hand look at their customer culture, just visit a Starbucks anywhere.

Like Starbucks, there are hero stories at the roots of other big companies like Apple, Wendy's, Microsoft and Disney. The current size of these organizations may inspire or intimidate, but they all have one thing in common. They all started with a driven entrepreneur that became likeable – became a hero.

Notice I said became likeable. Some people are naturally likeable, some people need to work on their likeability.

###

## **Implementation Questions**

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**Are you brave enough to become the hero inspiring your own mass movement?**

**What is your dream that fulfills the dreams of others?**

## The Followers

As the hero, tell your unique story. Tell your story in a way that appeals to our emotions. Tell your story from the beginning.

Two of my favorite examples of companies that create a customer culture of all ages and tell the best stories are Disney and Pixar. They give us so much more than just entertainment.

If you're thinking they are big companies and nothing like yours, just remember both companies were launched by entrepreneurs who began building their customer culture from the beginning.

Walk around any Disney theme park and witness the happy, smiling faces of their customers of all ages. You may even notice a few tattoos of Disney's famous characters on the hands and arms of loyal followers (no matter what their age).

Disney and Pixar movies are the best at creating that vulnerable, reluctant hero who inspires followers. Emma Coats identified 22 Rules of Story Telling that she developed while working at Pixar. Coats was the storyboard artist on BRAVE as well as on the team of other Pixar productions.

Her rule number one, “You admire a character for trying for more than their success,” I believe this is why we are so moved by the characters they create. Watch the movie BRAVE and see what she means.

You can find Coat’s full list published at the back of this book.

###

## Implementation Questions

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**What is your new and better offer EVERY customer of your product, service or company can believe in?**

**What is the life altering result of owning or using your product or service?**

## **The Enemy**

The enemy isn't a person. The enemy is a belief your customer has that you are replacing with a new and better belief.

It's not really as complicated as that sentence sounds.

Author and master of story-telling, Russell Brunson, calls it "throwing rocks at the enemy." His company is ClickFunnels and they produce user-friendly lead and sales generating software.

In Brunson's sales copy and videos he tells us the enemy is websites and website developers. In telling the story of developing his product Brunson talks about the web developers that were expensive and how that delayed his ability to generate revenue online for his company.

He also talks about how websites are like having sales people that do nothing more than hand out company brochures, but continuously demand more money for their efforts...even though they aren't generating sales results.

His offer is a better, simple solution anyone can use that works 24/7 to generate leads and sales. A secret the enemy doesn't want you to know.

## **Implementation Questions**

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**Who are your customer's enemies?**

**What robs them of their time and money?**

**How does your product or service protect them from their enemies?**

# **FORMULA #2:**

## **Failing**

We have all failed at something. Admit it. Accept it. Learn from it. Make it part of your hero story.

## **Past Failures**

The stories that get our attention, keep our attention and inspire our trust are more than case studies of successful products used by customers. Although these testimonials have their place in marketing a business, they are not enough to build the kind of trust needed to bond with a loyal following.

Building a customer culture requires the hero to be vulnerable and talk about the things that didn't work, didn't go well or mistakes they made. Stories of disappointments that customers will recognize in their own experiences have the greatest impact. This is where you make them feel. You've likely heard it before and I believe it's worth repeating here...people don't buy based on logic, they buy based on emotion.

One of my favorite quotes from the activist and poet Maya Angelou is "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

After admitting struggles, failures and disappointments, your story continues with the lessons learned...the transformation that took place that lead to the solutions the hero wants their followers to benefit by knowing.

## **Implementation Questions**

---

**What are the challenges and failures that got you and your company to this moment?**

**What was the transformation that took place?**

**What real solutions are you offering your customers that would make them loyal advocates?**

## Planned Failures

These are the fun failures. These are the things we try and know may not work out.

If it makes you feel better, marketers like to call these prototypes, alpha or beta versions, research & development or R&D. You can use these terms too if the word failure causes you to stop trying new ways of doing things.

My favorite way to fail faster is to test.

Several years ago I was at an American Marketing Association meeting where Omaha Steaks did a presentation on the value of testing offers, colors and copy in their direct mail marketing campaigns. They were looking for a winner in each campaign, which meant there was also a loser or failure.

They split their list in half and mailed the A-list the “Control” which had the offer, color and copy that was the previous winner. They mailed their B-list with only one change and started with the offer. In the following rounds of tests the B-List received a different copy headline or different color in the graphics.

Their winning offer for many years was a free set of steak knives, but that didn’t stop them from testing new

offers because the offer in their B-List mailer still worked, just not at the level of their control offer.

The company had been tracking their results in a notebook since the company started their mail order campaigns in 1952.

If you're thinking "my company doesn't compare to a big company like Omaha Steaks International," you may be right about that now. However, if you are an entrepreneur, you have that in common with J.J. Simon who started Omaha Steaks in 1917 with his son.

###

## **Implementation Questions**

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**What failures will you plan now?**

**What failures will become part of your company story?**

**What failures will become your company's treasured secrets?**

# **FORMULA #3:**

## **Action**

## **When SMART Goals are Dumb**

No matter what the educators told us about simple, measurable, attainable, realistic, time tracked goals...there is a better way to launch and navigate a fast growing business.

## **Goal vs Action Plan**

Early in 2018 I began a YouTube video series called Monday Up. That series focused on setting SMART goals for the week. I stopped after a few episodes because something didn't feel right about what I was saying to my viewers. It didn't feel authentic.

Somehow goal setting seemed more like a New Year's resolution that was quickly forgotten. And I wasn't actually doing the work of setting goals for myself so I felt like a hypocrite in the videos.

Throughout my career, the only times I set SMART goals were when a manager expected me to give them my written goals at the beginning of the year. Then the list went in a file both of us forgot about.

What I do and have done successfully is follow an Action Plan. This is a live document I refer to daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually.

Keeping track of the actions needed to move my business forward ensures I am not distracted from the most important activities that get results.

I've also shared my action plans with team members, assigning them actions of their own to be accomplished. By sharing the whole plan, they see how their activities affect the overall results.

## **Budgets**

You may be thinking, wait a minute, what about annual budgets, aren't they goals? No they are budgets. You are estimating what you will sell. You're also estimating what your expenses will be for the year. If you are considering bank loans or government grants, a budget is a critical segment in your overall business plan.

After setting your budget, there has to be a plan to meet or exceed budgeted revenue and meet or reduce the amount spent. That plan includes the big and little actions needed to do this.

I worked for entrepreneurs who taught me the budgeting process that has helped me launch hundreds of products, publications and businesses.

One of the monthly actions I learned is a radical idea to most business owners and accountants. It was used by an

entrepreneur that managed to grow his business about 30% most years.

Each month he would evaluate the budget with the management team and reinvest the excess revenue generated back into marketing.

He didn't want to wait until the following year to reinvest in successful campaigns. He reinvested throughout the year to maximize growth.

###

## **Implementation Questions**

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**How do you determine your budget?**

**When do you set your budget?**

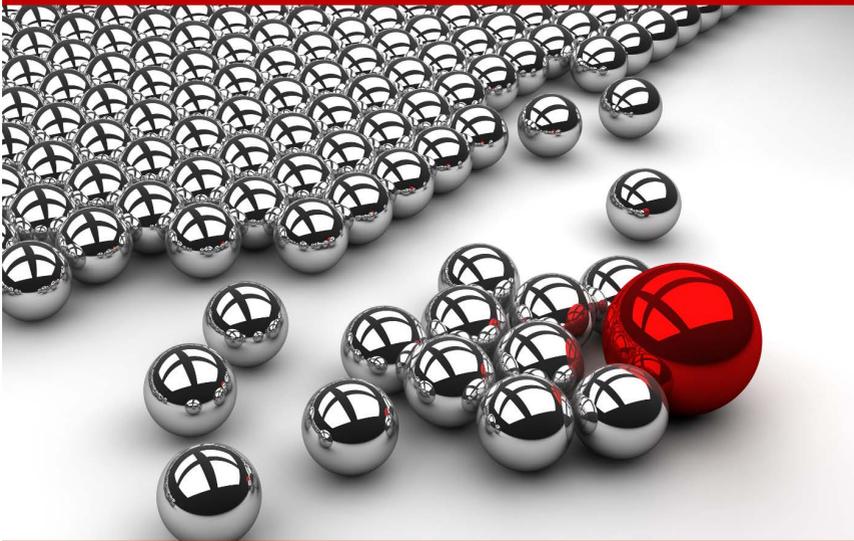
**How often do you do a budget review during the year?**

**Do you have a strategic action plan for meeting or exceeding your budgeted revenue?**

**Do you have a plan or systems for reinvesting in your company's marketing?**

**PREVIEW**

# **INFLUENCE MARKETING**



**A proven system to attract and captivate  
customers who want to do business with you!**

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## **The INFLUENCE MARKETING System**

It has never been easier to start a mass movement and establish your own customer culture.

If you are sick of the hustle and grind mentality others have insisted are the secrets to success, you're not alone. There is a better way to help the people who want to buy from you.

This exclusive 2-Hour Online program walks you step-by-step through finding your best customers, discovering the most effective motivators for inspiring action...

...and even reveals how to get them to market your business for you.

This 5-Step system will give you new and exciting ways to attract and captivate the customers who truly want to do business with you.

Learn more at [b2bENTREPRENEUR.org/Influence](http://b2bENTREPRENEUR.org/Influence)

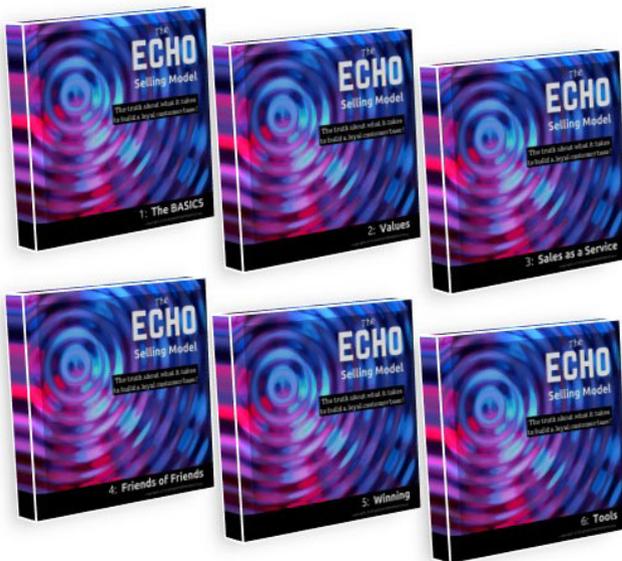
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## PREVIEW

### The ECHO Selling Model

#### 6-Module Online Course

Instead of teaching you how to "Close"  
more sales, this is the  
Only Sales Model Resulting In An  
"Opening" That Amplifies Sales Results



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## The ECHO Selling Model

Build your own loyal customer base by learning to secure every sale with an "open" instead of a close.

ECHO Selling is a unique selling model with timeless principles and radically new ideas that you won't find in any college or university course. You won't find this system in any other book, blog or video.

ECHO Selling has been developed over time through my own quest for knowledge. Along with my practical experiences and those of my customers.

You'll learn my formula for duplicating success. When I doubled my income the first time, I definitely wanted to repeat that again and again. You can too.

In this course I share real examples of how I've used, refined, taught and achieved success in multiple industries using this unique selling model. You'll discover how easy it is to simply apply your unique style and your product or service to this proven system and get results for yourself.

Click here and learn how you can **double YOUR income** within a year like I did at ECHO Selling.

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## SOURCES

- ✦ Emma Coats, Pixar's 22 Rules of story telling
- ✦ Eric Hoffer, The True Believer: Thoughts on the nature of mass movements
- ✦ Harley-Davidson.com
- ✦ Howard Schultz, Onward: How Starbucks fought for it's life without losing it's soul
- ✦ John Wendorff, The Personal Marketing Company
- ✦ Ken Blanchard & Sheldon Bowles, Raving Fans
- ✦ Russell Brunson, Expert Secrets: The underground playbook for creating a mass movement of people who will pay for your advice

###

## **Pixar's 22 Rules of Story Telling**

22 Rules of Story Telling was published by the Washington Post, Huffington Post and dozens of other media outlets and individuals. You'll find most of the articles are titled "Pixar's 22 Rules of Story Telling." The creator of this now infamous list is Emma Coats who was employed by Pixar when she began tweeting about what she learned as storyboard artist at Pixar.

Here are the rules Coats tweeted:

*1: You admire a character for trying more than for her or his successes.*

*2: You've got to keep in mind what's interesting to you as an audience, not what's fun to do as a writer. They can be very different.*

*3: Trying for theme is important, but you won't see what the story is actually about till you're at the end of it. Now rewrite.*

*4: Once upon a time there was \_\_\_\_\_. Every day, \_\_\_\_\_. One day \_\_\_\_\_. Because of that, \_\_\_\_\_. Because of that, \_\_\_\_\_. Until finally \_\_\_\_\_.*

*5: Simplify. Focus. Combine characters. Hop over detours. You'll feel like you're losing valuable stuff, but it sets you free.*

*6: What is your character good at, comfortable with? Throw the polar opposite at them. Challenge them. How do they deal?*

*7: Come up with your ending before you figure out your middle. Seriously. Endings are hard — get yours working up front.*

*8: Finish your story, let go even if it's not perfect. In an ideal world you have both, but move on. Do better next time.*

**9:** *When you're stuck, make a list of what wouldn't happen next. Lots of times the material to get you unstuck will show up.*

**10:** *Pull apart the stories you like. What you like in them is a part of you; you've got to recognize it before you can use it.*

**11:** *Putting it on paper lets you start fixing it. If it stays in your head, a perfect idea, you'll never share it with anyone.*

**12:** *Discount the 1st thing that comes to mind. And the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th – get the obvious out of the way. Surprise yourself.*

**13:** *Give your characters opinions. Passive/malleable might seem likable to you as you write, but it's poison to the audience.*

**14:** *Why must you tell this story? What's the belief burning within you that your story feeds off of? That's the heart of it.*

**15:** *If you were your character, in this situation, how would you feel? Honesty lends credibility to unbelievable situations.*

**16:** *What are the stakes? Give us reason to root for the character. What happens if they don't succeed? Stack the odds against.*

**17:** *No work is ever wasted. If it's not working, let go and move on — it'll come back around to be useful later.*

**18:** *You have to know yourself: the difference between doing your best & fussing. Story is testing, not refining.*

**19:** *Coincidences to get characters into trouble are great; coincidences to get them out of it are cheating.*

**20:** *Exercise: take the building blocks of a movie you dislike. How do you rearrange them into what you DO like?*

**21:** *You've got to identify with your situation/characters, can't just write 'cool'. What would make you act that way?*

**22:** *What's the essence of your story? [The] most economical telling of it? If you know that, you can build out from there.*

###

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Debbie Donaldson is an engaging, inspirational speaker with a good-humored approach to business.

In addition to *SALES FUEL*, she is author of the book *Superpowers Activated*. She is also the creator and instructor for two educational courses, *The INFLUENCE MARKETING System* and *The ECHO SELLING Model*.

After writing her book *Superpowers Activated* Donaldson founded Superpowers 365 Inc. to fulfill her passion of producing success communications for better health, greater wealth and lasting relationships. She quickly learned the people most interested in her expertise are entrepreneurs. So she created b2bENTREPRENEUR.org to serve her growing customer base.

As the former publisher of the Las Vegas Business Press, Donaldson is an award-winning leader with more than 30 years of experience in media, marketing and management.

Donaldson is the recipient of the Women's Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award. She also received the National Association of Women Business Owners award for excellence in communications.

Her passion is serving the b2bENTREPRENEUR.org's caring community of entrepreneurs who are interested in their own business growth and willing to help others succeed.

You can hear more from Donaldson in her weekday podcast "Driving with Debbie" on nine popular podcast apps.

You can also find Donaldson interviewing entrepreneurs on her morning video talk show WAKE UP to The New Rules of Business at INBLV.com/wakeup.

**Connect and engage with Debbie on multiple social media platforms:**

**Facebook:** DebbieDLive  
b2bENTREPRENEUR.org

**Instagram:** DebbieDonaldsonLive

**LinkedIn:** DebbieDonaldsonLV

**Medium:** DebbieDonaldson

**Twitter:** debbiedlv  
b2bfriends

**YouTube:** Debbie Donaldson

## PERSONAL REFERENCES

“Debbie has proven to be a very hard working, intelligent and ethical business person with a keen eye for detail and an appreciation of the big picture. She has given me key insights on her professional experiences, and I have used her several times as a sounding board to help me better understand businesses that I have to evaluate in my line of work. Debbie was also unanimously elected to serve on the Better Business Bureau Board of Directors, and held that position for 3-years. She is an incredible business leader and well respected by all of her peers on the Board.”

George Cartwright  
President/CEO  
Better Business Bureau of Southern Nevada



“Debbie is a true professional and always passionate about her work. She continually develops creative ideas and new innovative ways to collaborate with clients and community partners. She is committed to excellence and has a great work ethic. It is a pleasure working with her.”

Tracy Skenandore  
Community & Public Relations Director

“Debbie is an excellent "people" person. She has the unique ability to identify an individual's strengths and weaknesses; then use their strengths to coach their weaknesses. She inspires loyalty and is loyal herself.”

John Wendorff  
President/CEO  
The Personal Marketing Company



“Debbie is professional yet warm. Her follow through is impeccable as is her integrity. She also has a natural ability to make others feel comfortable which is very meaningful as she develops relationships for the organization she represents. She is an asset to whatever organization she is involved with.”

Michelle Jackson  
President/CEO  
Junior Achievement of Southern Nevada



**Resources for business to business  
entrepreneurs worldwide interested in  
accelerated, profitable business growth!**



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