
MONDAY MANNA
NOV 6, 2023**VISIONARIES VS. THE FINANCIALLY DRIVEN**
By Rick Boxx

We live in very uncertain economic times. It probably has always been that way, but for a variety of reasons, economic conditions seem especially unpredictable now. The question is not why this is so, but how we should respond. Do we take a defensive posture, or should we choose a proactive approach?

When recessions are likely, there are typically two types of leaders: Visionaries, and those who are financially driven. The financially driven often take a defensive approach in their decisions, trying to eliminate risk. Visionaries, however, operate from a different perspective. They regard a looming recession as an opportunity to build customers and market share, often adopting an offensive strategy instead of reacting defensively.

For followers of Jesus Christ, we have an advantage in determining how to respond: We know the One who knows the future, our Heavenly Father. In the Old Testament, Daniel was asked to interpret the Babylonian king's troubling dream. Daniel told him, "The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future" (Daniel 2:45). We can ask the Lord for similar wisdom in planning for the future.

Key staffing decisions. When a recession is looming, the financially driven will typically reduce or eliminate staff. But a visionary sees the situation differently. After the terrorist acts of Sept. 11, 2001, the airline industry was devastated. Nearly all major airlines began to make massive layoffs. Southwest Airlines, however, did not. Their visionary leaders committed to keeping their entire staff working. Costly in the short term, it positioned the company for rapid and profitable expansion over the long term.

In 1 Peter 5:2 we read the admonition, "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing." Staff reductions are sometimes inevitable, but visionary leaders look long term, shepherding their people well, even during bad times.

Considering market share. If a company has the strength financially, recessions can be an ideal time to expand. An example from the past illustrates this point. While Blockbuster Video stores still dominated the video market, Netflix made a bold move during the 2008 recession. Their video streaming business not only captured market share, but also factored into the demise of Blockbuster.

We find great wisdom in the teaching of Ephesians 5:15, "Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity." If you are in a role of influence at your company and see your competition pulling back on their sales and marketing efforts, this could be an excellent opportunity to increase market share.

由香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd) 逢週一發放

地址: 香港上環禧利街2號東寧大廈20樓2004室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: enquiry@cbmc.org.hk Web: www.cbmc.org.hk

支持本會使命, 服侍工商界及職場, 請下載奉獻表格

<https://www.cbmc.org.hk/file-download.html>

Supplier relationships at risk. Many financially driven leaders will risk jeopardizing supplier relationships during a recession. They might start demanding price concessions while not paying their vendors as promptly. A visionary, however, may take a longer-term view. Offering to pay vendors early, or at least on time, can win favor that may lead to price concessions or better terms. This approach can also have the effect of building stronger relationships for the future.

As Proverbs 3:27 says, “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.” Rather than using and abusing your suppliers, consider paying them early, or at least on time. You will likely build a friend for the future. We live in the present but must always keep the future in view.

Copyright 2023, Unconventional Business Network. Adapted with permission from “UBN Integrity Moments.” Visit www.unconventionalbusiness.org UBN is a faith at work ministry serving the international small business community.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Looking at where you work, would you say the overall operating philosophy is visionary or financially driven? Explain your answer.
2. Have you experienced situations in which company decisions have been financially driven, made solely upon immediate economic circumstances? What were the benefits – or consequences – of taking and acting upon such a perspective?
3. What are some possible risks of taking a visionary approach during times of difficult economic developments? Have you personally experienced or observed any of these?
4. In terms of striving to work and operate a business or organization within a context of faith in God and His guidance, how would you go about determining which approach – visionary or financially driven – would be best?

CHALLENGE

Making decisions, personally as well as professionally, can be very difficult during times of economic turmoil. Who do you know that you could rely on for advice and counsel when confronted with stressful and challenging circumstances? If you are in a CBMC group, or part of another group of committed followers of Jesus Christ, determine who you would turn to as trusted advisors when needed.

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:

Psalm 37:3-7; Proverbs 2:6, 3:5-6, 11:14, 15:22, 19:20, 20:18; Matthew 6:25-34; James 1:5-8

由香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd) 逢週一發放

地址：香港上環禧利街2號東寧大廈20樓2004室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: enquiry@cbmc.org.hk Web: www.cbmc.org.hk

支持本會使命，服侍工商界及職場，請下載奉獻表格

<https://www.cbmc.org.hk/file-download.html>
