



# Catalyst!!

Career & Organizational Design & Development  
Reach Your Goals; Realize Your Dreams  
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January, 2006



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### Notable Quotables

Long-range goals keep you from being frustrated by short-range failures. --Charles C. Noble

The Wright brothers flew right through the smoke screen of impossibility. --Charles F. Kettering

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. --Confucius

*In this issue:*

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**Leveraging Your Financial Potential**

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**Big Opportunity for Small Business**

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**Resources, Resources, Resources!**

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**ENJOY!**



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## Leveraging Your Financial Potential

*By: Brian Tracy*

### Know the Right People

One of the greatest forms of financial leverage is contacts. Knowing the right people and being known by them can open doors for you that can save you years of hard work. The quality and quantity of your contacts and your relationships will have more to do with your success than perhaps any other factor. Here are three things you can do to expand your list of contacts. First, make a list of the 25 people you feel it would be most useful for you to get to know. Develop a strategy to get to meet everyone of them over the next 12 months. Then make a list of 25 more.

List the people in charge of the major corporations that would be useful for you to know. List the mayor, list the congressmen, list the senator. List the important people that it would be helpful for you to know and then make a plan to meet them.

### Network at Every Opportunity

Second is for you to network at every opportunity. Join business and trade associations. Attend meetings. Get involved. Volunteer for service on a key committee. This action alone can cut years off your career .

Once, when I was working with the Chamber of Commerce, I came to the attention of a senior executive who hired me away from the company I was working for a year later at triple the salary. Meeting people is very important. Network at every opportunity.

### Get Involved in the Community

The third way is to get involved in community service organizations. The best people in every community, the people you should know and who should know you, are usually involved in public service in some way. Start with the United Way in your own city, or get involved in any charity that

you care about or that you're interested in. You'll be amazed at the quality of people that you'll meet doing voluntary service.

### Unlock Your Creativity

Another form of leverage is creativity. Remember, one new idea is all you need to start a fortune. Everyone has the ability to come up with creative ideas and solutions if they look for them. All great fortunes begin with an idea.

### Create Good Work Habits

A powerful form of leverage that can help you is good work habits. Good work habits make an extraordinary difference. In a recent study, 104 chief executive officers all agreed that the ability to set priorities and then to get the job done fast were the two qualities that most readily led to promotion and increases in pay. Good work habits will bring you to the attention of the important people in your life as fast or faster than anything else you can do. In the final analysis, you always get paid for your results. If you develop a reputation for being the person who gets the job done fast, that alone can put you onto the fast track in your career.

### Action Exercises

Now, here are two things you can do to leverage your financial potential:

First, get involved in the business, trade, civic and social organizations in your community. Once you become a member, offer to help and serve on committees. This will bring you to the attention of people who can help you faster than any other way.

Second, develop excellent work habits. Be punctual. Plan your work and work your plan. Always concentrate your energies on high priority tasks and make sure that you are doing things that are important to your boss and to your company



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[Atlanta Business Chronicle](#)

From the December 19, 2005 print edition

## *Big opportunity for small biz*

**New organization will link minority- and women-owned businesses to global corporations**

Jill Lerner

### Staff Writer

Some of Atlanta's largest companies are teaming up to give minority- and women-owned businesses a better shot at winning lucrative corporate contracts.

With the support of lead sponsor The [Home Depot Inc.](#), a new organization called The Resource Institute was launched Nov. 30.

It aims to introduce vendors to purchasing agents at Atlanta's largest global companies, bring small companies together with investors who can help them build capacity to fulfill large orders, and train small businesses to sell to large corporations -- most of which have internal supplier diversity programs mandating they spend millions and even billions with minority-owned businesses each year.

Besides Home Depot, other companies that have already signed on to participate or are considering doing so include [Russell Corp.](#) (NYSE: RML), [Turner Broadcasting System Inc.](#), The [Coca-Cola Co.](#) (NYSE: KO) and [United Parcel Service Inc.](#) (NYSE: UPS).

"Just about every major corporation in Georgia has indicated a strong level of interest and will likely join us in 2006," said K. Michelle Johnson, director of supplier diversity for Home Depot (NYSE:

HD) and co-founder of The Resource Institute.

Although the Resource Institute will serve all small businesses, preference will be given to minority- and women-owned businesses. To participate, clients will pay an annual fee of \$150.

The benefits for minority- and women-owned businesses could be great. For example, Coca-Cola spent more than \$800 million with women- and minority-owned businesses from 2000 to 2005, according to the company. And Home Depot spends billions annually with small, women and minority vendors, Johnson said.

The number of businesses in Georgia with the potential to benefit from such supplier diversity programs is large and growing rapidly.

Georgia is one of only nine states in which the percentage of minority-owned firms exceeds 20 percent of all businesses, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Minority Business Development Agency. And their ranks are increasing. Nationally, minority firms are growing at more than three times the national average, increasing 35 percent between 1997 and 2002 compared with 10 percent for all U.S. firms.

Of the minority firms, African-American businesses grew 45 percent, Hispanic firms grew 31 percent and Asian firms grew 24 percent, according to the agency.

Those numbers are expected to keep growing, with minorities projected to account for 90 percent of overall U.S. population growth between 2005 and 2050.

The growth of women-owned firms is equally impressive.

Between 1997 and 2004, the number of women-owned firms with employees grew at twice the national rate of all firms, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Women's Business Research

The Resource Institute is the brainchild of Johnson and David Zalik, CEO of Atlanta-based [GreenSky Financial](#).

There's another Home Depot connection: Zalik's partner in GreenSky is Larry Smith, who was formerly general counsel for the home improvement giant for 19 years before he retired in 2002.

In 2004, Home Depot agreed to pay \$5.5 million to settle U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission charges of gender and race discrimination involving some of its Colorado stores, although Home Depot did not admit wrongdoing. A spokeswoman for the retailer said the



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company's support for The Resource Institute is not related to any litigation.

Johnson, who developed the diversity supplier program at Home Depot three years ago, said she has long sensed a need among existing suppliers for the capital and the expertise to expand.

"If we ask you to expand ... that scares you to death," she said.

One of the biggest problems small businesses have is finding the necessary capital to grow and fulfill large orders.

"It's very hard for a big company to place a \$20,000 order. What they really want to do is place a \$2 million order or a \$10 million order. And [The Resource Institute's] job is to build capacity in these small businesses so they can fulfill it successfully," Zalik said.

The Resource Institute will help small businesses by introducing them to the banks, private equity funds, investment bankers and angel investors that can lend money to fulfill larger orders.

Additionally, the group will introduce small businesses to corporate buyers through such

initiatives as a "speed selling" event scheduled for January.

At the session, purchasing agents from The Resource Institute's large corporate members will listen to two-minute pitches from its small-business clients. The group also will host training seminars and workshops.

Gwen Thomas, an African-American woman who is president and CEO of Atlanta-based human resources consultancy HRNow!, one of the 200 business owners Zalik said have signed up to join The Resource Institute, cited access to corporate buyers as her reason for signing up.

"I hope to gain stronger business relationships from those supporting companies ... and some real depth and growth to HRNow!'s business," she said.

Thomas, who founded the business in 1996 and has 12 employees and \$700,000 in annual revenue, said she learned of the group through Home Depot, which is her company's mentor in the state-sponsored Governor's Mentor Protégé Program.

Supporters note The Resource Institute isn't just a benefit to its clients.

For one thing, corporate partners may unearth great new vendors.

Service firms could benefit as well, said James J. McAlpin Jr., chairman of law firm Powell Goldstein LLP, whose attorney Helen Zalik, David Zalik's wife, handled The Resource Institute's legal work pro bono.

"[The Resource Institute] is the right thing to do and it's also good for business. There's a growing community of women- and minority-owned businesses ... There's a lot of legal work to be involved in ... and we'd like to be part of it," McAlpin said.

Home Depot's Johnson said that doing more business with minority- and women-owned businesses can help burnish the retailer's image with such populations.

She noted that research has shown store loyalty among minority customers is much stronger than for the population as a whole.

"Companies like ours, that are truly customer-driven, are doing our best to make sure those customers are loyal to us," she said.



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For additional information or to contribute to Empowered Dreams Foundation, please call Means Davis at (404) 847-0797