Executive IT Insider

...The Exclusive Edge to Today's Technology

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"**Happy New Year!** Now that the holidays are over, let's start this new year off right! When it comes to your business, **you don't have the time to be stressed out** by things like computer problems. We can help you get everything organized and under control. If you have any **projects**, plans, or problems this year, feel free to give us a call or **schedule a meeting**. Let us help make 2018 the **most successful year for your business!**"

Why Hiring The Cheapest Computer Support Company Will Actually Cost You More

As anybody working in IT will tell you, the most common question we get isn't, "Why is my computer running so slowly?" or "Why is my Internet not working?" It's, "What do you charge for your services?" With so many IT companies clamoring for your attention, it makes sense that you'd want to look for the most inexpensive, cost-efficient option, right?

The problem is that this question doesn't get to the heart of the issue. Sure, any IT company can offer rock-bottom prices, but as with anything else, those savings are going to come with fewer, lower-quality IT services. Also, many cheaper services say they are inexpensive, but they typically have slow response times and nickel and dime you over everything. Instead of asking about price right off the bat, the better question is, "What will I get for my money?"

With cheapo IT companies, the answer is not much. Maybe they'll be there when the server breaks down or if Microsoft Word is acting weird on your computer. But you can bet they won't help you implement IT systems that will prevent real, catastrophic issues from arising – the kinds of things that determine the success or failure of a company at the most basic level.

Today, business and technology go hand in hand. It's an inescapable fact that good tech forms the pillars upon which successful companies stand. Many business owners still insist on cutting corners with IT, hiring cheap and inexperienced "professionals" to protect and support the most fundamental aspects of their operation.

Of course, it's hard to fault them for doing so. Without a firm grasp of a business's IT needs, it's all too easy for a subpar, would-be IT partner to convince an owner they meet the company's requirements. That's why the question, "What will I get for my money?" is so important. IT support coverage needs to be comprehensive, addressing every potential sink-or-swim crisis before it actually happens. The integrity of your...

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network infrastructure should support your business, rather than force you to run around putting out fires.

A downed server or temporarily unreliable network might seem like minor issues, but even the smallest of IT problems can easily snowball into an expensive nightmare that threatens your company's very existence.

Take a company that stores all its data on a central, networked server, for example. Maybe they're a content creation firm, with terabytes of custom-designed client marketing materials stashed away, or a large law practice with thousands of vital case documents. They were reluctant to spend much on IT support, so they went with the cheapest option available. Of course, regular server maintenance wasn't included in their package, but they assumed their trusty hardware would keep kicking for at least a few more years. But when an employee tries to access the database, an error pops up. Upon further investigation, it turns out the outdated server has finally

> **"When technology works, it's easy to imagine that it'll continue working without issue. But the fact is that a computer network requires constant, behind-the-scenes monitoring and maintenance to ensure it stays up and running, not to mention secure."**

broken down, apparently for good. All those documents, all that data instrumental to the basic functionality of the company, is irrecoverable – thousands of hours of work (and thousands of dollars) down the drain, and all because of an issue that would easily have been caught and prevented by a team of qualified IT experts.

When technology works, it's easy to imagine that it'll continue working without issue. But the fact is that a computer network requires constant, behind-the-scenes monitoring and maintenance to ensure it stays up and running, not to mention secure.

From hordes of hackers waiting in the wings for you to slip up, to hardware failure, to natural disasters, rogue employees and a million other IT threats, it's important to ensure the stability of your network before a problem comes knocking. Cheap Band-Aid solutions work great until the day they cost you thousands. It's better to invest in a team of real IT experts, and avoid crisis altogether. It's much cheaper to prevent something from breaking than it is to replace it altogether.

Refer-a-Friend and Get Free Gifts!

We **love** having customers like you and honestly, we wish we had more just like you! So, we are doing an ongoing "**Refer-a-Friend**" event.

Refer any company with 5 or more computers to our office to receive a FREE Computer Network Assessment (a $300 value). Once we've completed our initial appointment with your referral, we'll send you a **$50 Amazon gift card**. For **every referral** that you send, you get a $50 gift card as your referrals complete the Network Assessment. Just a small "Thank You" for thinking of us. As an added bonus, if they join and become a client of ours, **we will send you a $500 Amazon Gift Card** for introducing your friend to us.

Simply call us (**401-684-3036),** e-mail us (support@itsupportri.com) or visit www.ITsupportRI.com/referral and send us their contact information today!

Technology Spotlight: Leeo Smart Alert Alarm

What if we told you that there's a way to make your smoke detectors smart? Well, the Leeo Smart Alert Alarm can do <u>exactly</u> that. It monitors your existing smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to protect your home from disaster.

The Leeo Smart Alert is a simple, wall plug-in monitoring system. It is equipped with a microphone and temperature, humidity, and ambient light sensors. If your alarms begin to sound, Leeo will notify you immediately by sending an alert directly to your phone. It will send an in-app or push notification, and an automated phone call.

Leeo wants you to take action immediately, so it presents you with three options: "Listen Now," "Call 911," or "False Alarm".

You can listen to an embedded recording to see if it's there's an emergency. If it is an emergency, Leeo provides you with the phone number to the fire department that is local to your home, allowing you to call 911. After listening to the recording, and you decide that it is not an emergency, you can dismiss the alert as being a false alarm.

If you don't respond to your alerts, Leeo will begin calling your emergency contacts. This way, you can be certain that someone will respond to your emergency before it's too late.

All you need to do is plug Leeo in, download the free app, and connect to your Wi-Fi. You can rest easy knowing that your home is safe when you're not there.

You can purchase the Leeo Smart Alert Alarm on Amazon.com, starting at $49.99.

Run Your Next Meeting Like A CEO

As both a CEO for a couple of decades and a humble bystander, I've grown to appreciate the fine art of how to run a meeting well. I have seen billionaire tech CEOs run meetings where people cried their eyes out they were so inspired, and I've seen frontline supervisors at an aluminum can manufacturing company run meetings so poorly that people were falling asleep, heads clunking down on the table.
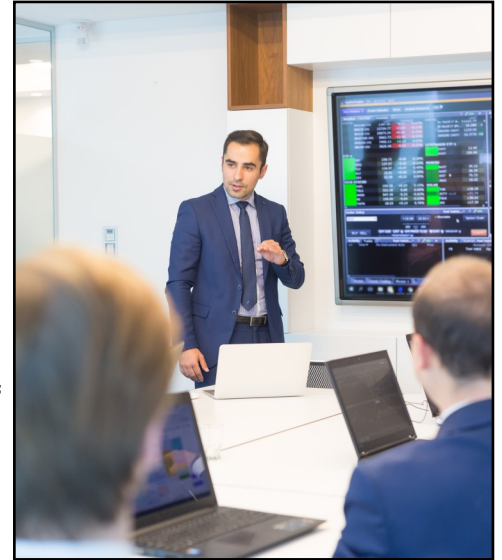
Want to run your next meeting like a CEO? Here are three ways experts avoid rookie mistakes and elevate their meetings to the next level.

1 Make an agenda with three simple questions.

This is an absolute ninja level of CEO wizardry. As many authors have said, success comes not when you have all the answers, but when you ask all the right questions. Show you have CEO swagger and print on a piece of paper (and include in the online calendar appointment) three simple questions for the itinerary. Simple questions make valuable meetings.

2 Summarize key points you hear.

Meetings get sidetracked when lots of people are talking and nobody is summarizing key points as you go. Great leaders often pause naturally about every 10 minutes and take the time to summarize the key points they're hearing. Little statements like, "It sounds like one big conclusion we are making is X" or, "One big question I hear us asking is Y" can have a tremendous impact. Right after these summary statements, you'll see the conversation turn toward a decision point and boom – a decision is made.

3 Make people feel safe.

I once heard a governor tell a skittish junior staffer, "Tell me more about what you mean by that. I want to understand." On another occasion, a CEO told a new member of her team, "I am not promising I'm going to share your point of view, but I want to understand it. So tell me more." The best CEOs don't want to intimidate people in meetings. Instead, they make people feel safe, so that everyone feels open to sharing useful information without fear of retribution or being made to look stupid. Make people feel respected, heard and appreciated, and you'll be impressed by the value of the information you learn, and the solutions that come from your team.

Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the New York Times *bestselling book* Who: A Method for Hiring *and the author of the No. 1* Wall Street Journal *best-seller* Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) into Government. *Geoff co-created the Topgrading brand of talent management. Geoff is the Founder of two 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring and the Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a BA in Economics with Honors from Northwestern University, an MA, and a PhD. in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.*

Experts of the Month:

"The Team at Gardiner Whiteley Boardman Insurance"

Are you looking for an insurance agency that has a dedicated and knowledgeable staff? Do you want your insurance agent to treat you like a person and not a number? Well look no further! The team at Gardiner Whiteley Boardman Insurance is here to help.

Gardiner & Whiteley Inc. was established in 1957 by Charles H. Gardiner and William R. Whiteley. Over 50 years later Gardiner & Whiteley Inc., now known as Gardiner Whiteley Boardman, is a premier, full-service insurance agency. They're available to help you with your personal and business insurance needs. At Gardiner Whiteley Boardman, they believe that their personal service mixed with their sophisticated technology distinguishes them as the leading independent insurance agency in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

What makes them different from other insurance agencies in the area? At Gardiner Whiteley Boardman, they provide "old school customer service". They take the time to get to know all their clients on a personal level. They believe in putting the time in to understand each client's insurance risk, which helps to eliminate the likelihood of a claim. By assessing and eliminating all their clients' risks, they can help reduce the cost of their insurance.

Even though they haven't been with us long, account executive Timothy Mailloux already had plenty of nice things to say. When asked what he liked best about working with the team at SNECS, Mailloux believes that the two things that stand out the most are the proactiveness and responsiveness of our team. Mailloux states, "It's nice that SNECS takes care of all of our updates. They will take the lead on any issues before they become a bigger issue. In the rare instance we do have issues, the technicians jump right on it and quickly and efficiently resolve the problem."

If you would like to learn more about Gardiner Whiteley Boardman Insurance, you can visit them online at www.gwbinsurance.com. You can also call them directly at 401-726-3330 to speak to a team member. You can even email Timothy Mailloux directly at Tim@GWBInsurance.com.

How To Prevent Hackers From Stealing Your Phone Data

Unfortunately, even though you keep an enormous amount of personal data on your phone, most phones don't have any security software. To combat this, update your phone's operating system at the earliest opportunity. Then, set up an auto-lock system, backed by a six-digit passcode. Ditch as many apps as possible with access to your camera, contacts and email. And when you're out and about on the town, disable WiFi and Bluetooth. At the very least, adjust the settings to stop your phone from connecting to unprotected networks. Next time you're at Starbucks getting some work done, absolutely don't enter any passwords or credit card numbers until you're back home. —*Inc.com*

"I miss the old days when we could just tout things."

Successful Leaders Never, Ever Do These Things

Any good leader is constantly striving to elevate their skills, draw their team together, and steer the ship to profits and success. But even the most vigilant bosses often make some basic mistakes, most of which come down to one often-neglected fact: a good leader's primary concern should always be to serve the needs of their people.

Too many business owners fail to realize that their employees are real people, not just instruments or machines you can exploit to elevate you to the top. A topdown structure will always eventually fail, while a collaborative, participatory structure can only grow stronger as it ages and expands.

The fact is, no matter how smart a leader is, they don't have all the answers – they don't even get close. Intelligent leaders realize this and treat their fellow idea-makers as their most important asset, valuing input and creativity over their own egos. Not only that, but they're available to communicate with the team, instead of existing as some invisible force barking orders from on high. —*Inc.com*