TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"

What's New

B4 Networks welcomes their newest employee:

TONY FUTINO

Learn more about Tony on page 4

January 2019

"As a business owner, I know you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

Bryan Lachapelle, President

B4 Networks

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The Top 3 Lessons I Learned From *Shark Tank's* Robert Herjavec For Growing A Multimillion-Dollar Business From Rags To Riches

Today, Robert Herjavec is known as the beloved "nice judge" on ABC's *Shark Tank*, but if you ask him, he thinks the descriptor "fair" is more appropriate. Whatever you call him, make no mistake: he's one of the most shrewd and successful businesspeople of our time. Despite humble beginnings while growing up in former Yugoslavia, Herjavec managed to leverage his endless drive and acumen into a long list of multimillion-dollar business ventures, including Herjavec Group, now a global leader in IT security services.

When someone gets officially dubbed a Shark and becomes one of the most visible faces in the business world, you might expect them to lose touch a little bit. But that's just

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not the case with Robert Herjavec. At a recent conference, I had the pleasure of seeing him speak. It was clear that he wasn't just there for a paycheck. He genuinely wanted to share his wealth of knowledge with all the attendees. Here are a few key lessons Herjavec schooled us on and how they can help your business.

1. YOU'VE GOT TO SHOW UP.

Right as he took the stage, Herjavec delivered a simple but vital piece of encouragement to everyone in attendance. "I congratulate everyone for being here," he said with a smile. "Because the key to success is you gotta show up." Whether you're making time for an event or just struggling to survive, "if you don't show up, you can't win."

The fact is that it's easy to get caught up in the minute-to-minute chaos of running a business. It's just as easy to get tired out, start slipping or begin questioning why we're trying at all. But, as Herjavec was so eager to point out, we need to bring ourselves fully to the task at hand if we hope to carve out our chunk of success. Sure, we'll have bad days, but the more we can be present, prepared and hungry to implement our vision, the better off we'll be.

> ## "WHETHER YOU'RE MAKING TIME FOR AN EVENT OR JUST STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE, 'IF YOU DON'T SHOW UP, YOU CAN'T WIN.'"

2. NOTHING HAPPENS WITHOUT SALES.

Herjavec will be the first to tell you that, starting out, he knew absolutely nothing about the sales world. By his account, he was a "geeky, technical guy" who thought that as long as he offered a great service, customers would show up. Luckily, when he was 23, his friend Ross Marsden – then a global VP of sales – gave him a piece of advice

that would change his life. "You're a great guy, and you really know your stuff," he told Herjavec. "[But] unless you learn sales, you will never be successful."

In response, Herjavec began to learn more about sales and marketing, until he realized, "You can have the best accounting system, the best CRM [and] the best tools, but nothing happens until you sell something." The difference between those Fortune 500 companies dominating the market and the little guys who barely eke out a living? Sales.

"Sales is not a foreign object that controls what you do," he said. "Sales is an extension of what you do."

3. "EVERY DAY, SOMEBODY WAKES UP WITH THE SOLE INTENTION OF KICKING YOUR @SS."

After hearing fellow Shark Mark Cuban say this during the first season of filming *Shark Tank*, Herjavec got it chiseled in granite above his desk. "One of the hardest things about becoming more successful is success," he said. Because when you're no longer that "hungry, young person looking to take on the world," you get to a point where you're content enough to let your life (and business) stagnate. Herjavec said, "The minute you want it to be like it is, don't forget there's somebody out there – like you were many years ago – who wants to take it away from you."

The antidote to this attitude, according to Herjavec, is to keep selling, keep growing and keep pushing. "If one of your top three tasks every day isn't 'Sell something,' you're going to fail," he said.

"It's like a mantra in my mind: constant forward momentum." If your company isn't growing *at least* at the rate of the market, you're losing ground. Customer service and excellent products are vital, but if you lose sight of the importance of sales, you're bound to the path of mediocrity.

Of all the wisdom Robert Herjavec imparted to us, that was the most inspiring. It doesn't matter how big or small your business is. Sell what you have, and stay hungry.

Good Morale Means Profitability

Employee morale is a fickle thing, going up and down seemingly without reason, a rollercoaster ride of emotions and profitability. Of course, you can't control people's emotions, but with the right approach, you can steer company morale consistently in the right direction. Here are a few tips to do just that.

1. INITIATE A DAILY HUDDLE.
The stories we tell ourselves have more impact on our emotions than perhaps anything else. But by holding standing mini-meetings of no more than 10 minutes every day, you can spark a new, authentic story in your work community. Let people share their challenges, the actions they're taking to overcome them, and their victories.

One thing, though: if you do start doing a daily huddle, make sure you keep it consistent for the entire life of your company. Leaving huddles hanging is a surefire way to plummet morale.

2. CHANGE UP THE WORK SCHEDULE.
When people fall into an emotional rut, they're often in an action rut as well. Let your employees switch up their daily work schedules, and it will help jar them out of sluggishness. Letting someone start late on Monday to allow them to clear up some personal baggage can go a long way.

3. REMIND THEM OF THE "WHY."
People tend to get fixated on the "what" of your business, and the day-to-day grind begins to cause fatigue. To stir up passion and purpose among your team, direct everyone's attention to the deeper meaning behind the work they do. The more compelling and fleshed out your company mission is, the easier it'll be to stick to it and stay happy.

4. LISTEN.
The first thing many customer service reps learn is that angry people need to vent before they are open to change. Meet with disgruntled team members individually or in small groups to learn about the problems they're facing. However, avoid big groups — these tend to spawn soapboxers who will bring more problems forward than you can fix.

5. LET THEM TAKE NAPS.
Seriously! Ever had a critical conversation with your significant other when you were both exhausted? I'm guessing it didn't go too well. Well, it's the same thing with your employees. Giving your team a "dark room" to take a 20-minute power nap shows that you genuinely care about them, not to mention boosting their productivity when they return to work.

6. TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM.
When your people are facing a particularly nasty obstacle and morale is sinking, be the ultimate leader and shoulder the burden for them. Take on the dirty work, handle the confrontation, and show the team you're there to serve them.

Once you've taken action and morale is lifting, it's your job to keep the momentum going. With regular communication and authentic leadership, you can keep mood dips brief and keep everyone working together for a common goal. Don't blame your team — it's your responsibility to maintain positivity, trust, and cooperation in the office.

MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL-o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford – a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multimillion-dollar business. Then he did it again. And again. Now he is doing it for other entrepreneurs. Mike is the CEO of Provendus Group. He is also a former small-business columnist for The Wall Street Journal; MSNBC's business makeover expert; a keynote speaker on entrepreneurship and the author of the cult classic book The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur and the instant new classic, ClockWork, his latest book. For more information, visit www.mikemichalowicz.com.

How Does Your Current I.T. Provider Compare?

Our December 2018 Service Key Performance Indicators

84%
8 Business Hour Ticket Resolution

95%
Client Satisfaction

5 mins
Average Response Time

■ 4 Ways Your Employees Will Invite Hackers Into Your Network

Cyber security is a complicated issue, no matter how you slice it, but one of the surest ways to reduce your risk and strengthen your defenses against hackers is to educate your team. Forewarned is forearmed, so make sure they fully understand the risks associated with the most common social engineering strategies. **Phishing**, the most prevalent, uses e-mails, chats or web ads impersonating trusted entities to trick employees into clicking malicious links. **Baiting** is similar, but purports to offer something enticing, such as a music or movie download, to deliver malware onto your system. **Quid pro quo** hackers offer a "service" in exchange for access to private data, such as an employee's login credentials. **Tailgating** is when an unauthorized person physically follows one of your employees into a restricted area or asks to "borrow" their device for a bit and steals all the info they need directly.

Make sure your team is on the lookout for these malicious techniques, and you'll be that much more secure. *SmallBizTrends.com, 9/20/2018*

■ Use These 3 Strategies To Break Your Bad Tech Habits

If you're trying to kick an addiction to your smartphone and other addictive tech, and you're tempted to turn to them whenever you feel uncomfortable or anxious, don't give up. Instead of seeking a distraction whenever you feel bored – for example, checking your e-mail for the 10th time or logging in to Facebook – learn to embrace silence, and yes, even boredom. If you find yourself checking your phone too much at work, set physical boundaries to restrict yourself. Put it in your desk or another place that adds an extra step to accessing it. The next time you have downtime, instead of whipping out your device right away, mull over a specific problem or idea on your own – you might be surprised what you discover. *Inc.com, 7/20/2018*

Don't take our word for it. Here's what a client is saying about us:

"THE PERSONAL SERVICE IS BAR NONE, THE BEST I'VE EVER SEEN, THE SERVICE IS JUST PHENOMENAL."

"Our old provider was very frustrating. They meant well, but it was very hard to get service. We would be down for hours, and sometimes days, or even weeks before things would get taken care of. Now with B4 Networks, the service is phenomenal. Our staff is never unhappy, B4 Networks is here sometimes before I am. If they spot a problem, they will be waiting in the driveway before I even get here. The personal service is bar none, the best I've ever seen, the service is just phenomenal".

Pamela St. Jean, Administrator, Thorold Auto Parts

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST EMPLOYEE, TONY FUTINO!

I'm Tony Futino, I'm the new Computer Service Desk Dispatch and Triage Tech at B4 Networks.. I graduated from Mohawk College in 1991 from Computer System Technology. I've worked over 25 years in many IT roles supporting in the financial industry in Toronto. I have recently had to opportunity to move back the Niagara Region. I have always liked the challenge of working on technical issues. It could be as small as a client not being able to print or as big as trading floor being down before the market opens. The satisfaction of exceeding or meeting the client's expectation is so satisfying. I look forward to getting to know our current and future clients!

LOVES: Animals, Golfing, Volunteering for Wheels for Hope, Star Trek & The Big Bang Theory

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

GE's New Smart Microwave

As more and more household devices go toward the Internet of Things' (IoT) direction, General Electric is following suit with its new WiFi-enabled smart countertop microwave. With the capability to sync with Amazon's Alexa, it aims to change the microwave game.

While it can't put the food you want to cook into the microwave by itself, it can do pretty much everything else in the process. All you need to do is scan the barcode of a specific food with a smartphone camera, and then the microwave will cook it perfectly using the exact correct time and power level. Over time, the microwave's library of known foods will grow. Eventually, you can just tell Alexa what you're cooking and have the dish heated to perfection.

Now, you might be wondering why we'd use smart technology to make microwaving a hot pocket even easier. But hey – it's the wave of the future. The extra features make it worth the relatively low price alone.

Buy it from amazon.com for USD $125

Client of the MONTH

CEM Engineering specializes in cogeneration and energy management solutions. They provide a range of services that include consulting, detailed design, contract administration and commission services. They are highly motivated to help you identify and implement any technology based solution which will result in less energy consumed and reach your environmental goals.

CEM is a thermal power engineering firm based in St. Catharines, ON. They are a team of over 35 mechanical engineers, electrical engineers, civil/structural engineering, designers and support staff. They are a leading developer and designer in custom-engineered solutions specializing in cogeneration, energy management, boilers, power generation, biomass/biogas and district energy.

CEM Engineering was established in 2001 by Martin Lensink with the goal of providing solutions to the energy and environmental sectors.

If you'd like to contact CEM Engineering, they can be reached at **905-935-5818**. They are located at 227 Bunting Drive, St. Catharines, ON.

Do You Know Someone That Needs Computer Support?

In our opinion, referrals from very happy clients and their employees are the greatest form of flattery. We love it when you're so pleased with our services, that you're willing to recommend us to other business owners you have a relationship with!

If you know someone who is looking for computer support for their company, you will receive $100 for every referral you send our way.

If your referral becomes one of our managed clients, you will receive a cheque up to the amount of one month of their signed agreement. That could be up to $5000 in your own pocket!

For full details about our referral program and to submit your referral, please visit www.b4networks.ca/referral-program today and get us in contact with your friends to-

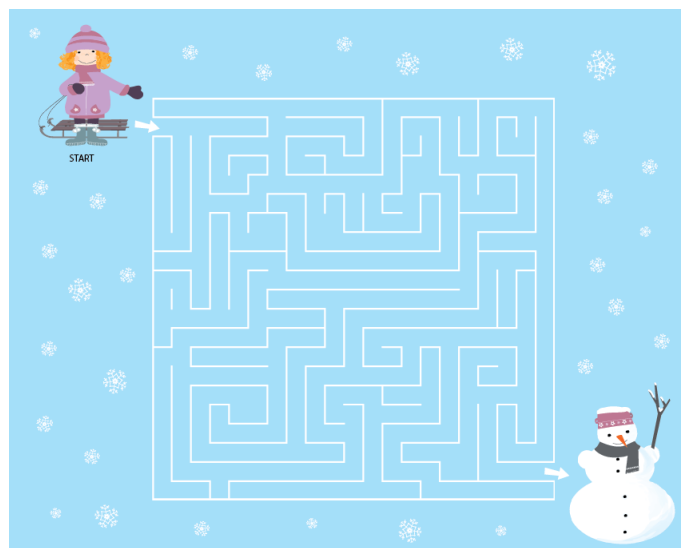**RECEIVE UP TO $5000 FOR EACH FRIEND YOU HAVE REFERRED TO US.**

January Highlights

Jan. 1 • New Years Day
Jan. 4 • Trivia Day
Jan. 8 • Bubble Bath Day
Jan. 14 • Organize Your Home Day
Jan. 17 • Kid Inventors Day
Jan. 21 • Hugging Day
Jan. 24 • Belly Laugh Day
Jan. 25 • Fun at Work Day
Jan. 29 • Puzzle Day

Game Time

Help her find her way to the snowman

Are IT Issues Ruining Your Workplace Productivity?

Studies show that at least 22 minutes a day are wasted by an average worker dealing with IT-related issues. According to the poll, the leading cause of time wasted in the workplace is related to cell phone use, which ranked the highest at 50%, gossip which followed at 42%, and closely behind was internet use at 39%. This article will briefly outline how companies can work through IT issues so that they can save on time. And time is money.

HOW MUCH TIME IS 22 MINUTES REALLY?

Going by the average time in a 40-hour workweek, 22 minutes a day is close to two hours of work time lost each week. Imagine what that equals for a full year or 52 weeks. It comes out to be over 95 hours per year per person. When translated into days, that is close to two weeks spent dealing with IT-related problems.

WHAT ARE THESE IT ISSUES AT THE WORK PLACE?

Some of the IT-related issues are technical in nature and they include:

- Software malfunctions
- Freezing computers
- Scanner or printer issues
- Old computer systems
- Annoying pop-ups
- Internet traffic delays

These are just a few of the issues that cause frustration for employees. If not handled well, they can lead to time wasted and low productivity, not to mention grumpy employees.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION TO THE IT-RELATED PROBLEMS?

Companies should have a help desk where employees can go and report IT issues as soon as they occur so that they can be resolved in the earliest instance. This is to ensure that a problem is resolved before it escalates, thus saving time for everyone.

Apart from fixing the problem, IT staff should be encouraged by the employer to share tips on preventive measures to similar problems to avoid them from recurring. Educating employees is always a good idea. It's cost-effective and just makes sense.

Companies should also invest in modern technical equipment. This way, computer systems, and networks are easier to maintain, less problematic, and also ensure efficient work delivery. Companies should confirm that the IT staff is well skilled. Hire trainers or allow employees to enroll in various training programs so they can learn all about the changing trends in technology.

Technology is meant to save time and make work more efficient, but when it decides to act up, it can actually cause headaches. Lack of knowledge is another major cause of employees wasting too much time on simple things that can be avoided in the first place. Whoever provides your IT services should have an in-house department or a third-party firm hired to conduct regular training for employees. They should be performing regular maintenance and upgrades to all systems. Training the employees regularly or after installing a new system can make a big difference when it comes to saving time-related to IT issues.

Training employees might not be the first solution a company thinks of but it's often the most cost-effective way to avoid wasting valuable time. Of course, it can help to hire savvy employees with proficient computer skills. But even if they know how to fix common IT issues, you don't want a bunch of amateurs working on your valuable software and hardware systems. When the same IT provider does all your upgrades and maintenance, he becomes familiar with your business. This is where you'll get the best return on your IT investment.

The IT department in an organization should ensure that regular updates are installed to prevent cyber-attacks. Outdated software can malfunction, thus slowing down work efficiency and delivery. This is also a major gateway for cyber thieves to enter your system and take it down.

WRAP UP

The best way to resolve IT-related issues is to treat the problem as a team effort. The stakeholders, such as heads of departments, should be well aware of the necessary steps to be taken to protect your data and keep all systems running smoothly.

The secret to avoiding costly IT errors is to detect an issue and have it attended to as soon as possible, so it doesn't grow into a bigger problem. Communication is also very important. Make sure employees are aware of how to handle IT problems. Teach them to report these issues right away. Help them do their jobs better with good cybersecurity training. At the end of it all, employee productivity is the ultimate goal. This will improve your bottom line and make sure your staff is happy and productive.

Contact us at info@b4networks.ca or 905-346-4966 to find out more about how we can help make sure your employees won't run into costly downtime.

TEK TIP   PHOTO ALBUM

Best Microsoft Word Add-Ins

1. **CONSISTENCY CHECKER**
   This add-in does way more than the built-in grammar tool. It scans your document for proper hyphenation, variations in spellings, numbers in sentences, abbreviations, typos and much more.

2. **DOCUSIGN**
   This add-in allows you to electronically sign and send documents within Microsoft Word.

3. **TEXTALOUD**
   For those of us who hate proofreading, this add-in reads your document aloud to you so you can hear how it sounds.

4. **OFFICE TABS**
   This add-in helps you manage several Word documents all at once within one document. It creates a tab for each file.

5. **DICTATE**
   This is a speech recognition add-in that converts your verbal words into text.

6. **PICKIT**
   This add-in gives you access to a huge library of HD images, clip art and layout design idea for creating appealing documents.

7. **TRANSLATOR**
   This add-in will automatically detect the language and translate it to the destination language.