



Leanne Hoagland-Smith
ADVANCED SYSTEMS
*Building Raving Fans while Multiplying
Productivity to Profitability*
219.759.5601
or <http://www.processspecialist.com/>

Power Choices© **March 2008**

***"Opportunity is missed
by most people because
it is dressed in overalls
and looks like work."***

Thomas A. Edison

Power Choice – Opportunity

What is an opportunity? (Encarta)

- ◆ An advantageous circumstance
- ◆ A chance for progress, advancement or improvement

Why seek opportunities?

We often spend a great deal of a time drifting along, oblivious prospects to have a happier life, a healthier life, yes even a wealthier life. We spend our much of our time worrying about being sick, unemployed, bored or unsuccessful in love and life than investing our time to identify the opportunities that surround us.

How can we identify Opportunities?

Create a process! First, consider the possibility that **opportunities** are available everywhere, so, **be open!** Secondly, use the **opportunity** seeking to help you **solve a problem** that you have. Not enough money, too much weight, too little time, no relationship. Third, **set a goal** for your self to look for the right person, the right tool, the right event to help you solve your problem. Finally, create a mini **action plan** so that you start focusing on being aware when an opportunity presents itself.

When we take advantage of situations, networking events, family outings, social networks, clubs or professional organizations that can provide us with an idea, a solution, support, a new contact, you name it **opportunities** abound. The chances are virtually limitless. Or you can find **opportunities** to "worry." It's up to you.



Tips to Discovering Opportunities

- Be aware
- Be focused
- Be open
- Be a planner
- Be adventurous
- Be creative
- Be vocal, ask for ideas
- Be a great listener

Most of all...

- Be Positive!

***"Every problem is just
an opportunity waiting
to be made use of."***

Anonymous



Laura R. Novakowski
Positive Power Strategies, Inc.
**Inspiring People to Discover
Their Health & Wealth**
570.477.3388 or
<http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

***"Good fortune is what happens
when opportunity meets with planning."***

Thomas Edison

Lost Opportunities

Laura Novakowski

There's a great story about a man and a rainstorm. The rain had been falling heavily and a knock came at his front door. "Sir, you need to come with me, I can drive you out before the roads close." The man looked at a young and said, "I'm fine, God will provide a way out if I need it."

The rain continued the river rose and the roads were washed away. Soon the man's house was surrounded by water. A boat floated up to his second story window and a man said, "Sir, jump in the river is rising fast and I can escort you to safety." The man again replied, "I'm fine, God will provide a way out if I need it."

Still the rain continued, and soon the man had to move to the roof of his house. A helicopter flew over head and a voice shouted, "Grab for the ladder sir, we can lift you to safety." Once again, the man yelled back, "I'm fine, God will provide a way out if I need it."

The rain continued and the man drowned. He faced God and shouted in frustration, "Why didn't you provide me with a way out?" God replied, "I sent a car, a boat and a helicopter, **you** missed the **opportunities** I offered you."

How often do we miss opportunities to grow, change, learn or leave? We often feel that we are trapped in job or relationship, missing the chance to find the benefits offered: different points-of-view, perspectives or approaches. We go to events with our minds set on already being bored and fail to meet a new person or hear an interesting idea. We read a novel for escape and overlook the applications to life and work. We fail to ask for help missing the **opportunity** to have someone help us to learn an easier, more effective, more profitable way of doing business.

Some ideas pop into your mind but failed to take action upon. Next year you're reading about a product or service that you thought about but failed follow through. You had a dream and failed to set goals to make that dream come true. Believe me, I know. I've lost more **opportunities** than I care to count and lost **opportunities** are gone forever.

However, I have found that there are some very simple ways to capitalize rather than lose **opportunities**. I make a **PACT** with myself everyday. Each morning, I **P**lan to see or find three new **opportunities** every day to learn from, a person to meet... I'm sure your getting the idea. I check my **A**ttitude to be open and interested. I **C**ontact one person that will give me insight or a fresh perspective. I **T**ake a different approach to solving a problem or reaching a destination.

I may not see every **opportunity**, but I can assure you, there a lot less lost **opportunities** in my life. How about **you**, are you open to creating a **PACT** for yourself and not have so many lost **opportunities** in your life?



Laura Novakowski, MBA, RN

Positive Power Strategies, Inc.

*Inspiring People and Businesses to Discover
Extraordinary Health & Wealth*

<http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

Lost Opportunity = No Action

Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.

"The ladder of success is best climbed by stepping on the rungs of opportunity."

Ayn Rand

A very short story: Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning a lion wakes up. It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death. It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle. **When the sun comes up, you had better be running.** (Source: Unknown)

Action is what separate the successful from the not so successful in business and in life. **Opportunities** are really just people taking actions on some thoughts or some ideas. These individuals are always thinking, using their secret resource, their mind. (See last month's issue)

When no action is taken, a lost **opportunity** is the result. President Theodore Roosevelt said: *In any moment of decision, the BEST THING you can do is the RIGHT THING; the next best thing is the WRONG THING; and the worst thing you can do is NOTHING.* He clearly understood the value of **opportunity** and being an individual with a Carpe Diem attitude.

By embracing a seize the day attitude, we are truly seizing, taking action on the **opportunities** that fall in front of us to the side of us. All we have to do is bend down or step to the side to look at this **opportunity**. Sure, maybe it is not the right one, but you do not know until you actually examine, think about and even try it.

Failed **opportunities** provide the springboard for our own knowledge where we learn from our mistakes. As Thomas Edison remarked: *I learned 5,000 ways not to invent a lightbulb.*

Risk takers understand the gold hidden within **opportunities**. For they know that most people will continue to stay on the *Island of Misery* because taking the **opportunity** to cross the *Seas of Fear and Uncertainty* to the *Island of Success and Opportunity* is too much of a risk. Sure things and very few **opportunities** are sure things are what many people want and cannot have. They become the regrets of yesterday and yesteryear.

Regrets are the results of not taking the **opportunities** that life presents us each and every day. Have you ever heard or even thought *"If I had taken that job, I would be so much happier,"* or *"I should have started my own business"* or *"Why didn't I do that?"* From these regrets spring the self-imposed limitations against taking advantage of new **opportunities**.

Take action this month and seize one new **opportunity**. Remember, regardless if you are a lion or a gazelle, you must begin each day running, taking action on that **opportunity**.



Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.

Your Chief People Officer

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America the Beautiful

Stephen Sisselman

**A Question for March:
What are your inner most desires?**

The old saying is that America is the land of **opportunity**. Is it? The land may not be magical itself but the way in which people use its great resources makes it that way. The greatest of those resources is the human mind. Our minds can see far beyond the horizon of "the right now " and see the **opportunity** of what lies beyond. **Opportunity** is what built this country as our ancestors saw the potential and went to work.

When you know how to look for them, **opportunities** exist everywhere. Our innermost desires have great **opportunity** because they are filled with passion. This month, ask yourself the question, what are my innermost desires and what can I do in order to align them with the **opportunities** that exist in my life to get them? Perhaps your not sure what your innermost desires are. Take a moment to clear your head, what would bring you to a heavenly place?

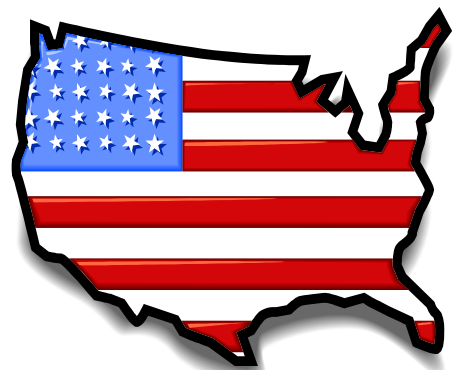
Go a little deeper and discover what a heavenly place is for you. What does it look like? What does it smell and taste like? Are you surprised by its appearance or your reactions? Next, make a **PACT** with yourself to create that heavenly space.

Remember that your heavenly space doesn't have to look like anyone else's but your own. It may be a beach house, an apartment in New York, a hut in a forest in a far away land, a state of mind, a Sunday morning enjoying a cup of coffee in your favorite coffee house, a peaceful night sleep, or spending more time with those you love.

Do not forget the best heavenly spaces are those we already have. Look to your daily life to find the small things that make you smile: A hot shower, the sound of your cat purring, a hot cup of coffee, the smell of bacon in the pan, the sound of your children laughing. The **opportunity** for peace exists in everyone's life.

If you're open to them, **opportunities** exist everywhere. Create a space in your life to be granted all the **opportunities** life has to offer. America **IS** the land of **opportunity**, enjoy it!

Make everyday a day to remember!
Stephen Sisselman, BS, MT (ASCP), MS
Positive Power Strategies, Inc
ssisselman@earthlink.net
(347)558-4082



Laura and Leanne

Where do you find **opportunities**? Easier said than done you might be thinking? Possibly, you may first need to open your mind. Many people believe that they truly have opened minds, but the reality of negative conditioning and self imposed limitations keep really great people from seeing exceptional opportunities.

For example, place the number 1 in its logical sequence in the following set of numbers:

8 5 4 9 7 6 3 2 0

If you spent more than one minute to solving this problem, then you probably do not know the answer. Due to past conditioning, you began this challenge by looking for patterns to adding or subtracting numbers. This is exactly why you cannot solve this problem. Your mind is literally blind to the correct solution that is not mathematically based.

Look at the number 0. What letter does it begin with? Now look to the number 8. What letter does it begin with? Now, do you have the answer? If not, the logical sequence of the above numbers is alphabetical and therefore the number 1 goes in between the 9 and 7.

To find **opportunities**, means we must continually challenge our own mind, thoughts and beliefs. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale said: ***Change your thoughts; Change your world.*** By taking that action, you will begin to see the incredible abundance of opportunities around you each and every day. Of course, once again, the real issue here is action. Keep the *Lion and the Gazelle* story close to you and read it when you think you need a boost in seeing those endless **opportunities** surrounding you.

More Opportunity Quotes

"He who refuses to embrace a unique opportunity loses the prizes as surely as if he had failed."

William James

"The door to opportunity is always labeled push."

Unknown

"Freedom mean the opportunity to be what we never thought we could be."

Daniel. J. Boorstin

"High achievers spot rich opportunities swiftly, make big decisions quickly and move into action immediately. Follow these principles and you can make your dreams come true."

Robert H. Schuller



Laura R. Novakowski

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3 Thorny Apple Drive, Hunlock Creek, PA 18621

Phone: 570.477.3388 or check out the website: <http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

Or

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

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508 Sunshine Dr., Valparaiso, IN 46385

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