**Little Changes, Big Results in Small Business**

Hello. It is great to be back from -- with my friends from SCORE. I want to think SCORE, first of all, for providing us with this great platform and it is free and how cool is that. And thank you for taking the time out of your busy day to spend some time with me and us. So often we spend so much time working in our business that we don't take enough time to work on our business so what we will do today is work on our business. I get to wear a lot of hats and I am an officer, as you see there. -- I am an officer and -- and it is a site done by Allstate and Microsoft and some other companies for small business and if you need some small business information tips or tools or small business connections is a great resource for you. I really love this topic we will be talking about today, Little Changes, Big Results in Small Busines, and you can see in my title, also known as the trim tab principle. Stay tuned and I will tell you what that is and how it applies to your business and I want to start by sharing two stories of businesses that became incredibly big and well-known and world-famous indeed. But start out -- started out as small businesses. One handled change well and one did not as we shall say. And let's talk about the first company. Because I think there is of course revisions for change of all sorts of reasons -- for all sorts of reasons but the fact is everything changes and life changes in business changes in tools change in attitudes change -- and attitudes change. And it is incumbent upon us to stay up with those changes and deal with them and the problem is sometimes it is overwhelming and that was certainly the case with a man named Edwin land. In the 30s he went to Harvard and dropped out after his freshman year and interestingly, that will be a theme today, people who drop out of Harvard and some are successful and some were not. But he dropped out. He was scientific and did some research at school on polarizing light and he went and got his first patent and he was 24 years old and he got a patent and did some special things with light and started a company that would eventually, as I said, become world-famous. In the 1940s, he did a lot of scientific work and he was on vacation with his family. His three-year-old daughter asked him why she could not see the picture he had just taken of her that day and he got a whack on the side of the head and created what became known as the Polaroid. His name was Edwin Land. And Polaroid, at one point, for you youngsters, it was synonymous with instant pictures. Think about that. That is an amazing thing. He invented the very first instant camera. We all take instant pictures. That is what many of us do during the day. You probably took one today or yesterday or the day before. This was invented, though, by Land in the 1940s. In the 1960s and 70s, Polaroid became one of the biggest companies on the planet and people bought them and we have all seen them of course in the old days. But here is the interesting thing. Have you taken a Polaroid picture lately? No, you have not. Why is that? Because in 2001, Polaroid declared bankruptcy. All the new technology came online and people started even then taking pictures with their camera, and Polaroid did not keep up with that change. Now look. Polaroid created a new Polaroid and the new one declared bankruptcy in 2008 and there is even a newer one still, still out there. the fact of the matter is, this is a company that did not handle change very well. Let's compare and contrast that with our friends at Starbucks. Again, you probably had a Starbucks recently. I have a cup sitting right here in front of me myself. But there was a time, not very long ago, when Starbucks was not on every big city corner and every suburban mall and drive through's and all of that. Back in 1981, when Howard Schultz was still the CEO of Starbucks, he first walked into a Starbucks and it was hard to find a cup of coffee and Schultz worked for company and he was one of the customers and he walked into Seattle's Pike Place market and never saw anything like it. At that time they did not serve brewed coffee. All they did was serve the beans. But Schultz was enamored of this whole idea of people who love their coffee and beans. Again, it was very hard to find quality coffee beans at that time. In fact, they found owners and got to know them and nudged themselves on and within a year quit his job and moved from the East Coast to the West Coast. He persuaded Starbucks to hire him and he became their marketing manager. In 1983, as stories would have it, he went to Milan, Italy, on a buying a mission to buy beans for Starbucks. At this time, remember, had six stores. It was a small business. When he got to Italy, he saw the Italian coffee houses that are so prevalent throughout all of Italy . The espresso bars, and things like that, he thought this was a fantastic idea. If we could do this back home at the states, this is very different. He had an epiphany at that moment. Heat came back and tried to persuade the other owners, to brew coffee, and they resisted it and did not like it. Eventually, he was so passionate about this idea and he bought them out and he became the CEO and he started brewing coffee and the rest is history. It was not really a big change. They sold coffee. Here is what Schultz set a few years ago's -- ago about this. They were in the business but he said perhaps the wrong part of the coffee business. It is interesting. It is true that change can be hard but it does not have to be hard. Now why is it companies resist change or why you and I resist change ? There are all sorts of reasons. It could be it seems too difficult or it is too complicated or too time-consuming. Psychology today, magazine, and the website, had an article recently on reasons for resistance to change in organizations. And there are all sorts of reasons. One is a misunderstanding of the need for change. Look at when you're staffed and understand the need for change and you can expect resistance from them. Especially from people who believe the current way of doing things is the right way. Maybe they have been doing it for five or 10 or 20 years or whatever the case may be. Other reasons are fear of the unknown, obviously a real common fear for all sorts of us. But it is a common reason that psychology today found that for businesses that don't change, is this fear of the unknown. They often found that people take active steps toward the unknown if they generally believe , and more importantly, feel, that the risk of standing still is greater than that of moving forward. What we will talk about today with the Trimtab Principle, we will make change much easier and not so scary for people.

It may be they feel they lack the competence to act the new way, or they are very connected to the old way. If you ask people in an organization to do something in a new way , and as rational as that may be, you are setting yourself up for often some kind of resistance because there is just hard wiring and people are emotionally connected to doing things a certain way. Tumor reasons. One is your staff or team may not want to change because they don't feel consulted and you didn't communicator you did not communicate well. And then finally number eight is it seems overwhelming. That is certainly -- it can be true but it does not have to be. What happens when you don't change? Have you flown Pan Am recently? You have not. There was a time when they were synonymous with world flights. They were as big as any airline today. But when deregulation came, Pan Am could not make the change and they got out of the business. Or, if there ever was an organization, an entity, that needed a change, it was the old Soviet union. It was the old Eastern Bloc, the Berlin wall falling down. Clearly, that was a system that did not work in a system that was stagnant, and yet, again, they could not change. The result of them not being able to change is that they were unable or good for the rest of us to keep going. This idea of organizations that resist change, because it seems overwhelming or they are tied to the old way or there is an emotional attachment to the old way. All these reasons are reasons and they are reasons. But the fact of the matter is, change does not have to be overwhelming. Change does not have to be exhausting and it does not have to be frightening. It can actually happen in a few ways. How do we make big changes?

There are two ways to make a big change within your business. One is you tackle a giant project. You think to yourself, or you know, our marketing isn't working with this product isn't working, this location isn't working. This business isn't working. And we had to make wholesale big changes in that is truly difficult. There is no doubt about that. When the case comes that that is necessary, well, it may be you waited too long to make the change. It may be there are so many fundamental things that are wrong that making the change won't be easy, but whatever the case is the idea is it will be making a change with a lot of buy-in and a whole new direction is sometimes necessary is the only way to make a change. There is an easier and simpler, better, more effective, faster way to make change, and that is the Trimtab Principle way of making change. Let me begin this way so John wooden is one of the greatest coaches in history and he was one of the she was the UCLA basketball coach for many years back when UCLA was a dynasty in the 60s and 70s and into the 80s and I went to UCLA myself but I want you to look at this quote from John Wooden. It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen. This is a man who knew something about success, about motivating people, about how to get a team, whether it is he's a basketball team or your small business team, going in a United Way, a different direction. I have a picture here of a shoelace. At one point UCLA 18 straight national titles in a row, some incredible number and had some of the greatest players of all time. The list goes on and on. And he had these blue-chip players who would come play for him at UCLA and back then they came to the practices and they thought they were all that, best players in the country, at that time plane for the Brewers. The coach would say, okay, kids, we will start out today by learning how to tie our shoes. What you mean, coach? He said, we are going to learn how to tie our shoes properly. What he explained to them and it is obviously a metaphor, you play basketball on your feet and in your shoes and you may have gotten lazy over the last 10 or 15 years you have been tying your shoes. But there is a proper way to tie your shoe. You tie your shoe properly and your feet are going to be safe and they will be less likely to get injured and you will play better and play your game altogether better. But it was obviously a bigger lesson than just tying your shoe. It was this idea that little details are vital and little things make the big things happen. It is not just John Wooden who says it is all about a little thing that makes a difference. There are, in fact, lots of people who are very smart and very effective who buy into this idea. Look at van Gogh. Look at that incredible painting. Great things are not done by impulse but a series of small things brought together. If you look at that picture of his, starry night, aside from being stunning, it is a series of little patches of paint built upon each other to end up creating magnificence holes. Individually each little dab of paint and impressionistic peace, there is a little dab of paint but together in the right direction, it is a series of small things brought together that create something magnificent. Here is an old Chinese proverb. The man who moves mountains begins by carrying away small stones. It is true, and it is true. [Laughter]. Finally, if there is anyone who is more effective than Oprah, you can tell me who it is. This is a woman who really knows about manifesting and taking ideas and dreams and turning them into physical reality. Here is what she says about this idea. The key to realizing a dream is to focus, not on success, but on significance. I want to read that again. The key to realizing a dream is to focus, not on success, but on significance, and then the vital small steps will take on greater meaning. Here, even Oprah knows that if you take vital small steps they can make a big difference and they end up creating success. It is the significance that can had you in a new direction and you heard me a few times this is also known as the trim -- Trimtab Principle. A little change in the right direction could had you in a new direction and it comes from this man, Buckminster Fuller. He is a hero in my life and others as well. He is not with us anymore. But that dome you see behind them, it is an invention of his. He, in fact, was an incredible -- incredibly successful man but he called himself the world's most successful failure. He invented the dome and you can sit at Epcot Center and you can see some pictures later but all of the different ways you can see this dome. He was also a famous mathematician and poet and he was a chair poetry at Harvard and once a book called Who's Who about all the famous people in the world and had the longest entry ever. The most interesting thing about him among many, is that for the first 30 years of life, he was incredibly unsuccessful. He went bankrupt. He had started and worked in two different businesses, both of which went defunct and he had a daughter who got very sick and his life was not working and didn't work and in fact he was a dropout from Harvard and he got kicked out twice and he spent his semester's tuition on a date with eight zig Field Follies girls. So he was a character for sure. So at age 32, he even tried to kill himself. But what am I doing wrong, what am I doing wrong? He's not my biggest mistake is I am not thinking for myself. I have to make a change. My core issue in my life is that I am doing something everybody else is doing and the mistake I have made again and again the reason I got bankrupt is I am not thinking for myself. So he went silent for two years and emerged as later became known as he tells a story of how you make a change , how he made a change in how organizations and businesses and societies can make a change and he told the story of when he was in the Navy. He used to see these giant ocean liners in the Navy and he thought, look at this tanker here, how do these giant tinkers change direction? There is so much momentum to keep it going in the direction that it is headed in. But he knew though that it is actually not that difficult to get a ocean liner for keeping the same direction and all you need to do is make a little change in the right place and you do that by moving something called the Trimtab. Let's look at how a captain might turn the writer of the ship. The captain turns the wheel and the wheel turns the rudder and the rudder turns the ship, right? Wrong. That is not how it works. It turns out there is so much water pressure on that writer that you can't really change it. So what you do instead is change the direction of a little mini rudder that is on it and it is that yellow piece. It is called the Trimtab. What he realized, Bucky, is that you can make a small change to the Trimtab, and the little change creates a change in the direction of the rudder and it changes in the direction of the ship. I have a quote hear from him about how it works. He said, you know, I was thinking very hard about what one little man could do. The whole ship goes by you and then at the end comes the rudder and there is this little thing at the end called the Trimtab in this miniature rudder. And if you move that a little bit it creates a low pressure system so the whole rudder can come around. It takes almost no effort at all. I said to myself, what an individual can do is be a Trimtab. You can make a change by being a Trimtab. The truth is, you can't make that change by pushing on the rudder with all that water pressure. You have to create a little change to create less pressure. You do that in life by getting rid of the nonsense and getting rid of the things that don't work. This is until you get to that Trimtab motion. It works every time. That is the grand strategy you're going for. One thing I read is that I saw at applied in all sorts of ways and in all sorts of businesses. I do see that now businesses that make change don't have to make these giant big fundamental changes that I was talking about previously. There are two ways to make a change, one is a fundamental change but it does not have to be. A little Trimtab change, in the right direction, and I will emphasize that again, and I will hit that point here in a second. It is the way you can actually make a change that will make a big difference in your business. Here is a Trimtab on a plane. They have them as well. You can see the wing and the flaps and you need a Trimtab to change direction as well and as a result of learning this principle and applying it in his own life, Bucky created this Geo dome and it turns out that structure, that dome structure is that you can create more strength with less material than anything else on earth. There is a 70s dome home and there is actually a great movie out these days about a family from the dome home. I wish I remember it but I don't. You can Google it about a family that lives in one of these and finds it interesting. Even play structures.

What I want you to think about is this idea. I want you to look at these two parallel, almost parallel, lines. At the bottom, they are parallel. Those two blue lines. Now, this actually is only a 5° change. From the bottom of the left mind to the top and the bottom of the right line to the top. At the bottom, you can see they are much closer together and at the top with only a 5° change, they are much farther apart. Just a 5° change, a little change in direction creates a whole new slope for the lines. And/or, right, for your business? That is how it works. The idea is this. You see the idea but how do you actually apply this to business? How do you apply this to your life and career and business? Well, there is, in fact, a three-step Trimtab process. You have to identify the problem and then you have to get to the crux of the issue and then you have to implement the solution. Now, in the case of Bucky, like I said, he decided he was not thinking for himself. That was the change he had to make. But this I Dia, it is not a typo and it is there on purpose to give X marks the spot. If you get to the crux of the issue, and you make a little change at that place, then your trim tab change can make a big difference. If you don't get to the core, at the bottom here were you need to make the change, your change won't last. It will make a difference. But if you get to the crux of it, then your solution will make a lot of sense. Now, what is the crux of your issue? You know that, or you may know that. We will take a few ways to identify what the crux of the issue is.

I know in my business, this process, a few different times, and each time it has resulted in some really significant changes that have made my business more interesting and fun and profitable but the answer I started with was unexpected. At one point I wanted to make a little bit more money in my business. So I started looking at different ways I could do it. In fact, I will hold onto that story for second. The issue is, for starters, identifying the problem. Let's talk about how you can identify the problem.

There are a few ways to do this. One is intuition. The second you can kind of stumble upon a solution. The third is you can ask your team, your team been your staff, maybe it is your partner or spouse or maybe it is your lawyers. And I, being an ex-lawyer, can make lawyer jokes. I came to my senses and don't practice anymore. Let's talk about how that works. In the case of Bucky, as I mentioned, he used intuition. He just thought about his life and thought what am I doing wrong. And his intuition is I am not thinking for myself. It is very possible in your business or life or career and is change you want to make you have a sense of what the problem is of the crux is. I'm not talking about what the solution is. I am talking about what the issue is. The issues are that you have to drill down and get to it. Starbucks has twice made big changes. Once they found the change by happenstance and once it happened by working with your team. So I talked about how Starbucks originally came upon the idea of selling brood coffee which is a ubiquitous idea. But when Howard Schultz came upon it, it was a strange idea. And he only found it by stumbling upon it on a buying trip to Milan Italy. And trusting his intuition and thinking this would really be great. And as an aside, he said to himself, what the Italians are doing, that I can do at home, and I love this idea, is create a third place. You have home and work and then you have a third place and that is what he wanted Starbucks to be, a third place. That is what many people use it for. But he only came upon that idea almost by happenstance. Secondly, you see this beautiful and delicious and high caloric cappuccino there. when Starbucks started, all they did then was sell brewed coffee. Now think about brood coffee. Brood coffee sells better in the winter than it does in the summer. It is a seasonal business. Not that it goes off in the business the people have different tastes and the idea of a hot brewed cup of coffee is more appealing in the winter in the middle of the day than in the summer. So they had to figure out a way. So he worked with his team and they wanted to come up with an idea and they knew they needed to make a change because he didn't want to have a seasonal business. He wanted one that was good all year long. We could tell essentially what that is and we will call it a Fred Pacino. It will sound very Starbucks. But you seldom for four dollars each on top of it and the second time they made a change is when they started selling not just coffee but other things as well. They started out selling Fred Pacino's does other types of coffee drinks. Copy sales are down, music sales were up. Maybe when music sales were down and other drinks went up so the idea of expanding the business and trying something new and working with this team allowed him to create a business that is now Starbuck so that certainly is two different ways to figure out what the problem is and what the possible solution is or, as I said, you can ask your team and this is what Twitter did. Twitter before it was Twitter was a pretty unsuccessful startup so as we know it today is this microblogging site also started out as a business called rodeo -- Odeo. It would collate and share podcasts with people but this is an 2001 or 2003. The founders of Odeo, Jack Dorsey and his two partners got some funding and VC money but after a few years and, Odeo is a podcast directory business did not work well , mostly because Apple came along and the iTunes Store and the word podcast comes from Steve Jobs. He launched it at one of his Apple events. It was the podcast. But while it was good for Apple, it was bad for Twitter and Odeo.'s what they decided to do was have a brainstorming session and they called it a hack-athon and people within the company did as well because they did have some money and they had these giant brainstorming sessions and it was at one of these brainstorming hack of funds that Jack Dorsey came up with the idea of microblogging and creating Twitter and that is it. They knew they had to make a change. They did not know what the change was going to be. And they talk to their team about how to make the necessary change. Those are the ways you can do it. You have to at least begin to identify what you think the problem is in here in the case of Twitter it was will the podcast work and we will be overrun and in the case of Starbucks it was we can't have a seasonal business and we have to do something besides sell brewed coffee in your business and what is it.

But then I want you to drill down more. You have to get to, as I said, the crux of the issue. If you're going to implement a little Trimtab change, you have to apply the pressure in the right spot because it does you no good to miss identify what the issue is and misidentify what the small change you need to make is, because you will then misidentify what you can do. Look at this -- how do you move a rock and boulder? Are you have this guide -- guy at the top trying to push a boulder. You won't be successful. Here with the lover at the bottom lookout easy it is for this man to move the rock or easier, or at least possible. How do you do it because you got to the crux of the issue and he applied pressure in the right place.

Here is the key question. As you think about it, here are some issues in my business and career, and we need to make a change, and I don't like the idea of making a big change. And you write, yes you can, so here's the key question, what is the main problem. This is what I want you to ask yourself and your team. And then what you need to do is dig even deeper and is this really an issue . Because doing a Trimtab on a side issue does you no good. It may create an interesting result. But it also may not . I will skip ahead a few slides. When I did this in my business and I wanted to make more money, what I did was, I have all these clients and I create content for them and let's apply the 8020 rule. Most of us here who are on the call today have heard of this rule, but let me share what it is again because it is interesting. It is also called the Pareto principle and it was actually an Italian man, an economist named Pareto who did some research back in the day and found out that 20% of Italy's families own 80% of the land. And as applied to business, it turns out, that you probably have a 20% thing you do in your business that is most successful. Maybe you have a webpage or 20% of your website is this one page but it gets you 80% of your page views or maybe you have a product and it is one of the many products or a few different products but those core products, your 20% best products create 80% of your revenue maybe or maybe it is customers. This is what I did. I have certain customers in my business, and those 20% actually create more revenue for my business than all my other ones put together. And I decided to concentrate on those businesses . My business would be more profitable and effective. It turned out to be true. One way to think about what you can do differently in your business is to apply the 80/20 will your business. And now how does this rule apply to yourself? What is working and what is not working and what is making us money and what is not making us money. What is the main point and what is the core issue because if you drill down to the point where you get this little core idea and get to the nugget and think about what the issue is, and begin to think about what the change might be, then you can really make a small change in the right place and setting you on a different direction and then all of a sudden you will find that new opportunities are coming your way. A new whatever the case may be. Whatever things for your business are available that you did not think of before. But the only way you get there is do your research

and analysis properly so you think about what is working best and what is not working and what is making you money and what is not and what is the main point and what is the core issue and what is the crux of the issue. Another way to do that, as I said, is to apply the 80/20 will. Let me give you an example of a company that did this. This is a site called

tripping.com . And the owners thought wouldn't it be fun if somebody goes to a city and they can get inside tips on the culture and community. What they wanted to do was create a social

travel site, social exchange. Whether you go to Paris or Prague or Shanghai, we will help you meet a local person for beer. That is why it was called tripping.com. It was for younger people. They launched this website at [Indiscernible] launch in 2010. Even a month later they had 150 members -- from 150 different countries. And they were getting an idea of how they would make money is they would do affiliate marketing for big travel sites when a member on their site would look, would use the site to book a flight or hotel room or something like that, so they had some money and they had a clever idea and I will go there and meet local and I will get a beer enough am going to meet there and might as well use the site to not only meet them but get a hotel room. And it happened that way. As is often the case in business, was no interest in booking flights or hotel rooms or rental cars through a site that was really kind of a social networking site for travelers. So they thought, well, shoot, we have this idea but we can't figure out how to monetize it. It turned out a lot of their customers were students. And students, of course, don't have a lot of extra money, they couldn't monetize their base. They had to figure out what what would we do. They decided that to find a solution, they would have a team retreat. Remember when I said one way to find a solution and do it is to talk to your team. That is what these guys did. They thought we will go to Lake Tahoe and we will spend a few days there and drink some beers and brainstorm and they started looking for rental properties and this was just in 2011, not really all that long ago but it was not easy back then to book rental vacation places online. You could book hotel rooms but actual rental places, there were not a lot of places to do that. So their own problem led to a solution. They were trying to have a retreat and they couldn't really easily find or pay for online vacation rental places. They never did find a place to stay. They went to Big Sur and everyone complained about the lack of nice beds and everything like that but they did stumble upon their answer. They thought that we could fix the vacation rental market. And it was happenstance. It turned out that was part of their business. It was actually a big problem, they were actually to think about solving and solved. They thought if we could aggregate all the rentals around the world into a single platform, we are on to something and they ended up creating the site called tripping.com. These days it is super popular and they make a lot of money and their rental business just took off and it grew rapidly. It is $100 billion business, vacation rental business. Last year alone, they did $500 million in booking. So the lesson of the story is it was a small little change to their business and they decided we will focus on something a little bit different than we originally thought we were going to focus on. But it does solve a problem for us. So then that gets to the third issue which is we will implement the solution. So as you implement the Trimtab solution, I want you to remember this it does not have to be big to be big. I will give you two more examples as I begin to wrap it up because I always talk to long when I get to these webinars. Here is silly putty and it is interesting. We all played with it when we were kids. Now, the way silly putty came about is during World War II there was a rubber shortage in the world and in the United States and the United States needed some synthetic rubber just to make some tires and all sorts of things so they asked different companies to come up with a synthetic rubber and nobody could really do it back then and they came up with this Goc and it wasn't really a synthetic rubber so they put it on the shelf and after the war they sent samples of it to scientists and professors and people all over the world and they said can you figure out a use for this interesting stuff and nobody really could and it was there that an out of work PR guy was at a party and one of the scientists that received it brought it out to share with people and he thought this doesn't make good rubber but it does make a good boy and it is the exact same product. He had a little bit different idea. He said if I could package this properly I could sell this to kids. So he bought the rights for $150 from GE and he put it in these eggs because he was able to do these eggs at the time and he invented silly putty. It was a little change in the right spot and it was not -- the product was the same but the use of the product wasn't and how we marketed the product was a little bit different. The same thing is true for post-its. 3M invented this glue that was not very sticky and I did not know what to do with it and they asked different people in the company to find a use for it and nobody could and then they had to create all sort of sick -- sticky pieces of paper and they wanted the marketing people, at 3M, decided to take a piece of sticky paper as a test and market -- mark his Bible with it. And he said I figured out how to use it. So it is the same product, same thing, a little bit more of an idea and all of a sudden the Trimtab change made that post it. So here is a few tips as I wrap it up. You can solve a big problem for yourself and for others and you can solve a big problem for yourself. That is great. But if you do for others, you can get rich in the process. As you make those changes, of course, keep your brand and value in mind. And this is important. Timing is your ally. When I showed you those parallel lines, to get from the bottom line to the top line, takes a little bit of time to implement the change and you won't see a big result immediately and it will take a little time and time is your ally. You can create a little bit of change and not take a big risk and not scare your team and not meet a lot of resistance and as you try your new idea and test it, and see how it works, you can see it start small but think big. You can refine it and see if it works. You can roll it out and make it really big. So test small and see if it works. If it works 80 -- 80/20 it and double down on what works and remember the three-step process, identify the problem, get to the crux and implement the solution.

In closing, it is the little things that make the big things happen. That is what

John Wooden said and Oprah said and Bucky said and that is what I am saying today. Little things make the big things happen. Just as an aside, I came across this recently and it was a headstone for Buck Mr. Fuller. It says

Trimtab. I guess he did believe in that idea. Thank you for listening to this and I hope you go back and make some necessary and needed changes in your life or business or career and away we go. I will hand it back to you, Alexa. If we have any questions, I am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you. We will get into the QA portion of the webinar. I will be reading the questions that are participants sent an. People, continue to submit the questions using the chat teacher on the left-hand side of your screen. In the time remaining, we will address as many questions as we possibly can. With that, we will jump right in. Our first question, this comes to us from Carrie -- Terry Abbott. He said he understands that change and adopt -- adaption is needed for business. But what about the fundamentals of the business. How much change would be too much?

I think it depends really on how big of an issue it is. If you are going to change the fundamental of your business, and some of the companies I shared with you today, did just that. When you think about Twitter and Odeo, it was a podcast networking platform. They were fortunate enough that they had some money and they could make a big change from podcasting to microblogging and that is as fundamental as you get. Most of us can't afford to do that. Try a few different ideas of time and money allow. See which one works. Start small test and roll it out bigger. If you are finding this little change and that being a big result in a great way, and you won't need to make a bigger fundamental change. Then you may also find , because you are testing, that it does not work. If it does not work, you have to go to the core. The problem with going to the core is you want to make sure you are not alienating your customers or damaging your brand. Those are two things that all of us spend a lot of time cultivating and you want to have a great brand and relationship with our customers. If we do something radically different that may confuse our Timor staff or our customers or the marketplace. Those are dangerous risks. One thing I do know about business is the best businesses keep the risks to a minimum. We all take a risk and that is what being an entrepreneur is about. But I do really suggest, let's take smoke calculated risks -- small calculated risks.

A next question comes from Nathan. After making an adjustment to the rudder in your business, what is the best way to revisit or evaluate the adjustment to make sure that it is successful, and how often should that monitoring process occur?

We are in the era of big data. There is a lot of the big data tools for small business. Our friends at Microsoft have some great tools and there are a lot of different companies that have dashboards that allow you to look at your analytics. One of the great things about businesses, there are a lot of ways to measure your success and it depends on what you're rudder changes. If it is your website, you can see whether you are getting more click or click through's or you are getting less abandons in your shopping cart or a physical store, how are your revenues and profits. All of those money things are ways to keep score in a business. It may be that your trim tab changes more ephemeral and is not about the bottom line but your culture in your brand and in that case it's a matter of addressing yourselves and your team and asking yourselves how often you check in. Early on, you want to check-in fairly regularly and once you're confident that you are headed in a nice new direction for your business, then you can check in less often. The next question comes from John and he would like to know if you have a certain technique for the digging deeper.

I agree, John, and everyone. That is a hard heart because it is. It is almost like therapy and I have to look at that again. But it is a matter of talking and thinking through is this really the issue. You can even keep asking that question as you get to one point and you can dig in and speak with their team or even do it on your own. So I think the problem is I am not making enough money. Is that really the core issue? I am not making enough money because I don't have enough high pain customers. Is that really the core issues? -- Issue? If I market myself to high-paying customers, I will get more high-paying customers and make more of those customers. So it is a matter of asking the question and thinking is there more to it. At some point you will say this is it. This is where it all starts and you will get to that fulcrum point of the rock. And it seems weird, but it is not actually that hard at all.

Next question comes from Maria, as a younger employee, do you have any suggestions on how to get your older bus to open up and change after 18 years of doing things the same way?

So I would suggest, and again this idea of the small change, if you can get them to buy into giving you just a little bit more latitude, let me try a few things. Give me a little room and I have a few ideas that will cost you a lot of money. What you want to think about is the older boss, has a comfort zone and they have a money zone and they are making money and doing business and they know what work's so if you make it less risky for them and don't stretch them too much and you start small and improve yourselves, then you can do more I think that is true in your case as well.

Next question comes from [Indiscernible] who says they have many potentially good or great ideas that they micro tested and found they all could work. Do you have any tips on how to focus or choose some of the ideas or projects over others. When I say keep the brand in mind, I think it is important. I also think -- if you have three different ones, I would test three different ones. It is almost like, and I have spoken before about marketing on a shoestring and there are a lot of ways to market your business. If you have a few different ideas and none are too hard to implement, have a contest. You try one of the other and you set up some benchmarks for testing and set up some benchmarks for your success and give each one three months and you can do them at the same time if none of them are that crazy and then you see which one is really generating the most desired change you want and then I would say abandon the others and go with the one that is working. That is the whole idea.

This next one ties into that previous question from Jessica. How long should you give yourself to make the small changes?

It is a hard question to answer because it depends so much on the business and what the changes and what the conditions right now are. I would say it is hard to say any rule. But you have to try it and test it and see if it is working. You know in six months you can get yourself to try it and I think a year is a long time and shorter is better. If it's not a big change it is a little change. Bucky did a fundamental change of rethinking his life and he spent two years being quiet. You don't always need to do that. Maybe you just need a new marketing ploy. That is easy and will take a few months.

Our next question comes from Thomas would like to note if you believe that face-to-face is the best way to advertise? >> Yes and no. There is nothing better than word of mouth advertising. Of you can meet and impress a customer face-to-face, you can create that emotional connection and we all love that. We are in an online world in so many ways to connect with people now that are not face-to-face whether it is social networking or your website or blog or paper click or whatever. Those are all really valuable. It is hard for me to say that face-to-face is the only thing that works. And it works, which it is great. But a lot of things work these days.

We have time for one last question. This one comes to us from Elizabeth. She asks, what are the best ways to figure out how you can solve problems for your prospects? She said she noticed in some of the samples used they had to do with a shift and how a product would be used. What you recommend? Focus groups, retreats? Anything else? In other words, how do you test small to create a big change?

How you test small is you just have to come up with a plan of action for whatever the change is and come up with the steps needed to implement that plan, whatever the plan is of the changes. I do think that your point is well taken. Be sure you check in with your customers. If you are offering a product, a new product or different product or a change on an existing product, you want to make sure that you are not too far ahead of the curve. But to the extent you have customers that you trust and whose feedback would be valuable and you would be willing to give it, I think it is fantastic to get. Customer feedback is the best. Have some coffee with them or have a planning session or whatever the case may be. If you can get that, that is invaluable.

Okay. Those are all the questions that we do have time for today. Ladies and gentlemen, if we did not have a chance to address your question, during this QA segment, we encourage you to connect with a SCORE mentor today. Our mentors can be found online or at a chapter new year -- you. I have a link on the slide showing now. I will also post it in the chat box so you can click right on it and access that information. They can work you with you and help you with your needs and apply strategies that have been presented today. They are here and available to support you. Also, if you are attending today and interested in becoming a SCORE mentor, you can get further information and apply online and here is a link for everybody. As a reminder, a link to this recording and the presentation slide deck will be sent in a postevent email. We generally send that out just a few hours after the webinar ends, so be on the lookout for that. On behalf of SCORE, I would like to thank you all for attending this webinar today, and I want to give a big thank you to Steve Strauss for presenting with us today. Thank you so much .

My pleasure. If you want to Google me and asked me questions, you can do that as well.

Wonderful. Thank you all so much again. We hope you have a great rest of your day. Take care. >>

[Event concluded]