

# PIPELINE

piping systems inc.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

SUMMER 2015

## Something You Should Know by Pauline L. Lally

**T**his past March, I decided to document our business plan on paper, instead of having it reside in my brain. Being a small business owner, it's easy to put off projects since there's always another one waiting in the wings. But, it was time to get it done. After mentally kicking and screaming, self-discipline kicked in and I began to write. The template that I started with had a general outline, but most of the items did not apply to our type of business. I find that lots of things I come across don't apply to construction. For example, accounting for construction is a specialty. We don't sell a product, per se, we are a service provider. We don't have online sales, although somewhat related, we're upgrading our software to a cloud-based service for tool tracking and service dispatch. We're not really what you would call a "bricks and mortar" establishment, yet we occupy more than 21,000 square feet of office and shop space.

After modifying the template to suit our particular industry, I was left with nearly nothing. However, during the process, I did manage to discover some interesting facts to include in the plan, and I'd like to take a few minutes to share those with you to give you a better sense of what we're all about.

### **Human Resources**

Our management team has unique experience in the industry, including more than 350 years of collective experience in the piping and contracting trade. Team members have an average of 15 years of employment with our company. An impressive 25% of our workforce has been employed at PSI for more than 20 years. We have employed many father-and-son teams (and father-daughter teams, too), which points to the value placed on how we treat team members.

### **Customers**

More than 60% of our annual revenues over the last five years

are comprised of recurring revenue—customers who have done business with PSI for each of the last five years.

### **Referrals**

During the last year, more than 50% of our new leads came from referrals from existing customers and vendor contacts.

### **Services**

PSI was formed in 1971. We attained Woman-Owned Business designation in 2004. Our present ownership in place since 1992.

Our services are superior to many of our competitors because most of our tradesmen are cross-trained and licensed in multiple disciplines, including steamfitting, process piping, fire protection systems, plumbing, welding and gasfitting. Oftentimes, tradesmen working within this industry are trained or licensed in one discipline only.

### **What We Are All About**

The reality is that just telling you how good we are doesn't cut it. The

best way for you to decide whether or not we are the type of contractor for you is to try us out on a small project. Visit our website to learn more about how we service our clients at [www.PipingSystemsInc.com](http://www.PipingSystemsInc.com).

Since this past December, all of us here at PSI have been working on establishing procedures and systems to help us deliver quality, quantity and experience to you, our customer. The process began by putting down on paper how I wanted the company to be, how I wanted it to look from an outsider's perspective. What resulted from those thoughts, and many edits from me and the staff, is Piping Systems' Strategic Objective Statement. From this document, we listed all of the procedures we would have to have in place in order to achieve these objectives. It was difficult to pare it down to one page but we did it. I'm sharing it with you (see page 4) today to give you a sense of what we are all about. Thank you for reading.



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# How To Form A Successful Safety Committee

Many organizations address safety issues with a safety committee that includes employees and managers. If you're tapped to set up such a committee, keep this advice in mind to support its success:

- **Make sure management is fully involved.** If upper management thinks forming a committee is a quick fix for its safety issues, nothing much will change. Get top executives solidly behind the idea of working together with employees on company safety before you start.
- **Design specific goals.** "Safety" can be a vague concept. Will the committee focus on reducing the number of accidents, cutting workers' comp costs, or some other measurable goal? Attack significant hazards instead of minor issues or regulatory concerns.
- **Recruit the right people.** Look for employees and managers who have shown an interest in safety issues—perhaps people who have made safety suggestions in the past. (Bear in mind that trouble in finding volunteers may be a symptom that people don't think management will take the committee seriously.)
- **Be consistent with meetings.** Hold them at the same time on the same day so members can plan their schedules and won't have any excuse for not attending. Changing meeting times often will disrupt people's schedules and weaken their commitment.
- **Keep meetings organized.** Prepare an agenda. Start and finish on time. Limit discussion to safety-related matters. Get input from every member by going around the table for ideas and concerns.
- **Assign people to take action.** Once you've identified a problem, assign a member or a team to take action on it. Follow up at the next meeting with a solution or status report. Be careful to keep accurate records of each meeting to limit misunderstandings about who was supposed to do what.
- **Locate a safety professional as a resource.** You'll want to educate team members on safety matters, but you'd better identify an expert on workplace safety to whom you can go for advice and support on specific matters that may be outside your committee's area of expertise—OSHA regulations, for example.



# Dinosaur Discoveries

For creatures that went extinct millions of years ago, dinosaurs seem to be popping up all over the place. From the *Sci-News* website, here are just a few of the "new" dinosaurs recently discovered:

- **Dreadnoughtus schrani.** Discovered in Argentina, this beast weighed as much as 12 elephants, making it the largest land animal to walk the earth 77 million years ago.
- **Pelagornis sandersi.** With a 21-foot wingspan, this was the largest flying animal that paleontologists have yet discovered. It flew over North America about 28 million years ago.
- **Aquilops americanus.** On the smaller side, this vegetarian was about the size of a small cat. It is classified as belonging to the family of dinosaurs that includes the horned triceratops, although it had no horns or neck frills. At 108 million years old, it's the oldest specimen of that family to be found in North America.
- **Cartorhynchus lenticarpus.** The smallest ichthyosaur yet discovered (about 15 inches long), this amphibious dinosaur had flexible wrists that helped it crawl on land about 248 million years ago.
- **Atopodentatus unicus.** This dinosaur, which lived in China some 245 million years ago, was full of teeth: The front of its upper jaw held about 35 needle-like teeth, and approximately 140 more lined the rest of its upper jaw; more than 190 teeth filled its lower jaw.

## The Heart Of The Matter

A heart surgeon took his car to the local garage for a tune-up. When he returned a few hours later to pick it up, he and the mechanic began chatting.

"So I've been wondering," the mechanic said. "We both kind of do the same thing for a living. We open things up, find out what's wrong, take some stuff out or put some stuff in and fix the problem, and then we close everything back up. So how come you make 10 times more money than I do?"

The surgeon smiled. "Try it with the motor running."

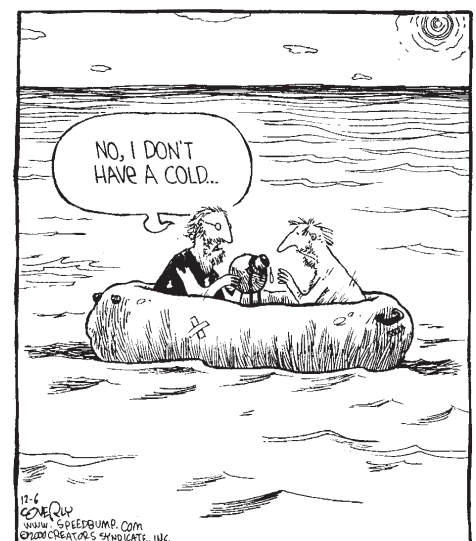
## It's The Doing, Not The Getting

Success is the doing, not the getting; in the trying, not the triumph. Success is a personal standard, reaching for the highest that is in us, becoming all that we can be. If we do our best, we are a success.

—Zig Ziglar

### SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly





# It's All In The Marketing

The next time you need volunteers to take on an unpopular assignment, just remember how the great French military commander Napoleon Bonaparte tackled a difficult problem.

While serving as a battalion chief during the siege of Toulon in 1793, the then 24-year-old Napoleon ordered construction of an artillery battery in an area that was so dangerously exposed other officers said he would never be able to find men willing to take up positions there. But Napoleon had an uncanny instinct for motivating his troops. Over the battery, he placed this sign: "The Battery of Men Without Fear."

The battery was always manned.

## How To Quickly Learn More About Job Candidates

You may learn about a job candidate during an interview, but you'll get a lot more insight by getting out of your office and taking finalists on a tour of your workplace. The candidate will see what your culture is like, and you'll have a chance to observe how he or she responds to your environment. Here's what to look for:

- **Interactions with employees.** Is the candidate interested in talking only to upper-level people? How did the person's attitude change when meeting people at different levels? Observe how much attention the person pays to what others say—is he or she really listening, or bored?
- **Optimism or pessimism.** Pay attention to how the candidate answers basic questions like, "How are you today?" A reply like, "Not too bad" may be a sign of a downbeat attitude. Similarly, listen to how the person talks about the people he or she meets: "She certainly seems to work hard," suggests a positive personality; a comment like, "Why does she have to work so hard?"

may indicate a negative outlook on work.

- **Clarifying questions.** Your organization will have new or different technologies, processes and work practices. Does the candidate ask questions to clarify his or her understanding of the surrounding workplace? Listen for questions or comments that show how quickly the person grasps new ideas and how well he or she asks questions to solve problems.
- **Unprompted actions.** If there's a piece of paper on the floor, does the candidate pick it up and throw it away? Does he or she hold the door for another employee whose arms are full? These kinds of actions can tell you whether or not the person is a team player.
- **Supporting statements.** Listen for any statements that support what you know about the candidate from his or her résumé and interview. Does anything seem to contradict what you've been told?

## Mental Health Benefits?

A cup of coffee or tea helps many people wake up in the morning, but they may also have health benefits later in life, according to recent research reported in *Scientific American*.

One project by the National Institutes of Health studied the relationship between different kinds of beverages and depression, and found that coffee consumption was associated with slightly lower rates of self-reported depression. A Chinese study found that adults who drink tea on a regular basis had a smaller risk of depression.

Other research suggests that caffeine may play a role in preventing cognitive decline, but the evidence remains inconclusive.



According to the state's official website, what is Idaho's nickname?

## How Much Do You Know?

- 1) What country ranks #1 in the Happy Planet Index?  
a) Barbados  
b) Costa Rica  
c) France  
d) Jamaica
- 2) Which U.S. city hosts a "Peach Drop" every December 31st at midnight to ring in the New Year?  
a) Miami  
b) Honolulu  
c) Dallas  
d) Atlanta
- 3) According to the state's official website, what is Idaho's nickname?  
a) The Farmland State  
b) The Potato State  
c) The Gem State  
d) The Hawkeye State
- 4) What song did American singer Slim Whitman take to the top of the U.K. charts for an amazing 11 weeks?  
a) Peggy Sue  
b) Barbara Ann  
c) Carrie Anne  
d) Rose Marie
- 5) "Happy the Oil Drop Man" was the logo mascot for what gas station chain?  
a) Esso  
b) Mobil  
c) Sinclair  
d) Sunoco

—from *mental\_floss*

**Answers:** 1) b; 2) d; 3) c; 4) d; 5) a

# Our Strategic Objective

**P**iping Systems, Inc. (PSI) is a high-performance piping contractor specializing in the installation of the following types of systems: heating, cooling, fire sprinkler systems, plumbing and process piping, including steam, water, air, gas and chemical piping. We are authorized holders of the ASME "S" Stamp and the National Board "R" stamp, which allows us to perform welded repairs on high-pressure steam vessels under strict quality control procedures. Our service department provides 24/7 emergency service to our existing clients.

We are known as, and will continue to be, the "go-to piping company" in Southeastern Massachusetts, due to our deep-rooted experience at identifying solutions to complex piping problems in the industrial and commercial markets. Our installations are generally performed within a 55-mile radius of our shop located in Assonet, Massachusetts. We are licensed in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire. Our contracts range in value from \$10,000 to \$750,000. Our service department expertly handles emergencies, small contracts and cost-plus contracts.

Problems are an inevitable part of construction, and our method of executing projects solves those problems; oftentimes before they even occur. We leverage all of our expertise, experience, technology, assets and working capital to execute the most efficient work practices possible, beginning with how we bid projects, continuing with the award, management and field installation—all leading up to the successful project completion.

Working at PSI is much more than finishing up a job to earn a paycheck. Our selection process for new hires is comprehensive and centered on carefully selecting those who we feel will adapt to our corporate culture, which includes the "Work Safe" mindset and our strong belief in maintaining a "drug-free" environment. All of our technicians are licensed in their particular trade or are enrolled in apprenticeship programs. All team members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to improve their work skills. Cross-training occurs on a continuous basis so that each key position has a back-up. We utilize technology not just for technology's sake; but only where it is evident that it has a positive effect on efficiency and profits. All of our tools and equipment are properly maintained and always left in a "Ready to Go" state.

We set-aside funds to make donations to various charitable organizations. We encourage our Team Members to participate in community events and fund-raising for worthy causes.

We operate in terms of fostering mutual respect between all team members leading to long-lasting, trusting and loyal relationships with each other. This lends to forming the same type of relationships with our clients. By providing the best value to our clients we are able to focus on growth: individually, corporately and financially.



We're doing our part!



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