

Staying power: (Plan Your Career) Long-held tenets of success still apply

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Watching historically successful companies tumble like dominoes, I have been curious about what it takes to survive in tough times, for individuals and corporations alike. Have the secrets of success changed? Comparing what we know about today's business triumphs against what worked in the past, it seems the old rules do still ring true: success comes to those who work with multiple core values and a wide array of planning strategies.

Companies exist to make money; successful companies exist for a range of purposes including, but not exclusively, making money. Local for-profit Finnigans, Inc. is an example of a corporation with multiple core values. Its website states, "we at Finnigans decided if we sold a great tasting beer and gave all of our profits to fund community programs assisting those in poverty – we would be doing our bit and just maybe, inspire others to get involved as well." The company has a good product and is faithful to its value of giving back to the community. Loyalty to your altruistic side does not require you to live in poverty. Rather, use your gifts wisely to earn money to further your causes.

Just as there can be multiple values within an organization, there can be multiple strategies for success. Choosing to tweak something that is currently working feels dicey, but it is possible to take risks and make progress without giving up what has worked in the past. In their book *Built to Last*, James Collins and Jerry Porras describe the "genius of the AND– the paradoxical view that allows them to pursue both A AND B at the same time." The longest-running, most successful companies know that most decisions are not strictly either/or. They look for a balance between past and future, tradition and technology, one product and another.

The key to strategizing with an AND lies in recognizing what should be on the table. Know what must never change and what can be open to negotiation. Combining tradition with vision leads to innovation and innovation, ultimately, keeps companies (and individuals) alive in challenging times.

Please send your career management questions to Julie@Insightnews.com.