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BOB AND JOYCE DORSEY

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF R. DORSEY+COMPANY

AN IT STAFFING AND OUTSOURCING, IT CONSULTING, AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT FIRM

What challenges have you faced or currently face that others might benefit from knowing?

Joyce: Stay on top of your receivables. When you service the small to mid-sized market, it is easy to want to have a big heart and grant your clients extra space when it comes to paying their bills within a defined timeframe. But then that space can grow and grow. It is nice to be helpful, but your generosity can come back to bite you if you're not careful. If/when accounts get too far behind (and your accounting department has done the appropriate follow-up), have the account manager (the person that "owns" the client relationship) make the call to your client. This is not a comfortable call and can be one easily put off, but it must be done. If they're not able to immediately bring receivables current, set a plan that you both agree to, and put it in place. This should include dates, amounts, and accountabili-

ties/actions if progress is not realized. Remember cash is king when it comes to sustaining a growth business.

Also, any time one steps out or is forced out of their comfort zone, it can be a positive or a negative. Make it a positive. Pray, have a positive attitude, work hard, and use great mentors.

How would you increase your income by 1% in one month or less?

Bob: In our business, we'd talk to our current clients and ask the basic question, "What else should we be doing to better service you and take better care of your technology needs?" We're good at what we do day in and day out for our clients, but unlike a "good husband," we can't read our clients' minds. Every business owner or manager has a list of things to do in their head. If you give them an opening and an ear, they can pop them off in order of importance in their mind. Great material from which to frame a new piece of work or project

How has the current economy affected the industry you love so much?

Bob: This is the perfect time to find new markets as well as deepen your relationships with current clients. Testy times give you the motivation to change, to come up with innovative products and services, and diversify your portfolio with companies in economic growth sectors. These are great things to be doing in any business—in good times or bad.

What personal or business-related secret has brought you success?

Joyce: Love what you do. If you're going to be successful in business—or life—you're going to be committing a lot of

usually the people responsible for those processes, procedures, and keeping the balls in the air that make it great and keep things running. Make it a priority to really see those you work with and let them know they're important before it is too late and they're gone.

What do you attribute for your success?

Joyce: The values and work ethic I was raised with. Surround yourself with good people—people with heart, character, and integrity. That way, when tough times come (and we all know they will), you will have people you can depend on. Don't be afraid to let them in to help. You can only do so much for so long by yourself. Remember it's more about the people than the product or service. When strong, trusting relationships are developed, people will work with you because they know you have their best interests

"STAY ON TOP OF YOUR RECEIVABLES."

your time and energy to it. If you love it, you'll be excited to get up every morning to see what the day holds. If you don't, you'll want to just roll over and go back to sleep.

Always visualize the best possible outcome you desire, even in the darkest hour, and keep working toward that goal. That got me through lots of design projects in college and has served me well in the project of life. Detours are often the best routes on the journey, so embrace them.

What one mistake did you make in business that you will never be repeated?

Joyce: Not always clearly seeing the value, commitment, and heart of the people in front of me. You often hear people talking about how they don't see and/or take for granted those who are closest to them. When things are running smoothly, it can be easy to adopt the mindset "we have really great processes and procedures in place" without seeing that it is

at hand and you won't lead them astray. (Also, they will be more forgiving if and when you mess up.) Always be open to learning new things. For me, spiritual study and growth has also been key.

Any other words of advice for young professionals that might read this with the hopes or ambitions of making it to where you are one day?

Joyce: Don't be afraid to try something new. Find a mentor who cannot only keep you accountable to your plans and goals, but who can let you know when you're off track and who will help you refocus. The most important words in your vocabulary should be "Please," "Thank you," and "I'm sorry." Always make sure you bring every bit of learning possible out of the mistakes you make along the way. Your word is your self-portrait. When you give your word, it is your own personal representative, so promise what you know you can deliver and then work to deliver more. You will reap what you sow, so sow it wisely.