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# Business

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## Recovery for long term on the right track

by Mary Bruce

Everything about this year has felt just a bit different from “normal.” Therefore, the latest wrinkle should not be a surprise. It’s October – a time when companies would normally be well into the budgeting process for next year – but no one wants to talk about it. Owners complain that they have simply lost the ability to forecast revenue – even from month to month. Sales cycles are unpredictable. Proposals go stale sitting on hold. Contracts sit unsigned as commitments are delayed. Looking forward feels a bit like driving through a blinding storm and wondering what’s on the road ahead.

Budgeting is actually pretty simple in such an environment. Keep a very tight rein on spending and cash flow until tangible results of a recovery begin to show up via a growing bank account. However, in the meantime, rather than delaying the planning cycle altogether, why not redirect that seasonal time and effort to a longer-term strategic planning exercise? Like 100 percent of all recessions in the past, this one, too, will come to an end. Leaders who sharpen their strategic vision now will be the ones whose businesses are “recovery ready.”

**Are you getting your business “recovery ready” with a vision of future growth?** Find out with the following quiz.

*We have reviewed our recessionary “survival mode” for lessons learned to:*

1. Improve efficiency by implementing smarter methods and discontinuing ineffective activities.
2. Evaluate the current profitability of products and services within client/market segment.
3. Rethink the attractiveness of pursuing inactive clients or very depressed markets.
4. Assess our staffing and structure for needed adjustments in capacity, roles or compensation.
5. Understand how this business cycle has impacted our value to clients and business partners.

*Mary Bruce is president of Kaleidoscope Business Options in Charlotte.*