

# CEO <sup>20</sup> CEO

Assisting business leaders as they navigate critical passages

## The Attitude of Gratitude

January 23, 2009



*I landed on the news. I'm grateful for the help I got!*  
Learn how it happened and get a good laugh at  
[www.ceotoceo.biz/networknews.html](http://www.ceotoceo.biz/networknews.html)

The number of people referring me to opportunities is rising quickly, and I'm in their debt. I've long preached that both being and showing appreciativeness for those who help you is a key to success. So please take a look at this list of referrers, and if you think they could help you, please don't hesitate to contact them, or call me to connect you with them. Most of us professionals realize that we can't help in many areas, and we tend to surround ourselves with quality professionals whom we trust in different specialties .

Some of these people on my honor roll have referred me to clients, while others opened doors to panel appearances, speeches, keynotes, or other opportunities that have allowed me to grow my business. I am now keeping a list, but wasn't in the past, so if I've omitted you I do apologize, and please tell me so I can add you! There are also LOTS of people who have helped me and given me direction (outside of referrals) that I've not listed, but I really appreciate them too.

## The **INSOMNIA** Factor

What keeps CEOs **AWAKE AT NIGHT**  
—and what to do about it.

### Are Your Circuit Breakers about to BLOW?

By Robert Sher

There's a lot happening right now in many businesses, and CEO's dashboards are lit up with indicators of overheating, stalling, low fuel and more. I'm starting to hear comments like, "I'm afraid to look at that project", and "We don't talk often (the CEO to the VP) and that's probably good". Comments like that give *me* insomnia.

I liken this situation to when a circuit breaker in your home or building blows. It blows for good reason-- too much current (amps) have begun to flow through the wires, so the circuit breaker blows to protect against a meltdown or fire. But the moment the breaker blows, if

*(Continued on page 2)*

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#### Honor Roll of Referrers (in no particular order)

- ◆ Steve Boullianne, Managing Partner of IpsoFacto, (IT services), [www.IPSoFACTo.info](http://www.IPSoFACTo.info)
- ◆ Dennis Jaffe, PhD, Founding Partner of Relative Solutions, (advisor to wealthy families), [www.dennisjaffe.com](http://www.dennisjaffe.com)
- ◆ Nancy Barrett, VP Bernstein Global Wealth Management, [www.bernstein.com](http://www.bernstein.com)
- ◆ Angela Gonzalez, President and Founding Partner, Meridian Consulting, Inc., [www.meridiancoaches.com](http://www.meridiancoaches.com)
- ◆ Steve Collins, President of Mar-

you're in the house, all information about the problem disappears too. Everything goes black.

That's not ideal in a business. As CEO, we need to see each and every critical situation; no matter how bad it is, so that we can make the best judgments. Sometimes a big problem can't get fixed right away because there are even bigger problems that take all our focus and resources. We all know intellectually that putting our head in the sand about anything is a bad idea.

But even CEOs are human. Sometimes, it's hard to take it. Sometimes, if we stared at all our problems we'd just get depressed, and would be less effective in our jobs. Or we'd burn out trying to do it all, and would quit, or start drinking, or otherwise blow up our lives in unfixable ways.

Rather than sitting in the house as the circuit blows, it's much better to be standing in front of the power panel, where circuit breakers can be observed and controlled. We can choose which breaker needs to be turned off, and if one blows on its own, we immediately know which circuit has problems.

There is no easy answer. And the amount of bad news each of us can bear is different. It depends on our personalities, how burnt out we already are, and many other factors.

There is one key thing that can make a big difference:

*Being keenly self-aware and staying tuned in to how we're feeling, what our mindset is, and continually tending to our own mental and*

*(Continued on page 3)*

vel Maids, [www.marvelmaids.com](http://www.marvelmaids.com)

◆ John Keagy, CEO of GoGrid/ServePath, (managed hosting and cloud computing), [www.gogrid.com](http://www.gogrid.com)

◆ Chris Anderson, Principal, Atlas Business Advisors, (M&A advisory firm), [www.atlasba.com](http://www.atlasba.com)

◆ Rob Robinson, Founder & Managing Partner, Rigel and Associates, (private equity group), <http://rigelassociates.com>

◆ Diane Fleck, CEO, the Learning Café, (training for entrepreneurs), [www.thelearning-cafe.com](http://www.thelearning-cafe.com)

◆ Rebecca Turner, PhD, Marshall Goldsmith School of Management, (professor and organizational psychologist), [www.alliant.edu](http://www.alliant.edu)

◆ Steve Clinton, Partner, Nixon Peabody (law firm) [www.nixonpeabody.com](http://www.nixonpeabody.com)

◆ Ken Niewald, Partner, Tatum, (interim CFOs and controllers) [www.TatumLLC.com](http://www.TatumLLC.com)

◆ John Reese, Managing Director, Expense Reduction Analysts, [www.expensereduction.com](http://www.expensereduction.com)

◆ Jim Horan, CEO, The One Page Business Plan Company, [www.onepagebusinessplan.com](http://www.onepagebusinessplan.com)

◆ Jim Kelley, Principal, KSG Transform, (organizational development and coaching) [www.ksgtransform.com](http://www.ksgtransform.com)

◆ John Connelly, Vice President Client Relationship Manager, Circle Bank, [www.circlebank.com](http://www.circlebank.com)

◆ Guido Krickx, Associate Dean; Shyam Kamath, Executive Director, Global and Executive Programs, Graduate Business; Jackie Williams, Director of Corporate Recruiting & Outreach, St. Mary's College, [www.stmarys-ca.edu](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu);

◆ Mike Clothier, Co-founder and CTO, Vet-Edge (veterinary practice management) [www.vet-edge.com](http://www.vet-edge.com)

◆ David Gill, Principal, EthixBiz.com (ethics consultant and professor), [www.ethixbiz.com](http://www.ethixbiz.com)

◆ Meir Gluzberg, Sales Agent, Harvey Kalles

*physical health.* As the ultimate resource for the company you lead, you must optimize your contribution. Running a business is more like a marathon than a sprint.

Eleven things that have helped me over the years:

1. Getting enough sleep.
2. Exercise.
3. Firing needy team members that drain me.
4. Having and utilizing team members that can absorb some of the pressure and handle things without dragging me in all the time.
5. A top team that knows when to shield me from some of the petty or less important things, so I can focus on the important things and my spirit stays high.
6. Avoid listening to all the negative news.
7. Avoid people that are negative.
8. Stealing some time for fun and distracting passions that help quickly charge up my batteries.
9. Take a vacation, or some sort of a break. Sometimes this can work.
10. A family who loves me and is there for me. And my wife and kids most certainly are.
11. Surround yourself with some key people that you respect and that aren't afraid to say anything to you.

Instead of having your circuits blown, be the one in control of the power panel, choosing, when needed, which circuits you must disconnect, all the while keeping a close eye on all the circuits for signs of trouble.

Being a CEO is always challenging and we always need to be at the top of our game. Manage the energy flows carefully and protect yourself and your company against power surges that could blow your circuits.

Real Estate, [www.meirgluzberg.com](http://www.meirgluzberg.com)

- ◆ Barbara Belk, CEO, Belk and Associates (executive development), [www.belkassociates.com](http://www.belkassociates.com)

New CEO Case Study:

Available at [www.ceotoceo.biz](http://www.ceotoceo.biz) on the published works tab near the top: **Galaxy Deserts.** What to do when you've hired a charlatan.

Presentations, Recent Past and Future:

- ◆ **Speech:** The Feel of the Deal, Niles Rotary Club, Fremont, CA Jan 15, 2009
- ◆ **Speech:** Planning your Practice, Alliant University, San Francisco, CA, 12/10/2008
- ◆ **Panel:** Taking your Business to the Next Level, Professional Coaches and Mentor's Association Meeting, Millbrae, CA, 1/13/2009
- ◆ **Guest Lecture,** UCSC MILE Program, Implementing Business Planning, May 5th, 2009

*Please call, e-mail or let's get together.*

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