

**ARE YOU A SURVIVOR?**  
**“Don’t go down with the ship!”**



By - *Barbara Lee*

Since the economy seems to be at the forefront of all the news media, I'd like to take a few moments with you and clear up some confusions. The first one being that what you hear on the TV or radio, and what you read in the various newspapers and correct by any means. Oh, there may be a "few" truths here and there, but only just enough to cause the public to generally accept what is being pushed. All this hubbub causes panic and chaos and fuels the problem to an even higher level than it needs to be. The public starts clamping down and once thriving businesses go broke. And mostly what you hear is "no one is buying anything" or "I need to downsize and cut out my advertising". So the second confusion I'd like to point out, is that the above viewpoints only create MORE problems and will NOT keep you in business! Someone ALWAYS profits in "hard times". History shows that to us over and over again. There are always ways to not only stay in business, but to expand in this type of economic climate.

It's all in the viewpoint of the owner. You can sit and whine about how slow business is, or you can take advantage, yes, take advantage of the times and actually do even better! It's all up to you. How I wish I was in YOUR kind of business! Gee whiz! Cars! The MAIN method of transportation in this country! I sure still see a ton of cars on the road. And those cars are going to break down and they are going to need to be fixed. And whatever shops survive, will get ALL that work. Now THAT is how you the shop owner should be looking at this. People still need to get to work, get the kids to school and get groceries. They need a working car to do that. Are YOU going to be there for them? I sure hope so.

Instead of contracting your business, cutting corners, cutting out your advertising and spending an enormous amount of time worrying, how about dreaming up ways to get customers in the door! Promote like crazy! Keep your name out there. Get on the phones and call customers, send out service reminders or specials. Use the computer to help you sell! Advertise a raffle – you know, all customers who come in during the month get their names into the hat. Then you

have a big drawing and they win something. I don't know, maybe a new set of tires, or maybe you can get some local store to go in with you and get some nice item donated which gets both your names in the news. Get creative! The point is that sitting in the office worrying about the bills and the future does NOT bring in a single customer. It does not help you to think clearly, and it sure isn't going to fix any problems you have going on. You've worked too long and too hard building your business with your blood sweat and tears, to see it all go down the drain because you think nothing can be done - "it's just the way the economy is right now". I say Humbug! Something can always be done no matter what the situation or how bad it looks. I say roll up your sleeves! Get that determined glint back in your eye and prepare for battle! Because that's what it is – a battle.

You have to work smarter. You have to USE the current economy to your advantage. You should be using that computer until it starts smoking! If you aren't using it for promotion and sales, then call us! We'll show you how! If you need help with your shop, then go after it! Don't listen to anyone around you sulking about how bad it all is. They'll just bring you down. Rise above all that and make a plan. Do NOT just do business as usual unless your shop is in good condition. If it is, then congratulations – you are obviously doing the right actions. But if it isn't, then CHANGES need to be made. It starts with YOU. There is a lot of help out there to be had. If you need help, then Management Success! is of course the best there is out there. If you already have help, then get them to help you MORE. The proof will show up in your shop, IF you apply yourself to the task.

So look ahead five years from now. Did you take the bull by the horns? Did you outsmart the economy? Are YOU a survivor?

- *Barbara Lee*