



# *Facilitation Focus*

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# MEASURE YOUR BUSINESS PERFORMANCE



You must determine your business's long-term goals so that you can set short-term markers for success. Doing so enables you to see if your operation is doing well, worse or just barely hanging on. However, it can be challenging for a young company to have enough history to track its progression. Thankfully, there are several ways to measure your business's progression as it climbs closer to reach your long-term goals.

## How to measure your small business's performance

The market's behaviour can be unpredictable, but that shouldn't stop you from setting standard practices for running your business. Besides maintaining your revenue stream, you must also develop ways to track your progress and measure your company's efficiency.

In this article, we'll share three ways to measure your small business's progress.

### 1. Compile your financial statements

A simple way to measure any business's progress is through your cash flows. This includes not just your income but also other financial payments like payroll expenses and overhead costs.

Your income statement will dictate how many inflows you're receiving in your account. You should use these figures and compare them with your balance sheet, compiling your list of assets and how it relates to your outflows.



Finally, your cash flow statement will represent your actual revenue through the liquidity of your profits.

### 2. Monitor your customer conversions

A business's growth doesn't always depend on your cash flows. Sometimes, your conversions will have a greater impact on your company's greater potential. If more people beyond your existing client base are subscribing to your service, it could be a sign that you can scale up your business.

A more extensive customer base gives you more opportunity to increase the output of your business to match its growing demand.

Consider what campaign and marketing moves lead to a higher conversion rate. Business actions like releasing new products or reinforcing your online visibility can affect how appealing your brand leads to conversion. Closely monitor these data so that you can make a reliable model for continual customer conversions in your sales funnels.

### 3. Listen to customer feedback

Besides the quantitative numbers your company is generating, you should also learn to listen to your qualitative data. Although some reviews use numbers and star

ratings, customers may also leave valuable points for consideration in their feedback.

Remember that your products and services should always appeal to your demographic. This means that negative views on your product also reflect poorly on your brand.

Consumers love a brand that knows how to listen to its audience. If you want to improve your branding online, you should learn to read these critical comments and know how to use them for your company's growth.

Learn to stay humble and polite when addressing these criticisms and eliminate future feedback by listening and adapting to these reviews and testimonials.

## Conclusion

Monitoring your business while simultaneously developing plans to scale up your operation can be challenging to multi-task. At best, you'll only have minimal growth while remaining consistent.

At worst, you could overwork yourself on both ends, causing inaccuracies and inefficiencies with your business model.

Thankfully, you can partner with capable accounting firms to receive an accurate assessment of your business's progress. Besides evaluating your company's performance, they can also project your sales figures to prepare you for internal changes and adjustments you'll need to implement. ■



## Would You Run A Family Business?



Have you ever hired a family member in your business? Chances are that if you have, a couple of issues came up . . . to say the least!

And what do you do if that family member ends up not performing to the standards you've set for your business? Do you even have any options?

Can you fire a family member without igniting a small war?

This kind of scenario brings to the surface two interrelated issues. The first is whether it is wise to work side-by-side with family members in the first place, and the second is whether you should consider hiring family members to do work for you or having them hire you.



Steve Strauss says: *"My experience, and that of many readers I have heard from over the years, is that hiring family is fraught with danger."*

But that leads us to the second issue, namely, should one work with family? There are pros and cons of course; some people love working with family members, while others can't bear the thought of it.

Let's consider both sides:

On the positive side of the ledger, one of the best things about working with family (and maybe one of the worst too) is the familiarity you have with one another.

There is a shorthand that you have with family that you do not have with the world at large, and when you get along well with that person, that can really work to your benefit.

Working with a family member you like can really be fun.

By the same token, family members know your strengths and weaknesses, and that too can come in very handy in the workplace. Especially if you work with a family member who has different strengths than you, then that give and take can save time and hassle, since you have already spent years together.

Another great thing about working with family is that you will have someone around whom you can really trust. Not that you cannot trust your regular employees or partners of course, but there is just something about family that kicks that to a higher level.

### **The Downsides to Working With Family**

The first is that mixing business and family can hurt both entities. On the business side, if things don't work out with the family member, disciplining (not to mention firing) that person is very difficult.

Similarly, your loved one may not show you the respect that you deserve and need in the workplace; they may think that you are still jolly Uncle Joe at work, and not the boss that you are.

And that, in turn, can either hurt morale or invite similar disrespect

among others in your organization.

In fact, family members may even feel that the normal rules do not apply to them, or they may resent your authority, or they may goof off, or they may not understand when you can't or don't give them a raise. And, like the question above, what do you do if they do a poor job?

Or what if they miss too much work, or call in sick when you know that they are not sick? Of course you will have to take action, and that is where working with family can hurt the family. Family relationships can be challenging to mend after a rift at work.

The bottom line is that, unless you have an incredibly good fit, and everyone understands the rules and you have set up some guidelines, working together runs the very real risk of damaging all sorts of family relationships if things go south.

And the problem there is that if things do go south, unlike a disgruntled employee who leaves, a disgruntled family member will be around for the long haul.

If you have a story of successfully working with a family member, and care to offer helpful advice, we'd love to hear from you at ([info@aibef.org.au](mailto:info@aibef.org.au))

■



# Something To Say?



*Our article in last month's newsletter "Offshore Outsourcing" prompted some vigorous response. Thank you to all those who have offered an opinion, and I apologise that we simply don't have the space to reproduce all of them.*  
**\*\* Editor's note**

❑ **From** a real estate property management perspective, offshore outsourcing can be helpful, if - and only if - an agent cannot find suitable local employees.

I am currently seeking work in the industry and cannot beat the \$7 per hour pay rate that offshore companies offer.

After 15 years in the industry I am now considering a change of career due to not being able to source suitable work.

[Debbie Halley, Property Manager](#)

❑ **When** you outsource your staff, then you lose control. Sure they may be cheaper but will they just do their job or have a commitment to their job? I was part of a outsourcing project. At first the company was happy, less overheads due to wages but over the next couple of years there was a need to create a complaints section. A lot of the complaints were around lack of empathy, customers being hung up on, language issues and the worrying perception of information remaining private. I am referring to call centre work. When you outsource to another company it is very hard to maintain ownership of your standards verses the standards of the staffing company. There are cultural differences such as some of

the words Australian uses can mean another word in another country. Some of these companies have a set up where they are just not taking your customer calls but other companies calls at the same time. Their systems have the ability to know who the incoming call is for. Some of these outsourcing companies have call centres in prisons. Buying Australia made, made in Australia etc are very good marketing foundations. You can teach the lingo like "mate " and "no worries" for example, but you can hear the difference when they are being said at the wrong times, it sounds so unnatural. I have worked with a lot of call centres from around the world, in some industries it works but in some it doesn't and these can cause issues that can lead a customer away from your business.

[Janelle Macpherson, Change Consultant](#)

❑ **It** really depends on what you are looking at as off- shore outsourcing. Some high level specialised skills are not readily (or sometimes affordably) available within Australia. Especially true in manufacturing and IT industry.

In other cases it simply a matter of cheaper prices e.g virtual assistants etc.

It's not a blanket decision and needs careful consideration of circumstances, personal ethics and financial position.

[Michelle Hanton OAM](#)

❑ **Outsourcing** can be beneficial if an organization is running on a small scale. It can save costs and keep the work going. Moreover, it also brings diversity and different perspectives to the company. However, along with the different perspectives it is also necessary to understand the culture and the way people work in it. It depends upon organizational values as well.

[Runali Maniya SDG Impactors Founder](#)

## **Non-Compete Clause - Are They Worth Anything?**

I see it time and time again. A business owner employs a skilled person; the employee works in the business, gains more skills and knowledge, and then leaves with a wealth of (the business) information, and either sets up in competition or works for a competitor.

Why should small business owners invest in proprietary information if their employees can simply walk off with it?

Fair Work Australia defines a small business as one that has less than 15 employees which comprise almost 87% of all Australian companies.

These smaller businesses often require their employees to wear many hats. Consequently, employees are by necessity exposed to, and knowledgeable of, a wide variety of trade secrets and other proprietary information.

It would be prohibitive for companies to invest in this kind of proprietary information without the ability to protect it from employees that leave, especially in cases where the lifeblood of a whole business consists of one or two products developed at a high cost.

Small-business owners are sometimes compelled to mortgage their own assets and provide personal guarantees for the loans they take to cover their start-up costs.

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# Something To Say?



## AVOIDANCE

Every week I read an excellent newsletter – Sunday Brain Food - written by Shane Parrish (<https://fs.blog/newsletter/>). In early October, Shane wrote this fabulous piece on avoidance which I would like to share with you as I suspect many of us do this. I could not have said it any better.

"There is nothing that gets in the way of success more than avoidance. We avoid hard conversations. We avoid certain people. We avoid hard decisions. We avoid evidence that contradicts what we think. We avoid starting a project until we're certain of the outcome.

To justify our avoidance, we lie to ourselves. We tell ourselves that we're noble — we don't want to hurt someone's feelings. We tell ourselves we don't want to offend others. We tell ourselves that things will get better. We tell ourselves that things will get easier. We tell ourselves that we can avoid the real issue without any impact. We tell ourselves we'll start when the time is right.

Sometimes we muster up half the courage. We have half the conversation we wanted to have. We do half the hard thing. We acknowledge the evidence but convince ourselves this time is different. We see the person we're avoiding but don't really talk to them. We start but don't commit to the project.

And here's the interesting thing. Half-efforts tend to make things worse, not better. When things don't get better, it only reinforces that we shouldn't have said anything in the first place. Avoiding isn't better, it's just easier.

Not only does avoiding today make the future harder, but it also almost always makes the present harder. Avoiding puts you on a hair-trigger, anything will set you off. We all do this. Who hasn't entirely avoided a hard conversation with their partner about something only to find themselves in an insignificant argument over something trivial? Of course, the petty fight isn't about the trivial thing, it's about avoidance of the hard thing.

Everything becomes harder until we stop avoiding what's getting in the way. The longer you wait the higher the cost."

Does this resonate with you? It certainly struck a chord with me as sometimes I confuse confrontation and avoidance.



**John Cannon MBA**  
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## Storing True Wealth

Now that Summer is almost here, I'm certain we'll see more and more hardy types on our beaches searching the sand for that elusive windfall. Be that jewellery, coins or precious metals these fortune seekers are insanely oblivious to sun, surf and surroundings as their eyes are totally focused on the screen before them, with ears straining in earphones waiting for the slightest ping. As we so quickly point out in *Oz-Finders keepers -Losers weepers*.

For as little as \$100 and as much as \$1,000 you too can enter the world of the detectorist as they are called, and search far and wide for other people's loss - or better still - yet to be found unclaimed precious stones.

You would not be surprised to learn that the story of Kevin Hillier keeps the dream alive in many of these folk's minds, because Kevin was a man credited with discovering what is still regarded as the largest gold nugget ever found in the world, and that by using a hand-held metal detector! What he found in 1980 - and dubbed *The Hand of Faith* was a colossal 27kgs block of gold estimated in today's value at over

\$2million. More amazing was the fact this find was barely 30cms beneath the surface of the ground and was discovered barely 200kms from Melbourne City.

Now few of us could be so fortuitous in the prospecting stakes as Kevin, but we all have many and varied valuables in our keeping that are not easily identified as precious stones and jewellery. Given this thought, I would like to add to the quote for which the late Jim Rohn is credited, *Money isn't every-thing but it ranks up there with Oxygen*, by saying *Information is the new currency of this Generation*-for young and old alike and ranks equally up there with oxygen! Without ready and easy access to important information, businesses would flounder, governments would cease and financial markets around the world would be in turmoil.

Information is truly wealth to those who have unfettered access to it. Wealth is Information - Information is Wealth.

So, let's summarize these points. Who would take valuable stones or rings to the beach and have no thought of returning home with them intact? Or perhaps unknowingly drop them somewhere- so that others like Kevin may strike it lucky? We generally take much care with storage and safety of our valuables already mentioned, and would never think to leave them in full sight unattended at home, to tempt an aspiring burglar.

If that is so, shouldn't we take equal care and security with our critically important, and necessary information? To describe exactly what is defined as critically important information, would take longer than we have room for in this article. However, if the idea of a personal family encrypted vault, where all your important information, your true family wealth can be stored, if this has some appeal - then give us a call or contact us, so we can show you how your true wealth can be secured.



# The Relationship Between Ethics and Trust



How are ethics and trust related?

It means that ethics and trust are **reciprocal and mutually reinforcing**. Improving one improves the other. Damaging one damages the other. Ethics and trust are reciprocal. They are mutually reinforcing. If we lead in ways that are trustworthy, we are fulfilling an important part of our responsibility as ethical leaders.

The relationship between ethics and trust is ambiguous as ethics can promote trust, whilst trust can simultaneously be abused resulting in unethical behaviour.

What does all of this mean to us as leaders? It means that ethics and trust are reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. Improving one improves the other. Damaging one damages the other.



[Linda Fisher](#)

[Thornton](#), Assoc. Prof. for University of Richmond SPCS, tell us that

*“Proactive ethics is part of what it takes to build trust; and, Building trust is part of what is required to maintain good ethics.*

Ethical behavior is always striving to do what's morally right for yourself and others, particularly when times are tough and we're challenged to cut corners to get things done quickly and cheaply.

When people damage the trust between them, it's usually because one or more of them have done something hurtful -- they've done

something that they would not want done to themselves.

Many would argue that a cornerstone of being ethical is the golden rule -- *to do unto others as you would have them do unto you*

**Business Ethics** is a concept which has come to mean various things to various people, but generally it's coming to know what it right or wrong in the workplace and doing what's right -- this is in regard to effects of products/services and in relationships with stakeholders.



On Business Ethics [George G Brenkert](#) states: *“It has been a quarter century since issues of trust began attracting the attention of those*

*concerned with business and the management of business (cf. Zand). During the quarter century prior to that point, trust was particularly the concern of psychologists and those focused on issues of international security and relations between the superpowers. It is ironic, then, that at a time when there is increased trust between the superpowers, there seems to be less trust by many within and between businesses.*

*Downsizing, mergers, outsourcing, and reengineering have led to mistrust by many employees of the business for which they work (or worked). Dangerous products, invasive marketing, and efforts to pressure people to agree to unneeded repairs have fostered mistrust between customers and businesses.*

*Takeovers, leveraged buyouts and corporate espionage have fostered mistrust among businesses.”*

Clearly, Morality, Ethics, Trust, and Integrity, don't just belong in Moral Science Classes ! They are crucial for today's Leaders and Managers.

Surveys reveal that they are often considered the most important quality, for a Leader, or Executive!

Research also reveals, that most employees and Leaders are not very clear about what exactly constitutes Ethical behaviour, and Integrity, other than a vague sense of right and wrong, rules and compliance.

Ethics and Trust are the Foundation of Leadership. The philosopher Jean Paul Sartre wrote a lot about authenticity, arguing that to be an authentic person, an individual needs to be honest with one self and avoid self deception. Although this might be good advice for anyone, it may be especially critical for leaders.

Thus, the relationship between ethical leader behavior and trust is (partly) moderated by the consistency between desired and observed behavior of a leader, as perceived by their followers.

In everyday life, trust and ethics are commonly conceived as closely related, intertwined concepts - one does not go without the other. ■



# What Do Your Customers Really Want?



One of the most important things that a business owner needs to know (and constantly research) is what YOUR customers, and potential customers want.

Once you have a good awareness of customer needs and wants, then you can readily distinguish how you can meet their needs in ways that your competitors can't.

Seriously, You need to identify what YOUR customers want from you, rather than rely on some general statements for what ALL customers want.

It's a fact that some customers will come to you if you are more convenient regardless of price. Other customers may be very price sensitive, and again, other customers will prefer higher quality and pay a higher price for it. And some will be okay with lower quality, as long as the prices are also lower.



[Thomas H. Davenport](#) says that: *"Today's distracted consumers, bombarded with information and options, often struggle to find the products or services that will best meet their needs."*

Really, when you think about it, it's not really that complicated. Customer frustration mainly stems from a discontinuity between the expectation of a service interaction, and what's actually delivered.

If you want to provide excellent customer service and outstanding customer satisfaction then you have to start with understanding **customer expectations**.

You need to know who your customers are and what they want. Customer expectations will set the bar for customer satisfaction which will also impact on a customer

deciding if they will come back to you again, and thus begins customer loyalty. If a customer feels like you did not deliver a service that was expected, chances are they won't come back and buy from you again.



[Alan Fairweather](#), "the Motivation Doctor" believes that what customers really want can be divided into two areas.

**Firstly – they want the core service of your business to meet their needs.**

**Secondly, and most important:** What customers really – really – really want and what will make them loyal to your business and say wonderful things about you to other people are the following principles:

1. **Warm and friendly responses** – When customers make contact with you face to face or over the telephone, they want a warm response.

2. **They want to feel important** – They know that you have lots of other customers and clients but they just love it when you make them feel special.

3. **They want to be listened to** – Customers often get the impression that the person dealing with them is not really listening. Keep good eye contact with people and concentrate on what they're saying. Keep an open mind and resist the temptation to jump in with an answer. It's also important to show that you're listening.

4. **Someone to know their name** – A person's name is one of the sweetest sounds they'll ever hear. If you use a customer's name when you talk to them, it indicates that you recognise them as an individual.

5. **Flexibility** – Customers hate to hear the word "No" or "it can't be done." It's not always possible to say, "Yes" to a customer or do exactly what they want; however, it is important to be as flexible as you can. Tell customers what you can do – not what you can't.

6. **Recovery** – When things go wrong, customers want you to solve their

problems quickly. They don't want to hear excuses or who's to blame or why it happened, they just want it fixed fast.

Customers will often judge the quality of your service by the way you recover. They will even forgive your mistakes if you recover well.

Don't be afraid when something does go wrong; it's often a great opportunity to show customers just how great your service really is.

Overall, customers just want to feel good. They want to feel better after they've dealt with you or anyone in your business, than they did before. If you can create that feeling, then you're well on the way to giving customers what they really want.



[Michele McGovern](#), writing for [Customer Experience Insight](#) says that we can thank (or blame) technology for most of these new

customer expectations. The amount of information that's available at the speed of light and in the palm of people's hands makes nearly everyone expect more.

The answer is to accurately and constantly measure and understand customer expectations; only then can you truly begin to manage them. Many businesses have learned that it's often advantageous to "*underpromise and overdeliver*" in order to increase the likelihood of exceeding customer expectations.

Others take pride in delivering high expectations, knowing full well that they can deliver the goods. Regardless of the approach, it's imperative for companies to manage customer satisfaction.





## Welcome to AIBEF Continuing Professional Development



Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is embedded in our Institute's Constitution, not just for our members, but offering CPD to the much wider and diverse Business & Enterprise Facilitation profession is at the very heart of our Institute.

### 2022

#### CPD TRAINING FOR BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE FACILITATORS

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Further information or application form please contact AIBEF CPD Training [info@aibef.org.au](mailto:info@aibef.org.au) +61 410 082 201



### AIBEF Code of Conduct

All AIBEF members are obliged to maintain professional standards and ensure the legitimate interests of their clients are paramount. They must ensure that any conflicts of interests are avoided and confidentiality maintained. Members are required to adhere to the highest standards of facilitation, advice, referral, information provision, support and client care through undertaking ongoing professional development

### The Process of Becoming an AIBEF Accredited Facilitator

To be an accredited Member of AIBEF, simply submit your application to the AIBEF Secretariat.

The AIBEF Accreditation Committee then assesses your experience and qualifications and will advise you of the Institute's decision.

Often this decision is partly based on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where the Committee takes into account the equivalent experience of the candidate. The new AIBEF Member is then provided with a certificate of Membership and is invited to have their name listed on the Institute's website, and can immediately use the post nominal *M.A.I.B.E.F.* after their name.

Whether it is a concern about business start-up or growth, a marketing issue, HR or financial issue, a member of the AIBEF can provide effective guidance and support to entrepreneurs, business owners, communities or organisations.

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## About the Institute

### Benefits of Membership Some benefits include:

**Recognition** of the professional qualifications of Member of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (MAIBEF) and Fellow of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (FAIBEF) in Australia and New Zealand.

**The ability to use the post-nominals**, MAIBEF and FAIBEF in promoting their activities and achieve:

- credibility/validation as an enterprise facilitator
- a premium for services
- client confidence and direct benefits to their business secure and regular employment/use as a business facilitator and enhanced market/business opportunities

### Personal confidence and increasing business:

- through business support organisations including training providers and centres increasingly requiring counsellors/advisers to be professionally trained and experienced facilitators
- achieved through the formal recognition of practitioner skills
- by becoming preferred contractors.

### The sharing of knowledge and skills and growth of new business through:

- peer networking and interchange of ideas with other Members and Fellows



- peer mentoring of other Members and potential Members
- enabling contacts (formal and informal) with peer organisations and alliances

### Regular electronic Newsletters and communications that:

- disseminate news of major developments in the business support industry
- notify Members of relevant conferences and events
- keep Members up to date with current issues
- notify Members about opportunities in professional development

### Development of business facilitation skills and knowledge through the provision of:

- notification of opportunities to participate in ongoing targeted and specific professional development
- access to professional development in recommended training courses
- the best and most up to date information on business and training/facilitation.

**Representation to others** (government and non-government) on Members behalf on issues affecting business facilitation.



*A.I.B.E.F. Established 24 years*

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The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (AIBEF) was founded in 1997 as a result of the recommendations of the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills.

In their report, entitled *Enterprising Nation*, the taskforce recommended that: “... a comprehensive accreditation process be established for small business trainers, educators, counsellors, facilitators and advisers so as to upgrade the quality of small business advice.”

It's a fact that, at the moment, the business advice industry in Australia is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, facilitator, trainer or consultant.

Check out Google for instance; there must be a dozen (or more) sites on “*How To Start Your Own Business Consulting Venture*”.

The AIBEF is the Peak Body for Business Facilitators, Coaches and Trainers, and we, the AIBEF Committee, hope to continue the association's great work to further promote the professionalism and quality of our members, and to endeavour to act as a respected voice and advocate for the wider community.

The AIBEF represents a profession that is proud of its independence and confident of the service it provides, committed to continual improvement in the skills and knowledge of our members and Business and Enterprise Facilitators in general, who ably assist in the professional guidance and support of business, enterprise and community development.



## Welcome to our Newsletter

*Facilitation Focus* is an opportunity for Business Facilitators, Coaches, Facilitators, Trainers and Consultants to ask questions, offer answers, and become part of a group where we can all join in peer-to-peer discussions and conversations about challenges, experiences and outcomes. **It is also worth noting that ‘Focus’ can be included in your Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

*Facilitation Focus* is a publication for a rapidly changing world.

Almost daily, SME's are facing constant changes, and it is vital that the Business and Enterprise Facilitator is current with their expert advice and guidance.

*Facilitation Focus* has as its main aim to access to a professional network of peers through the AIBEF, and by gaining more insight into business and industry best practices, as well as increasing the focus on the important aspects of their own business, an AIBEF Focus member can accomplish amazing results.



## Something To Say?

### Thanks for the Info

Just a note to thank you for the helpful information contained in your magazine. I'm a client of one of your members, who sends your magazine onto me. I find it easy to read and some of the ideas in the numerous articles are very useful and valuable.

*Peter Haley  
Solar For Life  
Coffs Harbour, NSW*

## WHO ARE BUSINESS OR ENTERPRISE FACILITATORS?

Virtually any professional, qualified person or organisation involved in assisting entrepreneurs, organisations, or communities to improve their Skills; Knowledge; Business; Staff; and/or Life.

The role of a Business and Enterprise Facilitator is to promote local economic growth by providing support to local entrepreneurs, groups or entire communities wishing to start or expand a small business enterprise or to assist to develop a concept where the community will benefit

The concept of Business and Enterprise Facilitation is a model of development that supports the creation of wealth from within a community by nurturing the resourcefulness of its people.

The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators is an international not-for-profit institution that works with entrepreneurs, small groups and / or communities to establish sustainable, grassroots enterprise projects.

For more information please contact:

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