



Small Business CPR

Breathe New Life into Your
Business Model

by Cornell D. Green

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Small Business CPR



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What is CPR?

Consistency. Predictability. Replication.

I *know*: when you see the acronym “CPR”, what comes to mind is the life-saving technique. You breathe air in someone’s lungs, compress their chest to get their blood flowing, and literally **bring them back** from the **brink of death**.

It’s **not an accident** that **we chose the same acronym** to represent the **core** of our Small Business **success curriculum**, and to embody the **fundamental principles** of **productivity** – the **keys to Small Business profitability**.

No Magic Bullet

Right from the start, notice that I say “**keys**” to success, not “**secrets**” or any other such *hype*. **Success** in the 21st Century, **post-COVID-19 economy** will be achieved *the same way* it always has been: **through hard work and diligent effort**. Hard work should be **not be a struggle**, but a **focused pursuit** of a **clearly defined goal**.

So **how do we get there** — to *success*, however we each may define it for our

respective businesses? **Everyone is up to something different**, and I can't pretend to have a ***magic mirror*** where I can see what you're all up to. The good news is, **I don't have to**.



All businesses, whether they make or sell a product, provide a service or manage those who do, **must adhere** to the fundamentals of **CPR** in order to be productive and profitable:

- They must have a product of **CONSISTENT** quality, whether that product is a *physical* item or an *intangible* service
- They must have **PREDICTABLE** delivery of that product
- They must be able to **REPLICATE** the method of delivering their quality product

Not because I say so – because **it IS so**. How many start-ups, retail stores, local restaurants or trendy boutiques have you already seen which **began with a big BANG** and a tremendous **flourish of initial success**, only to **eventually sputter out and die off**? If you consider why this happens repeatedly, you'll find **it's usually because**:

- They failed to keep up the **quality** that won them their initial customers

WHAT IS CPR?

- The quality may not have failed, but **delivery** could not keep up with the demand
- The burden fell upon the owner or originator, and the product or service delivery **could not scale** to match the business' growth

In the end, they failed to apply the fundamentals of **CPR**. The *specifics* of **CPR** are, of course, **different** for **each individual business** venture. But they **ALL require it**, and **none can succeed without** its *proper application*.

In this eBook we will **examine** the principles of **CPR** in detail, and **explore** how you and I can **best apply** them to our businesses to **thrive, prosper** and **flourish** in this 21st Century post-COVID-19 economy. It **may not be as healthy** as it once was, but *we've got the technique* to **bring it back to life**.

Stay tuned...

C is for Consistency

Everything we *know*, everything we *do* consists of **fundamentals**.

Language consists of the letters of the *alphabet*, basic *sounds* and *pronunciation*. **A**rithmetic consists of *numbers* and the basic processes of *adding*, *subtracting*, *multiplying* and *dividing*. Any **t**ask, any **e**ffort, however complex or involved, can be reduced to the **f**undamental **p**riniples and **f**unctions of which it consists.



I've intentionally used the word "**consists**" several times, as it is the root of

the first **CPR** principle – **Consistency**. Just as everything – EVERYTHING – *consists* of fundamentals

- Fundamental **concepts**
- Fundamental **principles**
- Fundamental **elements**
- Fundamental **techniques**

– “*consistency*” is the first — in fact, the **fundamental** — component of **Small Business CPR**.

What is Consistency?

At its most basic, the dictionary definition of **Consistency** is

- always *acting* or *behaving* the **same way**
- *adhering to* the **same principles, course** (of action), **form**, etc.
- the *way* a substance **holds together**
- of the **same quality**: *especially* – good **each time**

Hmmm... that may seem like **a lot of different definitions**, but when you consider it, **when we say** that **something** or **someone** is “*consistent*”, especially **in a business sense**, we usually mean *all of those things*, don’t we? We mean that the **person** or **thing** will pretty much be the **same, time after time**.

And we kind of **assume** that this... well, *consistency*, is **based on** some underlying **principles** or **standards**. And when we say “**consistent**”, we usually mean that the **quality** of the **thing**, in the case of a **product** – or of the **person**, in the case of a **service** – is not just *acceptable*, but is **good each time**.

So you can see why “**consistency**” is the **first** – and **most important** –

element or principle of **Small Business CPR**. Which is all well and good... but **how** do you and I get from **understanding** consistency, to **achieving** it on a (I am *sooo* sorry for this) **consistent** basis...?



Breaking it Down

It's actually **quite easy** to understand **how consistency works** — at least **in theory**. Like most fundamentals, it's **not very complicated**. Neither is *basic multiplication*: but **remember how tough** *memorizing* those “**times tables**” were (do people *still memorize* multiplication tables in this age of “calculators everywhere”?).

Here's the “**quick and dirty**” on **achieving consistency**, regardless of *what* you do or *how long* you've been doing it. You simply **list every task** required **to do everything** you need to do to conduct your business, making sure you **haven't left out anything essential**, and then make sure you always **do every task, every time**.

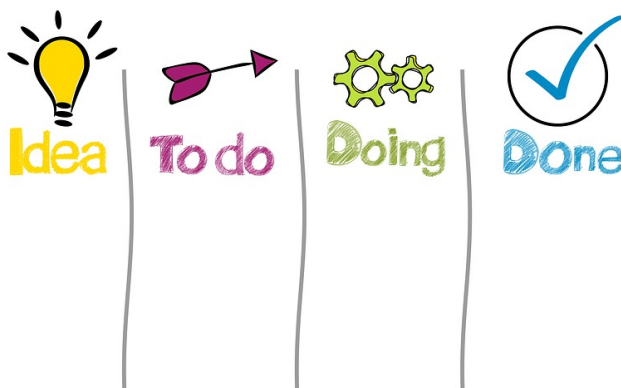
Sounds **simple**... but **not so easy**, right? Just like *multiplication*, or *riding a bike*, driving a *manual transmission automobile* or many of the **things we**

now do with ease that once **seemed quite formidable**. The *mere thought* of **compiling the list** of *EVERY TASK* is enough to immobilize most of us with “**analysis paralysis**”; but the good news is that we don’t have to do it all at once.

How do We Get There?

Just as we **learned the letters first**, then the *sounds they make*, then simple **words, sentences** and so on, compiling the “**consistency task list**” is not an *event*, but an **activity** that will **occur over time**. You can **start easily** by **grabbing a pencil** (Not a pen – *t rust me*) and **paper**, or opening up you favorite **word processor** or **spreadsheet program** and plug away. It *doesn’t really matter*, as long as you **start**.

As **comfortable** as using your favorite basic writing tool may be initially, the **experience** **CommuniT Solutions** has **coaching entrepreneurs** and *Small Business owners and operators* has led us to **recommend an excellent tool** for **compiling** your “**consistency task list**”, and many **other brainstorming** and **list making** activities as well. Like many of the tools we recommend, it’s **web-based**, there’s a **smartphone app** for **all platforms**, and its **FREE!**



This tool is called **Workflowy**, and is available at, quite logically <https://workflowy.com>. Simply **click** the link, **create a free account**, and **start**

compiling your “**consistency task list**”. Start *anywhere* , and **don’t worry** about **what order** things are in, or **whether your list is complete**. The beauty of **Workflowy** is that, *at any time*, you can **rearrange** the list, **move** things around, **make subcategories** (like an outline) and **much, much more**.

Once you’ve created your **Workflowy** account, you’ll be able to look at part of **MY Workflowy list** which I’ve publicly shared for the **readers of this blog**. The *link below* allows you to see my **original notes** for the “**Consistency**” part of the **CPR curriculum**:

Workflowy – Consistency Tool

I use **Workflowy** to organize **all the concepts** of the **Small Business CPR curriculum**. It’s what we at **CommuniT Solutions** refer to as “**eating our own pudding**”. We apply **CPR** to our *own businesses* – that’s how we’ve **developed the concepts**, and how we **know it works**.

So whether you use **Workflowy**, a **word processor**, or a **pencil and paper** — start compiling your “**consistency task list**” TODAY! You’ll find that, as you make your list, **you’ll think about** all the things you *know to do*, and **discover** many things **you do** “*automatically*”, “*by instinct*” or “*without thinking*”. By **identifying** them and **writing them down**, you’ll find that *fewer* things **fall through the cracks**.

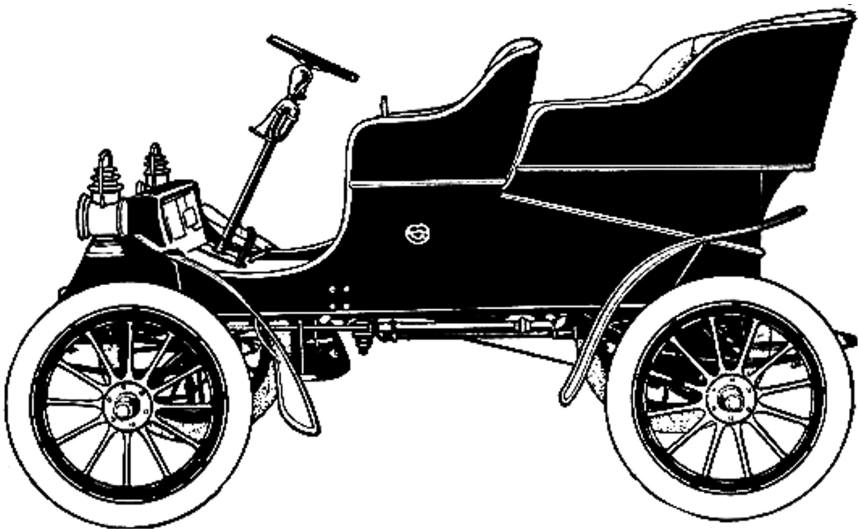
Fewer things **will be overlooked**. *Less hassle and stress* **getting things done**. And, most importantly — **more consistency** in the pursuit of **your daily business**. That, after all, is **the point and purpose** of **CPR...**!

Start *slow...* and **have fun!** More to come...

P is for Predictability

We usually don't think of **Predictability** as a positive trait.

Especially **in this Internet age** of “outside the box”, “chasing what’s trending”, “first, new and innovative”, **Predictability** can come off as, well... **behind the curve**, **un-creative** and easily **outperformed** by the competition.



But when you **examine the practical realities** of, well... *actual business*

as opposed to a informal “what if” kind of thing, it’s easy to see that **Predictability** is, indeed, **one of the fundamental elements** of *Small Business success*. Here’s a **real-world example** that will make the point quite clear.

Predictability is a GOOD Thing

Let us **consider the field** of *overnight package delivery*. Pop quiz, hot shot: what is the single **most important element** of the **success** of companies like **UPS, FedEx and DHL**? Is it fancy **logos**, clever **ad campaigns** or snappy **catch phrases**? No: it’s the ***predictable delivery of your packages***, on time, *every time*.

Consider the slogan of the first commercial overnight delivery company, **Federal Express** (now “FedEx” to its close friends and customers): “When it absolutely, positively *has to be there overnight*”. From their inception, FedEx knew that **the key to its success** was the **predictable delivery** of customers’ packages. Overnight did **NOT** mean “a *day and a half* from now”, or “*as soon as we can*, barring unexpected conditions”.

Predictability, as the second fundamental **CPR** principle is, in fact, all about the **predictable delivery** of the *first* principle, **Consistency**. It is of little value to your customer if your product is of consistent quality but on an intermittent schedule. “They make a great product... but you have to wait for them to get around to actually producing/providing/delivering it” is **NOT** what you hear when **world class businesses** are described.

I use the example of my *favorite* donut chain, **Dunkin’ Donuts** (this is *not* a product endorsement). I **love** their glazed chocolate cake donuts. The reason I am a long time DD customer is because **not only** are those glazed chocolate cake donuts **consistently** *tasty and delicious* no matter *when* I buy them, I can **predictably** walk into **any Dunkin’ Donuts store**, and the glazed chocolate cake donuts **will be prepared** — and **delivered** — to the **same standard** of

consistent quality.



Many Small Businesses which **depend on** the output of a **single skilled craftsperson** — *custom-made* jewelry, *specialty* cooking, *hand-made* anything — usually **start off quite well** because of the **unique design** or **consistent quality** of a product obviously **created** or **prepared to a high standard**.

The **problems begin** as the **orders increase**. Since there's usually **only the one individual** — typically, the **founder** — doing all the **actual creating/preparing**, the **orders start to overwhelm** their *ability to deliver the product* to **the same standard of quality**.

At this point, **one of two things usually occurs**: either they “crank out product” at the same rate, but the **quality declines** quite obviously, or they **adhere to the consistent standard** of quality, and **fall behind schedule** because they simply **cannot turn out quality product quickly enough** to meet the *increased demand*.

In the **previous chapter**, we learned that **to achieve Consistency** we need to **identify all the tasks required** to do the **work of our Small Business**,

and then do *every task, every time*. Since the “**Predictable**” thing we refer to in CPR is the **delivery of Consistent quality**, Predictability is **built upon** the tasks we identified in our “**Consistency task list**”.

How do I DO It??

You may recall that in **the Consistency chapter**, I told you to **write down all the tasks**, regardless of what order or sequence is required. **THIS** is what we do in the **Predictability phase**. We identify **which tasks belong together**, and **what order** they should be performed in **for maximum effect...** and **minimum** wasted *effort*. This step is called “**creating processes**”.

A “**process**” is nothing more than “a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular goal or result”. Nothing fancy or complicated – this is **pretty basic stuff** here. Just as the “**Consistency task list**” help you make sure you don’t leave out any important tasks, the “**Predictability process catalog**”, if you will, allows you to **organize these tasks** in the **most efficient way** possible.

Check out the Catalog

What should you do *first*? Some tasks are done **every day**: others **once a week** or even **less frequently**. **Assembling** the humongous **list of tasks** is an admirable (and daunting) **first step** — now, **to be Predictably Consistent**, you must **assemble those tasks** in the **best way possible** to... well, **create your version** of Henry Ford’s *assembly line*.

And just like the “**Consistency task list**”, *don’t* expect to get the “**Predictability process catalog**” down in the *first attempt*. In fact, it might **require some effort** to wrap your head around the whole **concept of a “process”**. As a “for instance”, let’s consider the **process of mailing a letter** to a friend.

The “mailing a letter process” would consist of the following tasks, more or less in this order:

- **Get** a pen and paper
- **Write** the letter
- **Get** an envelope
- **Address** the envelope
- **Fold** the letter
- **Insert** the letter in the envelope
- **Seal** the envelope
- **Put** a stamp on the envelope
- **Insert** the stamped, addressed envelope into a mailbox

I’m sure **some of you** considering this example **might come up with** a slightly **different list**. You might **get the envelope and stamp first**, before you start to write the letter. You might have to **purchase some of the items**, so these would be **additional tasks**. Some of you might even have a **separate task** of **composing your thoughts** before you start to write — as you can see, **processes are quite flexible**.

The **point isn’t** to “**do it OUR way**”, because there really **is no “CPR way”**. As long as you create the “**Predictability process catalog**” from *Your “Consistency task list”* that works for **YOUR Small Business**, you are **well on your way** to *Predictably delivering the Consistent quality* Your Small Business **is capable of**.

And that leads to **fulfilled orders, satisfied customers** and **increased profits**. A final added benefit is that, as Your Small Business expands (you *are* planning for **expansion, aren’t you?**) you will be **able to engage others** — interns, employees, partners, *whatever* — **to assist you** in the *Predictable delivery* of Your *Consistent quality*.

And that’s something **you can count on...**

4

R is for Replication

“Replication: the act of **copying** or **reproducing** something”.

You’ve got the **Consistent** quality, and have worked out your “**consistency task list**”. You’ve developed your “**Predictability process catalog**”, and have figured out **which series of tasks** to perform to **produce a predictable outcome**. *Now* what?



Well... if **you have actually done these things**, take a breath, and **take a bow**. Many Small Businesses will never – **NEVER** – make it this far. They will **get by** on a **wing and a prayer**, riffing their entire business **off the top of their**

head, by the **seat of their pants**. And in truth, that *isn't really all that bad*.

They'll make a **profit...** *of sorts*. They **won't** end up **broke**, they'll **meet their payroll** (with a few *slip ups* or *delays* here and there), and they'll even **manage to pay a mortgage**, or **put some kids through school**. The **problem** is that, **after five, fifteen** or **FIFTY** years. they **won't be doing much better** than **staying slightly ahead** of the **break-even point**, year after year.

Expand and Conquer

Yes, it **does beat** the alternative... but *not by much*. And **let me be honest** with you: *even if* you **have mastered** the **C** of Consistency and the **P** of Predictability, that **will not guarantee** that, after months, years or decades, **you'll be any better off** with Your Small Business. Because **CPR consists of three elements**, each of which are **equally important**, and **depend upon each other**.

Replication comes **last** because, just as **Predictable** delivery **requires Consistent** quality to, well... **deliver, without the catalog of processes** which ensure Predictable delivery, **there's nothing to Replicate**. In the CPR method **Replication**, like *Consistency* and *Predictability*, **conveys multiple meanings**.

When we discuss **Replication**, we mean the ability to copy, or to reproduce:

- the **catalog of processes** which *guarantee* both **high quality** and **dependable delivery**
- the **manner in which you analyzed** your business and created the **Consistency Task List** and the **Predictability Process Catalog**
- the **actions required to provide** your customers and clients with the **output** of your **Consistency** and **Predictability** – **every day, every time, every product, every service**

- the **understanding** of how to **apply these principles** to your business, old tasks and new, as you **acquire new customers/clients** and **develop new tasks/services**
- the **respect for the needs and desires** of your **customers** and **clients** which **inspire you to apply the principles of CPR** to Your Small Business in *the first place*

The **reason we chose** the word **Replication** instead of other equally good choices – like *Reliability* or *Repeatability* – is to **stress the importance** of viewing **Your Small Business** as a *living, breathing organism*. Small Businesses **stumble and fall when they think they’ve “made it”**.

They become **comfortable** with a *broad client list*, **large market share**, *strong brand recognition* or *consistent sales* – and **believe** that **they’ve mastered all the fundamentals**, and have *conquered the world*.

But then... the **market shifts**. Or **competition cuts into** their **market share**, or starts to *steal away their customer base*. If **all they know** is **what they’ve done**, and **not how they’ve done it**, by the time they **figure out** what has changed and **make adjustments**, it may be *too late*.

Replication, therefore, is **not simply** figuring out **how to do it again**. It’s **understanding how it was done**, so that **not only can the processes be repeated** — either **by other people** as your *staff expands*, or **at other locations** as your *BUSINESS expands* — but **they can be modified, adjusted or changed** altogether, to **help Your Small Business keep pace** with the *shifts* in the **economy**, the **market** and the **needs and desires** of *your customers*.

Method to Your [Madness]... err, Method

Replication comes from **developing workflows from the processes** in the **Predictability Process Catalog**. Just as you go **from the individual tasks** required to **deliver a letter**, for example, **to the groups of tasks** which make up **the letter writing process**, understand that **the process itself** is only one small **part of your *communication workflow***.

The **communication workflow** might look **something like *this***:

- **Identify** target market
- **Develop** message campaign
- **Deliver** message
- **Evaluate** results of campaign
- **Enhance/Improve** campaign

In the first part of the workflow – “**Identify target market**” – you might involve your **Financial Review** process, which may **consist of such tasks** as “**Open Quickbooks**”, “**Prepare Quarterly Report**”, “**Determine Most Profitable Client Quartile (top 25%)**”, “**Analyze Demographics of Top Quartile**“, and so forth.

The “**Identify target market**” workflow may involve other processes, such as your **Business Networking Review** process, in which you **review the business cards** you’ve collected and the **names of those contacts** you have ***actually followed up with***, either with a brief phone call or perhaps a face to face meeting over coffee or at lunch.

The **advantage of creating workflows** from your **Predictability Process Catalog** **is to remind yourself** that **everything you do** is **in the context** of the *two fundamental objectives* of every business, large or small: **acquiring more customers**, and **making more money**.

Steady As She Flows

The purpose of **identifying all the essential tasks** (Consistency), **creating processes** composed of **sequences of related tasks** (Predictability) and, finally, **developing workflows from these processes** (Replication) is to **remove the “*abstract and arbitrary*”** from the effort of **conducting business**. All business may be **work**, but the work **shouldn’t be any harder** than it *has to be*.

Successful business **don’t thrive and prosper *by accident*** — they **identify what they do well** and **do it *better***... and identify **what they *don’t* do well**, and **either improve or eliminate** the *inefficient processes*.

Right now, it probably **seems like either a mystery, or an insurmountable task**. Well, so did *walking*, once upon a time. But **don’t worry**: you **develop the CPR for Your Small Business** the *same way* you mastered the fine art of walking — **one step at a time**.