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# Dancer's dream studio takes big steps

**Magic Megaphone helped her envision, plan for new business**

**Sacramento Business Journal - by Nick Montoya and Roger S. Peterson**

So far, we've shown how a dentist built his practice and how the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce expanded services to members -- both using the Magic Megaphone. Now, let's see how the Magic Megaphone can help a new business get unstuck.

Giana is a professional dancer specializing in salsa and Latin dancing.

For years she has taught at studios from Los Angeles to Sacramento, but half of her earnings went to the studios and she found it difficult to recruit students. She loved teaching dance, but considered giving it up. She felt stuck -- until she used the Magic Megaphone.

## **The MegaMission**

"What is your dream?" was our first question to her. "To have my own studio," she answered enthusiastically. That led quickly to a simple MegaMission: Giana's Latin Dance Academy.

Identifying her MegaMission took two seconds and five words. Giana could have consumed hours on a lofty, overwritten mission statement, but the first principle of the Magic Megaphone guided her: Simple is Better.

## **The MegaBenefits**

Step Two makes the MegaMission more real by enumerating the benefits of success. It took her about five minutes to come up with a list:

- Financial stability
- More time for students to make them better dancers
- Charge less to be competitive
- Reduce driving time, so she can dedicate herself even more to her college work
- Partner dancing strengthens relation-ships
- Students' self-esteem is improved

More MegaBenefits could have been listed if she wanted to spend more time, but we reminded her of the second principle of the Magic Megaphone process: 85 percent is OK. Even if only three of these MegaBenefits were realized, the MegaMission could be called successful.

## **The MegaTargets**

After less than 15 minutes we were at Step Three, identifying her MegaTargets. We asked "Who cares or who should care about your dance studio?" The list fell logically into place:

- Current students
- New students
- My family

- Dance professors at the university
- Salsa community in the Bay Area and Sacramento
- Hollywood
- Kids and teens
- Teachers
- Counselors

But it was obvious who her primary MegaTarget was: new students.

### **The MegaMagic**

We rarely allow ourselves to envision ideal outcomes or reactions from target audiences. But such vision is the real magic of the Magic Megaphone. So in Step Four, Giana had to put aside the prudent, conservative outcomes that others might settle for.

Giana pretended that her studio was now a year old. She was hosting a student appreciation party. She imagined being invisible to her students but able to hear them commenting on Giana's Latin Dance Academy.

Giana wasn't satisfied to hear ordinary praise, such as "Nice studio." She wanted the best of all praises. The third principle of the Magic Megaphone spells it out: Think WOW!

- "WOW! Dancing has enriched my life. I have Giana to thank for it."
- "WOW! Giana's dance academy is excellent. I have to get my friends to come here, too."
- "WOW! I can live again. Dancing has touched me at the core of my soul."
- "WOW! Dancing is really cool."
- "WOW! Dancing has changed my body -- I feel great."

### **The MegaPlan**

How infrequently we allow ourselves to think in such ideal terms and then turn them into a plan of action. And that's Step Five. The MegaPlan includes the actions needed to turn imagined MegaMagic praises into reality. To make her MegaMission successful, Giana's MegaPlan included:

- Acquire a space in a good, central location
- Outfit the space with a hardwood floor and mirrors
- Install ballet barre
- Develop a marketing plan
- Find funding
- Create a Web site
- Create flyers and business cards
- Figure out a class schedule
- Figure out a college schedule
- Teach workshops to promote herself and her studio
- Teach a master class at Sacramento State
- Join the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Start networking

That's a long list. Remembering the 85 percent rule, Giana identified the top MegaPlan actions that she could put to work immediately.

In 50 minutes, Giana went from thinking she might quit teaching dance to becoming excited and empowered. She was ready to start her MegaPlan.

### **The Results**

So how is Giana's dance studio doing now? Two months after this Megaphone session, the studio was open for students. Giana continues to expand her business and is teaching workshops and master classes in Sacramento and the Bay Area.

"After the Megaphone session, there was so much positive energy and forward movement." Giana said. "All the right people came into my life and helped me achieve my goal. It truly was magic. I love my job. I love teaching and my students are learning fast."

In less than a year, her students are already saying "Wow!" MegaMagic accomplished.

*Nick Montoya and Roger S. Peterson are co-authors of "The Magic Megaphone: How to get your projects unstuck and back on track in under 60 minutes." Reach them at [magicmegaphone.com](http://magicmegaphone.com).*

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