

# Let's Get to the Root of the Problem!

By Steve Saenz

*"Change happens NOT by trying to make yourself change, but by becoming aware of what's NOT working." Shakti Gawain*

There is an important DISTINCTION that must be made before we can build a World-Class Business – the difference between SYMPTOM and ROOT CAUSE. Making this distinction is critical because if you treat the symptoms, the "pain" keeps coming back. A useful metaphor here (especially for those of you who like to work in the garden) is to think about those pesky weeds that start popping out during the summer months. If you mow over them, they *seem* to go away. For a brief period of time, everything looks fine. The problem is that within a few days they're back! As any gardener worth his/her Round Up will tell you, you have to get those suckers by the *roots* if you want to get rid of them permanently. And, it doesn't do any good to get *some* of the roots; you have to get *all* of the roots!

## What's NOT working?

When you start looking for the ROOT CAUSES of why things are happening or are not happening in your business (or in your personal life) you are basically saying, "I am going to begin by figuring out what's NOT working." When you do this, you stand a much better chance of achieving PERMANENT and MEANINGFUL change. It may be difficult to identify all of the root causes. The reason is that we all have BLIND SPOTS.

As the saying goes, "you don't know what you don't know." You also can't see what you can't see!

Listed below are some of the root causes that we have discovered in the practices we have worked with over the years.

Please keep in mind that these are *successful* businesses. It is often the most successful ones that experience the most pain. You should review this list with the rest of your team. As a group, you are more likely to see the true picture. If you are committed to building a World-Class Business, you should also RATE and PRIORITIZE each item on the list. This will help you focus on the areas that are causing you and your team the most pain.

## 10 Most Common Root Causes (in rapidly growing investment practices)

1. Lack of vision or focus
2. Lack of organization or structure
3. Lack of systems
4. Lack of communication
5. Lack of leadership
6. Poor management skills
7. Too many clients
8. Wrong type of clients
9. Not enough people
10. The wrong people