



Financial planner. Management consultant. Mortgage banker/broker. Real estate agent. Lawyer. Professional speaker. Dentist. Physician. Architect. Pharmacist. Counselor. Business/Life Coach. Marketing/branding executive. Insurance Agent. Accountant.

Regardless of your specialty in the wide array of professional services, you and I share a special place in business. We (those of us who are true professionals in the services industry) face an incredible number of obstacles to success.

Can you relate to any of these?

- Not enough time in the day to do what needs to be done.
- Too many low-paying, whining, penny-pinching customers.
- Inconsistent cash flow.
- Hit a growth ceiling and can not find a way to breakthrough.
- Working harder than ever - but not getting ahead...or even catching up.
- First-one-in & last-one-out (even if you run a home-based international professional services firm as I do).
- Feel like my firm runs me rather me run it.
- Late-paying customers (even some of good ones).
- Working too much IN my business rather than ON my business.
- Unclear how to really differentiate my firm from all the others (or even what makes me truly unique...if anything).

- Frustrated in my attempts to gain more long-term, high paying customers.
- Confused as to how to convince my customers I really am worth more than my competitors.
- Unsure of what to start, stop, or keep doing to grow my business.
- Hesitation in this market to “pull the trigger” on new ideas or additional services.
- Far, far too little time for what’s really important to me (family, faith, & fun).

Honestly, we can all relate to many if not most of these issues. I certainly have faced them over my career, but now I have control over them rather than allowing them to have control over me!

My Professional Services Story Begins

My birthing in professional services was as a 12-year old shoe shine boy in my home town barber shop in Bardstown, KY. The Heaton & Kelly Barber Shop was located on a prominent corner building in the dead center of my sprawling home town of (at that time) 7,000 people. (Hey, we had five stop lights in my hometown when I graduated high school in 1971!)

The barber shop had five barber chairs opposite two sets of hardback customer chairs. Separating the customer chairs was a beautiful wooden shoe shine station, the kind with two metal foot stands to place your feet upon while getting a shine.

As a boy, I of course hopped up to sit in the shoe shine chair while waiting for my haircut. What self-respecting 12-year old boy would sit in a regular, hard-back customer chair when he could jump up and sit in a huge, wooden chair with foot rests!

One day while I was in the chair waiting for my haircut, for reasons I am to this day unsure of, I asked Mr. Heaton, "Does anyone ever shine shoes in this chair?" I don't recall his specific answer, but it implied that no one had used that chair for its intended purpose in years.

Just like my dad, (an independent businessman himself - I'll save his story for another day), it got me thinking...hey, maybe I COULD SHINE SHOES IN IT!

I was only 12, but I figured I could make a little money (a lot of money I dreamed), hang out with some old guys (you know, in their 30's and 40's....gosh, even some in their 50's), and see what happens. I got Mr. Heaton, my dad and mom to agree to let me ride a bike downtown and go to work shining shoes.

So, my first taste of entrepreneurship began at the ripe old age of 12!

That was 43 years ago.

As I type and speak this into my IBM ThinkPad Tablet PC and Dragon Naturally Speaking software (next purchase - an iMac Pro), some of you already think, "This dude is way old!"

Well, not really. I'm not way old.

I'm just way experienced!

A Little More Detail

After earning my BA, MA, and PhD., (and also running in that timeframe a semi-custom home building company within a 20% interest rate - 9% unemployment economic market), I began my corporate career in Denver, CO. After two years in professional services at the University of Denver, then three years as a national manager within the headquarters of \$500M company, followed by being the branch manager of a multi-million dollar unionized transportation services company, I moved to Clearwater, FL to lead the nationwide executive development function for a \$5B Fortune 500-sized retailer.

12 years - four companies - all professional services focused.

For the past 17 years, I have led a very successful professional services company out of my home office (specially designed and equipped "bedroom" transformed into a home-office) where I have taught, led, and worked with thousands of executives, managers, and front-line employees on how to be lead and grow high performance companies.

Maybe you recognize some of the companies I've consulted with, spoken to, advised, and counseled, companies such as:

- Walmart
- Best Buy
- IBM
- Wells Fargo
- State Farm
- Johnson & Johnson
- Schlumberger
- Ford (before their fall)
- Baptist Health Care (Malcolm Baldrige winner & Fortune 100 Best Place to Work in America)
- Network Express, Inc (INC 500 fast growth company).

I could go on and list the other hundreds of companies, associations, and individuals with whom I have advised and coached, but you get the point.

In addition, I've sold well over 100,000 copies of my books, both self-published and mainstream published. (BTW - most published business books do not reach 2K in sales; 5K is considered a really successful business book.)

Further, I am internationally recognized as an expert in organizational and leadership excellence, employee retention and relations, and in business breakthrough thinking (strategy, process, and execution).

Even within these 17 years of running my own professional services firm, for two years I led a nationwide franchised services company. But I decided (along with the Founder of the firm) that I was again too much of an independent renegade to be locked into someone else's company (albeit a truly great company), and I needed to be on my own again.

Today, professionals service owners and their teams come to me to teach them my secrets for long-term success and how to breakthrough to the next level.

So what?

Here's what.

From working with many of the finest professional services firms in the world, to providing professional services myself for over 28 years (not including my shoe shine experience), **I know what it takes to be successful in our professional services sector.**

Therefore, written for you is my manifesto, *The Catalyst Manifesto* - a 9-point examination of the most critical components of building and sustaining a successful professional services firm.

But even more than that...

This document represents the absolute essential elements of what it takes for you and me to rise above the crop of the millions of other mere services firms (I left out the word "professional" intentionally) littering our office parks, Chamber meetings, and customer's in-boxes touting their average offerings.

The 9 Essentials

These 9 essentials truly separate the superior professional services firms from the common or average firms.

These 9 elements, when systematically applied, will clearly differentiate you (as they do me) from all your competition.

These 9 items are in actuality your “call-to-action” to forever gain and maintain your position as THE professional services provider in your niche target market.

My purpose in sharing this manifesto (and its companion eBook [The Catalyst Guide for Professional Services Firms](#) that explains all 9 in greater detail) is to get your thinking straight on what it takes to build and sustain a **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM (PSF)**.

Briefly then, here are the 9 essentials elements for building and growing a highly profitable and successful PSF.

Essential #1: We are in the MARKETING business.

You may not like to hear this, but it is true. You must understand that to be a truly successful PSF, you must move beyond seeing yourself as being in the “financial planning” business or the “coaching” business or the “dentistry” business.

You and I are in the marketing and sales business.

It’s obvious. A weak or non-existent marketing process begets a weak or non-existent business.

One of the many ways I teach and guide my clients (and particularly my [Catalyst Inner Circle](#) members) is how to create and execute a powerful, systematic marketing plan that builds positioning, brand awareness, and magnetic lead generation.

**What
Dr. Jim’s
Clients Say**

“As our business consultant & coach, Dr. Jim has been instrumental in our company’s growth over the last couple years. Our management team is on the same page with common goals and objectives. Sales, revenue, morale, teamwork, & profits are all up since Dr Jim joined our team as our business coach. I would recommend Dr Jim’s services to any business that is looking for a way to “take it to the next level.”

Jeff Powell, President & CEO, Collection Services, Inc.

Additionally, from unlocking your unique marketing point of dominance (that core market in which you want to dominate) to building an annual marketing map (with specific goals and monthly actions), you must begin with a powerfully crafted and aligned marketing plan as the first step toward becoming a world-class PSF.

Essential #2: We are in the RELATIONSHIP business.

Relationships matter more than you may realize. Too often I see highly skilled PSF's rely solely upon their talent or knowledge to hopefully attract great customers. They falsely believe...or hope... that all they need to do to grow their business is to be the best they can be at their craft, and provide a high quality service. Then their phones will ring off the hooks.

It doesn't work that way - not at all.

I know many very skilled, professionally trained white-collar service providers that are starving because they do not know how to or why it is important to build and sustain meaningful and consistent long-term relationships with their current and potential customers.

When's the last time your dentist did anything beyond call you to remind you of an upcoming appointment? And if you missed the appointment, did they ever call back?

Has your physician ever called you just to check in and see how you are doing?

Does your hairdresser or barber ever contact you for any reason?

People may be impressed with your skills and knowledge, but they buy relationships!

Essential #3: We are in the GAPS business.

No, I don't mean the retail clothing chain. One of our core business strategies as a PSF is to fill-in-the-gaps for what our core customers don't have. I like to say that we are in the "what they don't have" business.

Think of it this way. If someone is already getting services from a competitor, why would they change...unless they are not getting what they need from their current provider? They will not easily change unless your value proposition is huge, or there is someone to fill-in-the-gap between what they want or need with what they are presently getting.

[Forget low price - we won't even go there. If all they want is low price, they'll drop you in a New York minute for a lower price. Successful PSF's do not play in that park.)

One of our key roles, therefore, is to uncover what they don't have (unmet needs) and find creative, highly profitable ways to fill those needs.

Essential #4: We are in the PROPRIETARY SYSTEMS business.

As a dentist, you may see yourself in the cavity prevention or teeth cleaning business.

As a financial planner, you may see yourself in the asset protection or maximization business.

As a consultant, you may see yourself in the fresh ideas or solutions business.

These are all well and good potential descriptors of your business.

But let me share a secret in my life. When I finally got this, it changed my business life forever!

I guess I am a slow learner, because it took me several years of working with the best-in-class business women and men across dozens of industries to finally figure this out.

These top professionals wanted MY opinions - MY insights - MY systems to help solve their problems, improve their companies, and generate more profit for them!

Don't miss this! When you position yourself properly, your core clients could care less about anyone else's ideas or solutions - they are buying your solutions!

If you have not developed your unique proprietary systems within your unique niche - get started!

My primary, backbone system is called *[The Catalyst Cycle](#)*, a four-stage process that I walk through with every client to ensure they are totally on track for success. *[The Catalyst Cycle](#)* consists of four critical stages:

1. Crystallize your goals for **Clarity**.
2. Maximize your strengths for **Leverage**.
3. Energize your teams for **Execution**.
4. Realize your significance for **Impact**.

These four critical outcomes (Clarity - Leverage - Execution - Impact) comprise the core system upon which I base much of my advising, coaching, consulting, and speaking.

Within each for the four stages, I have created (and am constantly developing) volumes of worksheets, content, softwares, action plans, guides, audio-learning programs, and more to easily customize this process for any PSF and beyond.

My starting place is [The Catalyst Cycle](#) - what's yours?

If you would like to listen to a FREE 22-minute MP3 executive overview of [The Catalyst Cycle](#), [click here](#) and be directed to my website to download and learn.

**What
Dr. Jim's
Clients Say**

"As a young entrepreneur, Dr. Jim's coaching, advice, strategic leadership, and friendship has had an immeasurable impact on my professional endeavors. The resources, training, and wisdom provided by Dr. Jim have transformed the way we work."

Greg Godfrey, Co-Owner, Red Iron Design

Essential #5: We are in the RETENTION & RENEWAL business.

Confession time.

One of the easiest mistakes to succumb to in the PSF of professional speaking is to see yourself as an event speaker - get a gig, give a good speech, repeat. That's what I did for several years. It took me a while to understand that my business had to move from being seen as a one-time event performer into a long-term retention and renewal partner.

Once I got this, it transformed my business.

I went from just booking individual speeches (events) to developing one-year and multi-year renewal agreements (partnerships) with a select few clients---I repeat - a select few! These select few were the "crème de la crème" of the top clients in my chosen niches. These were the best of the best, and I invested the best I had in them for a very reasonable fair profit.

By focusing on more than just an event (i.e.- annual checkup, once-in-a-lifetime mortgage), I developed several deep, long-lasting, and highly profitable relationships with several great customers.

We hear all the time that it is easier and far less expensive to keep a current client than it is to find a new one. I can testify to that.

As an internationally known expert in employee retention, I have learned that many of the same principles of retaining top talent also apply to retaining top customers.

With a solid client retention and renewal process, you will never face having to “scrounge and beg” for customers or feel forced to lower price just to meet cash flow and payroll needs.

Essential #6: We are in the VALUE-ADDED business.

Over the years, I have advised clients across many professionals (sales, manager, executives) across multiple industry segments on how to think and build value within their offerings.

There are 12 fundamental categories of value (not enough space to review in this manifesto - buy the eBook [The Catalyst Guide for Professional Services Firms](#) for more details).

Without the space to discuss 12 now, here is a simple yet challenging exercise I encourage my [Catalyst Inner Circle](#) members and clients to do when assessing their current and potential value-added offerings.

The process is called the *List of 100 Benefits* - list the 100 benefits (real or potential) of your new or current ideas, services, or products.

I exhort then to do the same for their overall business!

It's easy to come up with 10, even 20-25 benefits for just about anything. But by the time you get to #34... then #52...then # 71...and beyond, it can be an incredible challenge.

Yet by forcing this thinking process, my [Catalyst Inner Circle](#) members (and my clients) inevitably come away with deep, fresh, and exciting ways to add value to their offerings and further differentiate themselves from the common providers in their marketplace.

Think value. Think value-added. Then you will leave behind commodity-pricing forever!

Essential #7: We are in the ADVISING business.

Read this carefully. As PSF, we are not so much in the change business, although we often do help our clients change the way they think, act, or behave.

At a deeper level, we really are in the advising business, offering world-class insight and progressive programs to meet their unique needs.

When I realized it was not my responsibility for my clients to change (although my heart and soul is committed to doing everything I humanly can to help them change where needed), my professional life became less stressed and more enjoyable.

Yes, as PSF's, one of key roles is to help set the stage and guide our clients through the changes they need to make. Again, read this carefully - to set the stage, to guide, changes THEY need to make!

We can not accept failure for what our clients chose to do or not do. We must also be careful not to accept too much of the credit for their successes. It is ultimately up to them to make it (whatever it is) work!

Hank Haney is the swing coach of Tiger Woods. Hank can only advise Tiger on what he believes Tiger needs to do to improve. He can not swing the club for Tiger, or lift the trophy for winning a tournament with Tiger. Hank can only educate Tiger on what he needs to learn, encourage Tiger for a long-term commitment to excellence, and exhort Tiger to reach higher levels of success and significance.

Ultimately, it's up to Tiger.

As a PSF's, you must understand how to set the stage, to guide, and to generate long-term commitment for your clients...but not take back the responsibility for their ultimate success.

What Dr. Jim's Clients Say

"Dr. Jim has helped me clearly identify my goals and think about the potential for my business. During one of our coaching sessions, he opened my eyes to the additional streams of revenue in a variety of price ranges with innovative ideas. Dr. Jim's experience is invaluable!"

Stacey Rising, Professional Speaker

Essential #8: We are in the LIFESTYLE business.

My dream 17 years ago was to build a lifestyle business; a business that conformed to the lifestyle in which I wished to live. When I was asked why I left corporate America after a very successful fast-track run, I answered, “to build a lifestyle business.”

I admit that most everyone who heard this was envious. They could envision for themselves what that type of business could be. Frankly, I was not totally sure how I would do it, but I was committed to making it happen.

I dare say that when you started or joined your current PSF, you also dreamed of having a certain lifestyle, a specific blending of your personal, social, spiritual, and professional lives.

Are you there yet? Are you where you hoped or dreamed to be?

Do you still have your dream of a lifestyle business? Or have the pressures and demands of PSF driven you far away from your dreams?

One of the beauties of building a PSF is that with the proper guidance and systems, you can create the type of lifestyle business you desire.

I am not at all suggesting that it is easy. In fact, it is not...but in the long run, it is so worth it!

Personal disclosure - I'll admit that I too at times have lost site of my original dream of building a lifestyle business that I jokingly describe to my friends as, “Stay home - Make money - Play golf!”

So after more than a decade of 35%-40% annual travel (that's 4-5 months on the road every year), and a wife and son's whose #1 love language is quality time, I've recaptured my dream. Yes, it has taken me time, energy, and a huge amount of determination.

But isn't that the essence of why we do what we do in the first place? To invest our time, talents, and treasures into designing a firm that provides us with the right kinds of rewards (freedom, income, lifestyle) that we desire.

I am back on the lifestyle business path, and I can help you find yours.

Essential #9: We are in the IMPACT business.

Anyone who asks for your service expects results. Even for people who choose to use your low-ball competitors, they expect results of some type.

I prefer to look upon PSF's like ours as being more in the impact business than the results business. By the very nature of the word, impact implies power, force, progress, and transformation.

The types of clients you and I desire are those who do not just seek results, but invest in impact!

If you are just in your PSF just for the money, you may not get this. That's OK.

If you are in your PSF for the impact you can have on others, you get it.

PSF's always strive for impact – helping themselves and their clients realize their significance.

[Note: Stage 4 of *The Catalyst Cycle* is “Realize your Significance – [click here](#) for a free MP3 download of a 22-minute overview of *The Catalyst Cycle*].

An Obvious Omission?

As leaders of your PSF, I am sure you want to ask me, “Hey Dr. Jim, what about the financials? What about sales, profit, expense control, and cash flow?”

Good questions. You are obviously on the ball.

We all know that cash flow is the literal life blood of any PSF – no question.

But for 20-seconds, put aside the notion to first focus on cash flow.

What if instead of a first focus on cash flow and other financial measures, your first focus was to:

- Develop and implemented a world-class **marketing** system;
- Build your PSF strategy on the breadth and depth of the **relationship** you enjoy with key customers;
- Automatically investigate ways to fill-in-the-**gaps** of customer's service expectations;
- Develop solid **proprietary models** including templates, modules, workbooks, audio/video programs and more documenting your uniqueness and expertise;
- Design your PSF on generating long-term **renewal and retainer** processes and services;

- Consistently deliver incredible **value-added** benefits;
- Elevate your brand positioning and image to be the #1 trusted **advisor** to your clients;
- Intentionally and unashamedly lead your PSF to allow you the personal, professional, spiritual, and social **lifestyle** that maximizes your energy, stamina, and focus to deliver world-class services, and
- Design a PSF that delivers the **impact** you desire for your clients, community, and beyond?

Then the inescapable outcome is:

- \$ Greater sales.
- \$ New, significant revenue growth opportunities.
- \$ Higher profit margins.
- \$ Consistent cash flow.
- \$ Increased financial security and stability.
- \$ Self-funded business expansion potential.
- \$ Greater sense of freedom, satisfaction, and joy...which is priceless!

Your Next Step

If you are ready to take positive action on leading your PSF to the next level, here are four ways we can get started.

- 1) Call me directly at 850-476-6633, or email me at drjim@drjimharris.com to set up a no-obligation 20-minute connection call. Let's quickly determine which of my coaching programs is right for you.
- 2) Visit [my website](#) to review my three coaching levels: the **Xccelerator Program**, the **Inner Circle**, or the **Catalyst 1-on-1 Coaching Program**.
- 3) Go to [my website](#) and purchase [*The Catalyst Guide for Professional Services Firms*](#) eBook for more details on these 9 essential elements including questions, handouts, and forms to jumpstart your future.
- 4) [Click here](#) to sign up for my monthly newsletter, **Impact**, for my latest ideas, best practices, and insights in how to better lead your PSF without it running you!

Do Something Today!

Telling yourself, "Well, I'll think about" will not get you to where you want or deserve to be.

Take action today. Call or email or click. Just do it. Let's get started!

What do you have to lose except your worry, overwork, anxiety, and low cash flow...to name a few!

Call or contact me today. I'm looking forward to connecting with you and helping you reach both success and significance in your business and your life.

In His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Harris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Jim Harris, Founder & CEO
The Jim Harris Group

About Dr. Jim Harris

Dr. Jim Harris, known as *The Business Catalyst*, advises professional services executives and their teams in how to crystallize their goals, maximize their strengths, energize their teams, and realize their significance. Through highly customized advising, coaching, speaking, and writing services, Dr. Jim helps you build the professional services company you desire and the one your clients deserve!

Follow Dr. Jim on his [website](#), his [blog](#), *The Catalyst Blog*, and on [Twitter](#).

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A Final Word about
*The Catalyst Guide for
Professional Services Firms* eBook.

If you have read this far, then my ideas, concepts, and approach obviously resonates with you.

I therefore encourage you to invest in your future through purchasing this eBook where you will learn:

- Today's most powerful relationship strategy in business.
- The ultimate secret to your marketing success.
- Your fastest way to grow high profits.
- Power of your "professional stamp."
- A two-word question that unlocks unlimited pockets of profit.
- Why clients must see you as an advisor first.
- 4 questions to unlock real value for your customers.
- Why work/life balance is the wrong goal for you.
- Today's easiest, least expensive, and most powerful form of marketing.
- How to regain control of your business and your life.
- Secrets to spot your customer's "profit gaps" and get that profit into your pocket.
- How to uncover and unleash your firm's mega-value.
- Why broadcast marketing is a waste of your money.
- What your clients need most (and it's not low cost).
- 7 questions that move you from success to significance in your business & life.

...and much, much more!

[Click here](#) to order your copy today.

It will change you and your professional services firm forever!