

BLACK & ESSINGTON

SOLUTIONS

We Accelerate Opportunity

*a strategy-focused consulting firm uniquely partnering
with organizations to initiate and implement positive change*



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Accelerating Your Organization

Our consulting services focus on solving our client's most important issues in the areas of performance improvement, business strategy implementation, and staff development training. We work alongside our clients as an advisor and partner to identify new opportunities, leading to high-level performance and sustainable growth.

Small Business

Successful organizations change direction over time to take advantage of new opportunities. Where are the best opportunities? What are the relevant trends in your industry? This type of analysis can propel your organization to the next level and help you avoid costly mistakes. We accomplish this through the following:

- **Industry Analysis:** Identifying trends and industry shifts through comprehensive analysis that ultimately affects the way you do business
- **Competitive Analysis:** Developing a deep understanding of your competition through a quantitative and qualitative lens
- **What-If Planning:** Generating a series of scenarios aimed at understanding the cause and effect relationships in decision-making within your organization
- **Turnaround Planning:** Establishing new strategic directions in the face of internal and external pressure. This involves an integrative process of analysis and scenario planning to reshape an organization from the inside out

Stage II and Beyond- Growth and Expansion

Now that you have been successful, the next steps you take will define the future of your company. Should you lease the space next door? Is now a good time to take on another partner? How will a line of credit impact your business? Our analysis presents you with valuable information to support your decision-making. Other areas include:

- **Growth Plan Development:** Specific plans that include strategy and operations development to properly assess risks and help you capture opportunities
- **Opportunity Assessments:** Analyzing your strategic options from a strategic, financial, and organizational perspective
- **Forecasting and Budgeting:** Development of financing plans that include cost and benefit analysis, net present value analysis, and a review of your financing alternatives to better support your decision-making process

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New Business Ventures

Today's decisions can disproportionately affect your long-term results. Is there a market for your product? Where should you locate your business? How much capital do you need to complete your build out? We work with businesses to develop realistic revenue and cost projections for financing and start-up planning. Here is more:

- **Business Plan Development:** A detailed description and plan that can be used to obtain financing and to effectively run your business
- **Resource Planning:** We have a database of resources to get your business off the ground faster and more efficiently. Our talented resource partners cover areas such as legal, accounting, web design, marketing, and more
- **Feasibility Studies:** A comprehensive assessment of your business opportunity and a detailed analysis of the factors that impact your results (location, product/service, market, etc.)
- **Customized Consulting:** Individualized analysis and feedback on executing your business plan including: performance indicators, financial budgeting and forecasting, and goal orientation

Brian did a presentation on 'Integrating Ethics into Daily Actions and Behaviors' at the IGFOA Conference. My experience working with Brian was nothing short of superb! From start to finish, Brian was professional, responsive and very timely in meeting our deadlines. If every speaker I had to work with was as good as Brian, putting together conference sessions would be a piece of cake!"

*– Vice President,
Financial Network,
Conference Committee*

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Workshops & Seminars

Managers & Supervisors Programs

We help managers become more effective by expanding their skills and boosting their confidence in decision-making. Program topics may include:

- Critical Decision Making**
- Leveraging the Team**
- Initiating Change**
- Solving Workplace Problems**

Management & Administrative Training

Custom-tailored for your audience these programs provide superior insight into leadership's challenges and the frameworks needed to cultivate continuous Improvement. Program topics may include:

- High- Performance Business Strategy**
- Managing Performance**
- Developing an Achievement Culture**
- Managing Conflict**



"I have contracted with Brian to keynote at a college leadership event. His presentation was captivating, informative and offered wonderful advice for being a leader and mastering the techniques of effective networking. I look forward to working with Brian again – not only was he professional, but his message was effective and easily applicable to increasing one's success."

– Project Director,
High School District

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Keynote Programs

“Look Before you Leap” Techniques for Making Better Business Decisions

All too often we play Monday morning quarterback with our business decisions simply because it's easier to analyze the past, than act in the present. Learning to separate our emotions and biased assumptions to make more informed decisions can be challenging. This presentation offers techniques for better framing decisions to ask the right questions before taking action, leading to more successful decision-making and better results. The presentation is distinctly impactful for managers and supervisors.

Thinking Beyond Tomorrow

Thinking creatively and critically is paramount to personal and professional success. Knocking down internal barriers that limit successful thinking can lead to exponential growth opportunities. This discussion presents concepts and strategies for becoming a more effective problem solver and strategic thinker. This presentation is a great “lunch & learn” topic for business leaders, educators, and healthcare professionals.

Owning Your Outcome

Getting more of what you want in life involves defining and aligning your daily actions in a specific direction. This presentation speaks directly to those who have experienced detours and turbulence in life on the path to happiness. Participants will leave inspired though hearing real life stories that demonstrate the power of perseverance and focus in creating success.

Entrepreneurship: Putting it All on Black

Entrepreneurship has become a choice and way of life for an increasing number of people. Technology and information have leveled the playing field in many exciting industries. However, businesses owners face a greater number of challenges such as legal, technological, and business model risks. This discussion centers on establishing the appropriate mindset and environment for entrepreneurial success. Participants will benefit from the thoughts and riveting stories of a serial entrepreneur.

Choosing to Win

There are countless books on motivation and self-improvement that offer advice for reaching goals and making change. However, books, audio CD's, DVD's, and seminars mean very little until you “Choose to Win”. This discussion is designed to ignite a sense of urgency that commits participants to take charge and implement change. Participants will hear personal stories that will raise their curiosity while they learn strategies that will drive new results.

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Management Training Programs

B.E.S.Path - Designing a Winning Strategy

B.E.S.T. Path “*Designing a Winning Strategy*”, addresses the day-to-day challenges of building and leading an organization. Where should you focus? How should you expand? What is holding you back? Focusing on better strategy leads to enhanced delivery of value to customers, employees, and other stakeholders. Our half-day & full-day seminars break down three key areas of management. We focus on behaviors that will help managers at any level to improve their company’s performance and generate long-term success.

B.E.S.T. Path is a strategy and decision-making training program for managers and supervisors focusing on:

- Thinking Strategically
- Managing Performance
- Planning for Growth

The program is designed for forward-thinking professionals seeking new ideas and successful approaches to implementing change. Participants are engaged through interactive discussions and business cases that address critical challenges facing most companies and organizations.

Section 1

Business/Organizational Strategy

Successfully selecting and implementing business/organizational strategy requires discipline and focus. This section introduces analysis tools, development techniques, and frameworks for identifying and capturing new opportunities.

Where are we now?

- Competitive/Opportunity Analysis
- Customer/Stakeholder Value Analysis

Where are we going?

- The Economics of Strategy
- Strategy Mapping

What should we do next?

- Organizational Decision-Making
- Thinking Critically

“Mr. Thompson exhibits professionalism and is gifted in the area of public speaking. His words are inspirational, motivational, and capture the attention of the audience. The response from the audience was overwhelmingly positive.”

– Assistant Director,
Junior College

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Section 2

Performance Management

Successful strategy implementation requires processes and measurement activities that drive change. This section gives managers the necessary tools and techniques to monitor performance and change course as necessary.

What is holding us back?

- Setting the Course for Improvement
- Measuring & Managing Data

Are we aligned with our strategy?

- Opportunity Analysis
- Long-Term Strategic Decision Making

Additional Topics: Key Performance indicators and dashboards

Section 3

Growth Planning

We present tools to successfully navigate innovation & changes in consumer preferences. This final section focuses on delivering value through new offerings, better processes, and alternative channels.

How can we expand our business?

- Creating & Delivering Value
- Resource Planning

Where are our best opportunities?

- Business Plan Implementation
- Scenario Planning

Who Should Attend?

Business Owners

Organization Administrators (*non-profit, educational, municipal*)

Senior Managers (*strategic planners, corporate managers, business planners, and directors*)

Functional Managers (*sales, human resources, marketing, operations, and finance*)

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About Brian A. Thompson

Brian A. Thompson is a Principal Consultant at Black & Essington Solutions, LLC. He has extensive consulting and operating management experience. He has particular expertise in business strategy development, performance improvement, and managerial decision-making. Brian's experience includes working with new and existing business to grow and improve their business performance. Prior to founding Black & Essington Solutions, he managed a family real estate business and co-founded a multi-location martial arts instruction and promotions company.

Brian was previously a securities trader and analyst for Bluewater Arbitrage and Reverb Trading in Chicago. In addition, his business development experience includes being a field sales manager for Tweeter Home Entertainment and a business analyst for the Illinois Small Business Development Center. Brian continues to trade securities independently and is also an adjunct faculty member at The University of St. Francis and Prairie State College teaching courses in economics and finance.

Education

The Kellstadt Graduate School of Business, DePaul University
MBA in Business Strategy & Decision-Making and Finance

The Stuart School of Business, Illinois Institute of Technology
M.S. in Finance

Governors State University
B.A Business Administration

"Brian is a very engaging speaker. He provides an approachable nature that makes him a good connection with any audience. Very dynamic!"

– Regional
Marketing Director,
Medical Corporation

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