

Survival Tips from 33 Years in Business and Four Economic Downturns

by Diane MacWilliams, President and CEO

Quickly respond to clients

Be available, take calls, respond to emails and let clients know we are as involved and interested in their business as they are. They should be confident we are here to help.

Understand key performance indicators

Review performance metrics that are important to making good business decisions regularly and take appropriate actions.

Implement projects with clear direction

Make sure everyone in the company knows how to accomplish their assignments on time, on budget, by following our common process.

Capitalize on a suite of service offerings

Be able to offer one-stop-shopping for clients and make sure they know all of our capabilities. Make these offerings fresh and appropriate to the times.

Keep a positive attitude and a sense of humor

As the leader of the company, attitude and laughter are directly responsible for my and the company's health and sanity.

Diane MacWilliams is the president and founder of Quicksilver Associates. She parlayed a degree in Fine and Applied Arts from the University of Illinois and experience as a designer at Arthur Andersen & Co. into a constantly evolving creative communications enterprise. Her business acumen has been recognized by Working Woman magazine, receiving an award for Entrepreneurial Excellence; by induction into the Chicago Area Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame at the University of Illinois; and by National Association of Woman Business Owners when they named her the 2001 Woman Business Owner of the Year. In 2002 she was recognized as the Illinois State Small Business Person of the Year by the SBA.

Stay out of debt

Without owing principal or interest to anyone, we are able to adjust our business freely and clearly during both good and bad times.

Invest in stable, supportive technology

Don't go into tough times without a great infrastructure in place. Build it during the good times and use it like crazy in the bad times.

Leverage expert advice

I joined the TAB Board in 2001 where I receive monthly coaching and the support of other small business owners. It has been invaluable.

Visibly market our services

Use every medium possible to stay in front of our target audience. Use the Internet, print, networking opportunities and all other sources to keep Quicksilver front and center—after all we have what you need.

Encourage focused innovation

Listen to our clients and develop innovative solutions that meet their needs. If we hadn't done this, we would still be making glass mounted slides.

Retain talented staff

It's a lot of effort getting the right team in place to deliver world class creative work—but we've done it. If you work with us, you know what I mean.

Quicksilver has been in business as a private, woman-owned, full-service business communications firm for 33 years. We have great depth of experience working with a wide variety of corporate clients. We become part of the team, acquiring a deep understanding of each client's communication needs, business goals and the desired results. We then embark on a collaborative development process and successfully deliver on those results. [Click on this link](#) to learn about our full range of capabilities or [contact our sales team](#) for more information.