Stargirl study guide questions and answers

Without the luxury of a unique product, virtual receptionist Answer 1 engages in customer service and marketing with a uniquely diverse target audience. By partnering with ConsumerAffairs, Answer 1 was able to connect with consumers further in the sales cycle, making it one of the most profitable marketing channels for the company. The problem: Providing support in digital (fully dependent) age groups The business world continues to think of digital service offerings, companies that want to stay ahead of the curve continue to increase their dependence on technological integration at all levels. Answer 1 knows that it is important to respond to services to move along with the times. Virtual reception services, such as those offered by Answer 1, respond to that call for a more integrated, digital solution, leaving traditional response services ol' to fall by the wayside in favor of advanced service offerings such as scheduling, bilingual on-demand translation, order downloading, help support, email and text tracking, online chat, and CRM data entry to name a few. Goals: Customization is key with the goal of a diverse BaseAnswer 1 client is to act as an extension of their clients' business, and with such a broad customer base, representing small and large companies in many different industries, this means that Answer 1 must be adapted to provide a customized service that offers the best need for each client. With its diverse range of services, one that ranges from simply answering a call all the way to Level 1 IT support, Answer 1 can answer that call to customize and serve each of its customers in a way that is unique to their need. Read the full case study here. In a detailed interview, we asked Collins about the implications of his research and ideas for the economy, the stock market and the very nature of executive leadership. The good to the big company you wrote about achieved outstanding results on the stock market over a 15-year period. But today, the stock market is down. Does that mean we won't see any good company today? First, I want to correct a major misconception. The stock market didn't fall. What does the stock market look like compared to 1985? The stock market didn't fall. How does that look compared to 1990? The stock market didn't fall. The market was irrationally out of whack – we didn't have a stock market; We had a speculative casino. The technological bubble was not a new economy – there is a new economy that has been going on a deeper level for years. But the brutal fact is that the companies that topped the tech bubble had no results. You can't make zero earnings and claim to have results. In the case of companies that had great results before bubbles burst, they're now down, but so what? The bottom line on a company like Cisco is, we know the answer yet. It may be that these companies are only in a very difficult period of 6 to 12 months. Let me use the analogy. Let's say you have a great basketball dynasty like the UCLA Bruins under John Wooden. This is a team that will win 10 NCAA championships in 12 years. They're a team that's gone from good to great. But in 1970, they lost three games. Does that mean we write them off and say they're not a great team? We have to watch for a long time. The same goes for companies caught in a bubble. It was too short a period of time. It will take longer to say which companies that are now in trouble are simply going through the current period and will have the resilience to return. But for many business people, the current slowdown is a sign of the demise of the new economy. This is one of the most beautiful times in history. Two or three years ago, what was the big complaint we heard? It's so hard to get good people! Whining, whining, whining! Today we have the greatest opportunity we will have in decades to snatch the ship's cargo - not the cargo of buses, but the cargo of a ship - of great men. And big companies always start with who, not what. We can finally get on the right side of Packard's law. Packard's law is like the law of physics for big companies. She says no company can become or remain large if it allows its revenue growth rate to exceed its growth in getting the right people in a sustainable way. It's one of those timeless truths that transcends technology and economics. Now, instead of trying to accumulate capital, we can accumulate people. If I ran a company today, I'd have one priority above everyone else: get as many of the best people as I can. I would put off everything else if I could afford it – buildings, new projects, research and development – to fill my bus. Because things are going to come back. My manure is going to start spinning. And the biggest growth constraint and success of my organization is not markets, it's not technology, it's not opportunity, it's not the stock market. If you want to be a big company, the one biggest limitation to your ability to grow is the ability to get and hang on to enough real people. This is also a great time to force yourself to look back. When you were breaking Packard's law, you probably let a lot of the wrong people on the bus. This is a good time to take them off. In fact, it's a little easier to do now. We can blame the circumstances. What else would you do if you capitalized on this period of reevaluation? This is also a great time to ask yourself some really tough questions. At a time of irrational prosperity, where the market would give you money whether you delivered or not, many companies did not answer any of the questions in three (What can we be the best in the world at? What is the economic denominator that best drives our economic engine? And what are our core people deeply passionate about?). They had no idea what they could do better than any other company in the world that was viable, they had no profit denominator, and the only thing they had passion for was turning the company around. Now we can no longer live in that fantasy land. We have to take a good look at all the things we do and put them all to a three-lap test. All the things that fall on the test we have to stop doing - today. I see a lot of companies that have come up with a lot of capital. So they strayed into all sorts of acquisitions or new ventures or new directions, simply because they could. But they didn't necessarily fit into the three rounds. Today, the task is for them to crop away. Those who clear their three laps will come out of this just fine. The ones who don't deserve to die. CEOs today have little time to prove their worth. What advice would you give the ceo in the hot chair? If I was a CEO in the hot chair and I was taking over a company I'd want to go from good to big, here's what I'd do. I'd take that good stock card, and I'd put it in front of my directors. I'd say we're on the left side of this curve. We want to be on the right side of the curve. Right? If that's what we all want, we know what it takes to get it. You can't keep lurking from ceo to director. If you do, you'll find yourself in the Doom Loop - and then we'll end up as one of the comparison companies, not one of the big companies. I don't think all directors are stupid. Most of them are intelligent, but they work out of ignorance, not out of lack of good intent. We need to hit them over the head with empirical results. Our job is to beat the market sustainably over time. We need to think about the share price over a five-year period. And we need to start doing all the things that are needed to turn that mante around. Finally, if I'm ceo, I want the board to give me the following assurance: However long or short my tenure as CEO is, whoever you choose as my successor, I need to pick up that whitefly mid-morning and keep pushing in a consistent direction. I might just get a whitefly that spins on 16 RPMs. But my successor has to take it to 100 RPMs. His successor must take him to 500 RPM and his successor to 1,000 RPM. It's not about me as CEO - it's about commitment to a consistent agenda. We're not going to do the Doom Loop.The CEOs who took their companies from good to big were mostly anonymous - away from the celebrity CEOs we read about. Is that an accident? Or is it cause and effect? I believe it's more a cause-and-effect thing than an accident. There's something. between the absence of celebrities and the presence of good to great results. Why? First, when you have a celebrity, the company turns into one genius with 1,000 helpers. It creates the feeling that the whole thing is really about the whole. And this leads to various problems - if a person is to go or if it turns out that the person is not a genius after all. On a deeper level, we found that for leaders to do something great, their ambition must be for the size of the work and the company, not for themselves. That doesn't mean they don't have egos. That doesn't mean they don't have a need for sissy. This means that at the moment of decision after decision - at critical moments when Choice A would favor their ego and Choice B would favor the company and its work - time and again these leaders choose Choice B. Celebrity CEOs, at those same points it decides, are more likely to favor themselves and ego over company and work. Like anonymous CEOs, most of the companies that have made the transformation from good to big are incoherent. What does that tell us? The truth is, most people don't work in the most horrible things in the world. They do the right job - which means most of the time they do a hell of a lot of drudgery with just a few points of excitement. Some people put on baked bread. Some build retail stores. The real business of the economy is done by people who produce cars, who sell real estate, who run grocery stores and banks. So one of the big findings of this study is that you can be in great company and do it in steel, in drugstores, in stores. It's just not the case that if you're not in Silicon Valley, you're not cool. It doesn't matter where you are. So no one has the right to whinge about their company, their industry or the type of work they're working in - never again. Did the 11 companies that made the transformation benefit from their anonymity? One of the great advantages these companies had was, nobody was well! Kroger began his transition; Nucor began its transition; No one expected much. We could underestimate and overwrite. In fact, if I was taking over the company and trying to get it to go from good to big, I'd tell my vice president of communications that his job is to make the whole world think we're constantly on the verge of collapse. During our study, we actually printed transcripts of CEO presentations to analysts by good to large comparison companies and companies. We've read it all. And it's striking. Good people always talk about the challenges they face, the programs they build, the things they care about. You go to comparison companies, they are constantly hypnotising, selling the future - but never produces results. If I'm not ceo, how do good lessons apply to me? Good concepts apply to every situation – as long as you can choose the people around you. That's the key thing. But basically, we do - we have a lot of discretion over the people in our lives, the people we choose to let on our bus, whether it's in our department at work or in our personal lives. But the basic message is this: Build your own mante. You can do it. You can start building momentum in something you have a responsibility to do. You can build a big department. You can build a great church community. You can take each of the good ideas and apply them to your own business or your own life. What did your study teach you about changes in business in general? Is that basicy a message to get back to basics? Very rarely do significant changes lead to results sustainably. That's one of the very important findings of the book. We started with 1,435 companies. And 11 companies did it. Let's look at that fact for a moment. The fact is, it doesn't happen very often. why not? Because we don't know what the hell we're doing! And because we don't know what we're doing, we launch ourselves into all sorts of things that don't produce results. Let's end up like a bunch of primitive people dancing around a campfire chanting on the moon. What I feel strongly about is that we need science to figure out what it really takes to change things. Is that back to basics? No, it's forward to understanding. Why does it go back to the basics of saying CEOs need to be ambitious for their companies and not for themselves? Why do we go back to the basics to first ask the question of who and the people and what and where the second question is? Since when is this back to basics for a company to start with a question like, Why have we been for 100 years, and what are the brutal facts that we have to face? Why do we go back to basics and say stop lists are more important than do-do lists? And since when did it go back to basics to say that technology is just an accelerator, not the creator of anything? I don't think those concepts go back to basics. Because if they are, we should be able to go back in time and find that people used these ideas. People didn't – which is why only 11 out of 1,435 So, no, it doesn't go back to basics. It's forward to understanding. What's your assessment of the new economy? We've seen a lot of changes, and we've seen a lot of backlash against change. How do you make sense of all this? The huge changes taking place around us make it the most exciting time in history to live. It's really fun. All these changes - changes in technology, globalisation - are brutal facts that must be integrated into all the decisions we make. The (song) At Walgreens, they did not ignore the internet because they focused only on the basics. They faced the brutal fact of the internet and then asked, how does it fit into our three circles and how can we use it to turn the manters faster? You never ignore change - you strike them head-on as brutal facts, or you come to them with a great sense of joy and excitement. This change, this new technology opens up a way for you to prevail, to be even better as a company. All good companies have taken over the changes and used them to their advantage, often with great joy. When the new pianos appeared, Mozart didn't put the music down. He didn't say, There are new pianos. The harpsichord is out of the way, so I washed up as a composer! He thought, this is so cool! I can do it out loud with a piano forte! This is really neat! He retained the discipline of writing great music and, at the same time, embraced the invention of the piano with great joy and excitement. With all the changes around us, we have to be like Mozart. We maintain great discipline around our music, but at the same time we accept things that can allow us to make even more music. Alan M. Webber (awebber@fastcompany.com) is the founder of Fast Company. Jim Collins (jimcollins@aol.com) wrote the built to flip essay in the March 2000 issue of Fast Company. His new book, Good to Great: Why Some Companies Are Making the Leap... And others don't, they'll be available in October. October.