

Business Success Tips – A Once a Month “Sit Down”

Once a month sit down with this list and DO IT!

ü PLANNING.

Review your business plan (You do have one, don't you?). Are you on course to your objectives and goals? Update your plan as may be necessary and make any additions and/or deletions based on any changes in your desired goals. Remember the importance of planning - without a plan in place, effective decision making is difficult if not impossible.

ü CUSTOMERS.

Make a point to contact all your existing customers - remember, they are most likely to purchase your product or service. Have a "preferred" sale, send them all an announcement of some kind, ask for suggestions. Make them feel how important they are to your business. Make personal individual contact with your larger customers.

ü SUPPLIERS.

Contact all your current suppliers and attempt to negotiate lower prices. Review your previous year's usage and consider a larger bulk buys in order to obtain additional discounts.

ü ACCOUNTS.

Contact all overdue accounts. Decide if you want to continue to work with these customers.

ü EMPLOYEES.

Make a point to sit down with each of them and ask for suggestions that might improve your product or service. Ask if they need anything that might make them more efficient. Be sure to give feedback at a later date as to how you used any of these suggestions.

ü TECHNOLOGY.

Are you using technology to the fullest extent possible?
Remember that technology is one of the great equalizers
between small and large companies.

- a. Should you have an Internet site?
- b. Is your telephone system adequate? (Do you keep customers waiting?)
- c. Would a fax-back system help get information into your customers hands at a lower cost to you?

ü MARKETING.

Set down ALL your marketing plans and plan your marketing budget.

ü ORGANIZATION.

If nothing else, get yourself a good personal information manager (PIM) and use it.

Remember, the continued success of your business is dependent on many factors, most of which are under your control. It is up to you to take advantage of what you can do something about.

Common Problems Affecting Personal Productivity

In a large sense, the freedom that attracted the businessperson to the small business environment becomes a major contributor to the productivity challenge. The point of having sought that freedom was to escape the oppressive structure of larger environments. Unfortunately, when the pendulum swings too far in the other direction, the result can be chaos.

Being in a small business exposes a businessperson to a lot more details to be handled in various areas not previously experienced nor anticipated. If your previous life consisted of coming to work, working on specific matters given to you, keeping track of your hours and going home, running your own business is often a real shock.

The first thing that often happens to businesspeople is they get overwhelmed by minutiae. Life becomes one annoying little problem after another with no one to handle them but them.

In addition, there are more little distractions, especially non-"selling" phone calls from friends, family and others, with whom you would not think of having protracted conversations if someone were monitoring your time. Distractions you might have allowed five minutes while you were in a large company suddenly become 30 to 40 minute adventures.

Then there is your computer. Computers have a special magic feature that makes them periodically malfunction, or worse still, function perfectly and give you something completely different from what you wanted. The real sorcery occurs when you attempt to fix the problem. Large blocks of time mysteriously vanish. You start working on the problem at 8:30 AM and when you look up from your monitor fifteen minutes later, it is somehow 10:27 PM.

Learn to prioritize and organize and you WILL overcome this!

Ä **"That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to industry and enterprise." - Abraham Lincoln**

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