

## 9 Key Business Startup Success Principles

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If you are in the early stages of starting up a business then you may be experiencing the internal 'fear and doubt' dialogue that can often take place in one's mind. The following 9 Principles will help to release some of this tension...

**1. Do What You Love** Ensure that you are in a business that interests you. This doesn't necessarily mean that you have to be in love with the product or service that you sell; however, you must enjoy aspects of the business otherwise you won't be motivated to give it 100% of your focus. And it will need a lot of your focus and energy, especially in the early stages!

To help determine this point, you could ask yourself the following types of questions:

- What do you really like to do (in a business sense)?
- Are you an ideas or action type of person? Or a bit of both?
- In which 20% of your talents do 80% of your results come from?
- In other words, where do your key skills lie?
- It really all boils down to one question though - what are you really passionate about?

**2. Niche** Another critical point which goes a long way to determining business success is your Niche. Without exception, the majority of successful business owners I know can tell you in a couple of sentences exactly what it is they love to do and why it has made them wealthy.

Without a precise understanding of your Niche your chances for success are greatly diminished. After all, it's very difficult to hit a target which doesn't exist or to win a game when you don't know what it (winning) is.

Ask yourself what you are trying to achieve in this business venture:

- Do you want to make quick cash?
  - Do you want to develop and grow a sustainable business?
  - Are you interested in high cash-flow or developing assets? Or both?
  - Do you have BIG aspirations or are you just looking to develop a hobby for some part-time cash?
- Keep in mind that your Niche can always be adapted down the track if your situation or the market changes.

**3. Leverage** You need to become a master of Leverage. It is one of the most powerful principles in business. Everyone who is successful in business and life uses Leverage in some way.

To use the concept of Leverage you need to continually examine how you can access other people's skill, resources and money more effectively. Furthermore, consider less obvious assets in business such as systems, marketing and time.

Leverage is about duplicating a high-value item or skill at a lower cost.

I will explore this topic in depth in future articles; however, at this point it is important to remember the following points:

- Focus on Money-Making activities
- Delegate to others as much as possible

By doing this you will see an immediate increase in your ability to work 'on' your business, rather than getting stuck 'in' the day to day running of it.

Lateral Thinking shares an implicit relationship with Leverage...

**4. Lateral Thinking** This is the concept of looking at things from a different point of view. You can increase profits significantly by doing simple things to "Add Value" in ways that others are not.

In other words, continually look at your business and ask yourself questions such as:

- How can we do, what we do, better?
- What do our clients want that they are not getting currently?
- Could we use affiliate marketing to grow our business?
- Do we currently use the internet to effectively market our business?
- Could we join forces with another business to cross-promote our products?

- Could we use our knowledge to create another product?

What I am suggesting here is to take some time out to brainstorm ideas around your business. This is a difficult for most small business owners to achieve because they see this as wasted and unproductive time - nothing could be further from the truth...

Some of the most successful companies in the world allow themselves and their employees lateral thinking time - Google and 3M immediately come to mind. Many of Google's most successful products have originated from this process.

Now, I'm not suggesting that you have to take 1 day a week (as Google does) to undertake this process - they have high operating margins and therefore significant leverage. However, I would encourage you to consider 'opening you mind' for at least couple of hours each week to explore further opportunities.

I am sure that you will find it a valuable and profitable experience if you stick to it!

5. Testing If you can start your business with a clear idea of how you are going to monitor your systems, resources and assets then you will be well ahead of the pack. When most business owners are confronted with questions about their average transaction value, sales conversion ratios, enquiry and lead generation rates - they come up with varying excuses or reasons as to why they don't know or have this vital information.

**DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE!!**

You need to be able to calculate your ROI (Return on Investment) for everything that you do on a regular basis.

To do this develop a set of KPI (Key Performance Indicators) that are appropriate for your business - don't go overboard - just focus on the information that you need. Remember that 80% of your results come from 20% of your activities! The key is to discover the 20% and keep improving them...

The other benefit of testing is that it encourages us to recognise mistakes and move on - this is a vital part of the growth process. Without action, mistakes and growth we stagnate and/or wither at the vine!

6. Efficiency Hard work doesn't guarantee success or profits - look at how wealth is apportioned in the world and this soon becomes apparent - 80% of the wealth is controlled by less than 10% of the population.

Personally, it took a long time for this penny to drop! The first business I owned was really just a job in disguise. I was caught in a trap that confronts many small business owners - working IN the business, rather than ON the business.

This is a critical distinction...

If significant profits and growth are what you desire, then it is critical that you become efficient and develop systems that will allow your business to work for you and not the other way around.

There is one key concept to remember when implementing anything...

7. Lag Lag is the concept that you 'reap what you sew'. In other words, if you follow the principles suggested here and persist - you will succeed!

However, your business life is going to provide you with numerous challenges and obstacles to overcome. The biggest difference between successful people and the rest is that successful people look at upsets as a chance to grow and learn rather than as failure.

When confronted by a setback, rather than giving into fear and quitting you must continue to persist. Why? Because if your principles are sound, all you have to do is keep adjusting your methodology until you have a formula for success.

You will have a much greater chance of success in business if you keep the principle of Lag in the back of your mind, stay focused and never give up!

8. Timing Timing is an essential aspect of business ownership. It also shares a close bond with decision-making and action-taking. If you continually use Lateral Thinking and Testing then you will certainly discover further opportunities. The key to successfully implementing and taking advantage of these opportunities is Timing.

As the old sayings go:

If you wait too long, you may miss the boat... (e.g. someone else capitalizes)

If you jump right in you may get your fingers burnt... (e.g. misjudged market enthusiasm)

You need to find a middle ground when it comes to Timing, because it is very difficult to time things perfectly. Combine focused analysis, gut feeling, enthusiasm and decision making together and you will be well on the way to mastering Timing and the next Principle...

9. Action Successful business owners are Masters of Action. They know that Action always beats inaction. They understand that it is better to try, make a mistake, refine and re-implement than to do nothing at all. That's because in business:

**INACTION = A SLOW DEATH**

Unsuccessful business owners are Masters of Excuses. Fear provides them with an endless stream of seemingly logical reasons why they shouldn't act.

You need to make a decision right now - will you accept as doctrine your negative internal dialogue and the nay-sayers - or will you take chances and trust your experience?

I would suggest the latter...

To take Action, it is critical that you take responsibility for your situation. If you are not where you want to be, then justifying or laying blame on others will not solve the situation - it will just add fuel to your negative mindset.

A better way to respond is to focus on 'the gap' - the 20% of activities in your business (or life) that will take you from where you are to where you want to be. Goal setting is one of the best ways to define the 'gap' and taking Action is the best way to reduce it.

**CONCLUSION:**

The most important Principle is that you should love what you do - passion and attitude will play a large part in defining your success in business. Therefore, ensure that you find a Niche that you are comfortable with. Apply the Principles outlined here, define your own rules and goals, and you will be well on the way to creating a successful and profitable business. About the author:

Andrew Cox is the Co-founder of Business Boot Camp. We provide FREE resources and paid programs to help small businesses get their bottom lines into shape! Join a profit-driven community today... Business Boot Camp - Get Your Bottom Line Into Shape