

How To Stay Focussed And Build Your Business

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You have a detailed business plan, which showed the overall intent of your company. You presented the business plan to your bank before start-up and they submitted funding in the amount that you both deemed acceptable. The original business plan contained the basis of the procedures that will help you stay focused while the company grows. Let's examine some of these processes that you will use to give your business the focus it needs to grow and succeed.

1. A marketing plan. If sales are a part of your operation (and it seems that some form of selling is always a big part of every company), then, you will need to have your sales group focused on a marketing plan. Short term and longer-term analysis should be a part of this planning and will likely contain an analysis of your competition, market potential and sales projections. Be careful not to fall into the trap of letting "the business take care of itself", stay focused at all times and be sure your managers are tuned into this market monitoring regularly, nothing is more defeating to the general manager/owner than to be told by a sales manager...I didn't see that coming! YIKES!
2. Accounting procedures. If sales are important, then the need to stay focused on receiving the proceeds from sales is equally important. Accounts payable, expenses and accounts receivable need to have fixed procedures in place to allow money to flow freely through the company coffers. Focusing on these procedures at regular weekly and monthly meetings will put the accounting and marketing groups on the same path. A rift between marketing and accounting is a common bureaucratic occurrence; so don't be surprised if one point you hear from someone from sales state, "We make the money here, how come I have to live by their rules?" Getting these two operations to stay focused on a bottom line results oriented approach is a regular part of an owner's job description.
3. Human resources. If you have ever worked for a manager, who considered his employees as expenses rather than assets, then you will be familiar with the need for managers to stay focused on human resources within the company. A manager who is fixated on staff reduction regardless of their accomplishments will create an atmosphere of fear. Certainly, no one wants to be grossly over-staffed, but a good owner/manager will focus on keeping adequate employee base numbers, and ensure continuing training, safety programs and top of the line employee benefits. It's your campground, why not have "happy campers?"
4. Selling your business. This does not mean selling in the true literal sense. It means focusing on being sure your company image is one that is the envy of your competitors and is known in the business world as a first class operation. You can do this by having key managers attending industry conferences. Be clear and tell them that their focus at these seminars is to network, thoroughly gathering as much new information that they can. They should also 'sell' other attendees on the importance and efficiency of their company in the industry. Upon their return, have follow-up meetings with these managers where they will report in detail on what they have learned. Managers attending conventions and seminars should take opportunities to enjoy themselves, nevertheless, they will be the "face" of your company, it's wise be sure that they focus on making them business meetings, and not all "playtime." If planning, organizing, staffing, direction and control are five major factors in managing a company, staying focused throughout the process, is paramount!

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