



White Paper

The 7 Deadly Small Business Mistakes You Must Avoid

Why do so many small or solo businesses fail? Is it because the owners weren't good enough at what they did? In most cases that's just not true. Most of them were very skilled and talented in their area of expertise.

So why do people continue to struggle without enough clients or income? It's heartbreaking to me when someone gives up who has great potential and a realistic dream. I want you to succeed in a big way. In fact I'm passionate about it.

So I want to share the 7 top deadly mistakes I've seen repeatedly that can pull you down and how to avoid them.

1. Believing that being good at what you do or even being an expert is all you need.

There are two completely separate "tracks" you need to master. First you need to be good at delivering a quality product or service. That's a given. Many people stop here. They act as if they are still an employee working for someone else. They spend their time trying to deliver services instead of building a business, which leads us to the second track--building a business.

Not only do you need to be good at what you do, you need to master the skills and mindset it takes to run a business, like strategic planning, marketing, sales, finance, productivity, priority-based action, management skills, self-discipline and self-motivation. This is the key. Master these skills and your success will soar.

The best way to do this is to learn from those who are where you want to be, so you can learn the strategies they used to succeed. Without the entrepreneurial skill and mindset, you cannot succeed.

2. Wasting money on poorly crafted or unnecessary marketing materials

Don't spend money building a website or crafting a business card, logo or brochure until you learn what makes them work to bring you clients. I've seen so many people waste money on an inefficient website with no traffic because they didn't know what questions to ask when hiring a web designer and they didn't know anything about traffic generation, search engine optimization or writing effective web content.

Don't get your relative or neighborhood college student to design your website. If you want to be professional and are serious, then you need a professional website that will get people to take action and will look professional. Nothing screams amateur more than a homemade website. The same is true for any of your other marketing materials.



3. Lack of marketing or sales mastery

The best marketer always gets the most new clients. Even if you have a superior product, if you don't know how to market it effectively and then close the sale, you will struggle. In today's information laden world, you need to know how to stand out and broadcast your message consistently and effectively. You've got to learn the proven marketing strategies and systems that are working for your top competitors and you need to master them. And you need to make marketing a daily activity, not just something you do when you have extra time.

4. Putting all your eggs in one basket

I've seen businesses sink because they depended on only one or two high profile, high paying clients. This is a mistake. Always make sure you're in a position that if you lose one client, your business can still survive and thrive.

The other way this can play out is if you offer only one or two primary products and once a client has finished using this product or service they move on. You're then relying on constantly getting new clients instead of making the most of the ones you have. That's why I teach people how to build a product funnel to keep clients coming back again and again.

5. Going it alone

Whether you're small or solo, you're the owner and you make the decisions. But you still need a support team. Work with a coach or mentor who can help you stay on track. Consider joining or creating a mastermind group of successful people who can be like a vision team for you and who will support you and push you outside your comfort zone.

The other way going it alone can sabotage you is if you want to control everything yourself and don't outsource. You need to be the person who sets strategy, creates products, and serves clients. The rest can be done by others and once you get this and follow through, your income will increase significantly.

6. Mis-allocated time

Spending time running from task to task with no idea of what's really a priority or an income-generating activity can run you ragged and cost you your business. Surfing the web, checking e-mail constantly, and other time thieves need to be avoided at all costs. Track how many hours each day are spent on client-generating activities or on servicing clients and how much time is spent otherwise. It's really eye-opening.

7. Lack of planning

I know you wouldn't take an overseas trip without detailed planning. So why would you run your business without one? When you have a vision and a plan you can check in regularly throughout the day and ask yourself, "Is what I'm doing supporting my plan and my goals?" Plan out at least 6 months ahead--what products you'll introduce, what marketing you'll do, how much money you intend to pull in.



The first step is to admit if you are making one of these mistakes. It's okay, we've all made them. Then start taking action right now to eliminate the mistake so you can experience the real success you deserve.