

Is Your Business Running You?

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Being a small business owner can sometimes be a very lonely place. Are you the person who opens your business' doors in the morning and locks the place up at night? Do you regularly miss having dinner with your family? Have you missed attending your son's big game or daughter's important recital? If you answered YES to any or all of these questions, then ----- you are a victim of **"Your Business Running You"**. Throughout my career I have seen so many small business owners who have let their business run their lives instead of them **"Running Their Business"**. Which business owner would you rather be and what makes the difference?



Successful business owners who have time to manage their businesses plan for growth, develop new business, and also spend quality time with their families are able to do so because they have done the things that they needed to do to make all those things happen. Does it take time and energy to do? ---- Yes. However, good things take time, but you will enjoy the rewards.

Here are some recommendations for your consideration:

- First and foremost do a personal assessment of yourself. What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are your personal goals in life? Where are you going and when do you want to get there? Are you a good leader? Do you have the mind-set to run your own business? Is your family on the same page you are?
- Write a Business Plan and share the Plan with your employees. Periodically update the Plan as conditions or events change and be sure to communicate any changes to your employees. Follow the Business Plan and free your Company from the idea that every opportunity is one that needs to be pursued. Staying focus is a key to real success.
- Develop a Mission and Vision Statement that ties into the Business Plan. Make sure that these statements are clearly posted throughout the Company for all to see. The Company's employees need to know the Company's Mission and the owner's Vision for success so they can follow them, communicate them and practice them as they do their job.
- Prepare job descriptions for every position within the Company and make sure every employee has a copy of the job description for the position he/she holds. Updating these job descriptions is a critical function and an important element for a successful operation.
- Hire the "right person" for every position. Do not settle on someone because you need a position filled yesterday. Hire the person who can do the job, has the skill set and is someone who can be trusted to be the Company's representative and ambassador (you cannot do it all).
- Set goals for everyone throughout the Company. Make sure the goals are realistic, achievable and measurable. Establish up front what meeting and exceeding these goals means to the individuals.
- Establish a trusted group of service providers and advisors. It is difficult, at best, to be an expert in every field. Whatever the cost, within reason of

course, to obtain quality services and advice will be money well spent in the long run.

- Delegate. Delegate. Delegate. You can't do everything every day that needs to be done to run a successful Company. Determine what is/are the most important aspect(s) of your business and focus your time and energy on those things that result in generating business.

If you do not feel that you can delegate certain functions because the individuals you have cannot do the task the way you would, then you have not properly trained your staff or you have the wrong people on board.

- Manage your time wisely. Plan your week up front and stick to your plan. If you do not stick to your plan or do not even have a plan, it will be the end of the week before you are able to come up for air, and your "To Do List" will only have lengthened.

This all may sound overwhelming, especially if you think you are already overwhelmed. If you are there and have determined you need some advice or help, contact Horizon Associates today by phone at 281-217-4231 or by e-mail at richard.horizon@mindspring.com and schedule a time for us to meet with you. ♦

