

PROFIT MATTERS

Helping you realise your full profit potential



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Staying ahead of the game in 2018

The business climate is rapidly changing; it is essential to stay up to date with these trends to remain relevant.

There are a number of strategies you can incorporate into your business model to ensure you are remaining at the top of the pack within your industry. Here are some great tips:

Online working environments

To allow your business the greatest opportunities to thrive, you need to be open to virtual teams. By hiring a team that lives remotely, you are exposing your business to the most talented staff, rather than just hiring individuals because it is convenient. By allowing your employees to work in a virtual environment; communicating and collaborating remotely means you are also likely to save costs on setting up an office space with the latest technology.

Focus on wellbeing

Many businesses are taking note of the importance of employee wellbeing. There are a multitude of benefits that arise from staff feeling job satisfaction. If an individual's place of work instills them with a sense of worth and purpose, they are more likely to thrive in the business setting. The happier employees are being part of the team, the more likely they are to be productive and a strong asset to the business. Also, the longer you keep employees, the less money and resources you will lose on training and professional development.

Individuals who do not experience job satisfaction may suffer from a diminished wellbeing which can impact negatively on business profit. Ways to promote positive wellbeing amongst employees include:

- Bright workplace with lots of natural lighting, plants and stimulating visuals.

- Opportunities for office socialising, including lunches, team days out or other team building opportunities.

- Generally, being a positive presence in the workplace will boost your employees' wellbeing. If you are approachable, personable and friendly, your employees are more likely to experience heightened wellbeing and thus job satisfaction.

Automation

Automation has become more and more popular in the business climate and continues to grow in 2018. Automation frees up time and resources used to complete monotonous tasks associated with running a business, allowing employees to devote their attention to tasks vital for driving profit. Ways in which automation can be used to serve your business include:

- Scheduling social media posts
- Automating bookkeeping
- Data gathered through services such as Google Analytics detailing user interactions with the business' online content

'It' factor

In today's climate, customers will stay loyal to brands that go further than just selling a product or service. Your business needs to have an 'it factor', something unique your business is doing that speaks to the consumer on a personal level. Once you have decided on what your 'it factor' is, you should use this to drive business through emphasising it in your marketing campaign. Examples of ways to set your business apart include:

- Links to specific charities where a percentage of the profit is donated
- Ethical products and product development
- Australian made and produced
- Handmade or personalised services
- Plastic and paraben free packaging



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Building awesome business relationships

An important aspect of any successful business is the ability to build and maintain strong business relationships.

At times you will find yourself surrounded by people you would rather not work with, because they have different values or views to you, because their personality clashes with yours, or because you just



don't like them. Developing skills to help you build and nurture positive professional relationships is a must have for running a successful business.

Evaluate how you can use the following strategies to help you create meaningful, long-lasting relationships.

Be authentic

Making genuine connections with people is about being authentic. Putting on a front and trying to come across as someone you are not is exhausting for you and for the person you are trying to develop a relationship with. All individuals are unique so never feel like you have to put on a facade and be someone you aren't. By being genuine, you will attract other genuine people.

Pay attention

Listening and paying attention to what the other person is saying when communicating is important. Strong relationships are built off people feeling a connection to you, which is why it is essential that you are present and paying attention to them. To do this, practise active listening by repeating and rephrasing things that they have said and asking

further questions to gather more information.

Take your time

When meeting people, it can be very easy to make judgements and assumptions about who that person is and what they are about. It is important that you take your time to get to know people and don't rush; allowing relationships to grow naturally. If you are over enthusiastic it can come across as disingenuous which will make it difficult for strong business relationships to develop. Take your time and you will discover how you can help the other person as well as ways they can help you.

Mutual expectations

Building relationships is a great way to build up your pool of resources, but you can't expect people to help you out if you aren't willing to help others in the same way. Relationships are a two-way street; both parties need to put the effort in for the relationship to be mutually beneficial. Don't only think about what others can do for you, consider how you can help others.

Why wellbeing and business management go hand-in-hand

Being an entrepreneur and owning a business is time consuming; if you aren't mindful, it can impact negatively on your wellbeing.

The following factors promote positive wellbeing and are ideal for business professionals.

Morning routine

Having a morning routine is important. Structure to begin the day brings familiarity and sets the tone for each day; it gets you in the zone. Everyone will have their own routine that works for them, but some good things to consider including in yours consist of:

- Morning meditation
- Going for a walk or exercising
- Reading something academic for 10 minutes
- Having breakfast with your significant other
- Checking emails before getting to work
- Avoiding emails and social media until after a certain time

Non-negotiables

This is a term to describe aspects of your routine that you cannot compromise on. Setting non-negotiables for yourself is a great way to stay in tune with your life outside the business to keep a healthy balance. Examples of non-negotiables include:

- Always leaving the office by 5pm on a Friday.
- Not checking emails after 9pm.
- No working on a Sunday.
- Making it home for dinner each night.
- Tuesday night is always date night with your significant other.
- Leave work so as to not miss special occasions for your children.

Diet and exercise

The importance of diet and exercise on your mental health and your ability to excel in your business is undeniable. Exercising in the morning helps prepare your body for the day; it gets you focused and provides you with the energy you need for optimal brain functioning. Exercising in the evening helps your body switch from work to relaxation mode, making you a pleasant person to be around for your family. Diet is also important; you wouldn't water your garden with oil or an energy drink. You should think of what you consume in the same logic. Fuelling your body with healthy, nutritious foods will help you perform at an optimal level. Fuelling it with fast, fatty foods; underfueling or overfueling it will see your performance diminish.

Gratitude

Business can be stressful, which can take

a toll on your mental health and wellbeing. This can see you make poor financial decisions, or lash out at staff and clients. A great way to combat this is to express gratitude. Once you develop a gratitude ritual, it will become more natural for you to practice. A simple way to express gratitude includes sitting quietly for 5 minutes at the start of the day and listing all the things you are appreciative of.

If you feel you aren't coping, or even if you are feeling prolonged periods of unhappiness or of being dissatisfied, do not hesitate to seek help.



Leading change and driving profit

At one stage or another all businesses will have to go through a significant change. Change is necessary for growth but accepting the need for change can be difficult for some.

Change can arise in various ways, i.e., struggling to find quality employees, a demand to change direction, targeting a new target market and so on. Whether it is an internal or external force driving the change; it is important to lead change confidently.

Here are three ways to lead change with ease:

Articulate a clear vision

A strong strategic vision acts as a blueprint for leading change and can provide employees with more clarity about the positive impacts change will have for them and the overall business. A vision statement helps to align your team around the business' goals and prompts them to work towards making the change happen. A clear vision also helps to overcome cultural

resistance to change as employees can link the change to positive transformation.

Engage with staff

Staff will either accelerate or hinder the change process, so it is crucial to get them onboard and constantly keep them informed. Frequent communication is ideal during times of change. Set aside time for questions and have an open door policy for staff to ask questions. Make a plan, communicate it to staff and check in regularly to assess whether tactics are successful or require adjustment.

Celebrate wins

Wins are proof that change is generating results. Celebrating wins reinforces the notion that change is essential for business growth. Celebrating both small and large wins hones in on the collective contribution of the team's efforts and motivates employees to work towards goals which will promote change throughout the business.

Wise Words

Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people.

- Steve Jobs

Boosting profit through increased productivity

High productivity is an important element of boosting profit. You may be practising specific strategies due to the belief they increase productivity, but this may not be the case.

Consider how the following aspects may actually hinder productivity, resulting in reduced profit. Once you get your head around how to use the following aspects positively, you can drive your profit margin.

Avoid multitasking

Multitasking can be very detrimental when it comes to being productive. Once upon a time, the ability to multitask was seen as an admirable quality. Nowadays, this isn't necessarily the case. With so many distractions infiltrating and interfering with an individual's work, the ability to stay tuned in and focused on one task and not be distracted by other things is a desirable quality.

Urgency vs importance

Distinguishing between tasks that are important vs tasks that are urgent is essential for productivity. Tasks such as returning a call, or responding to an email may seem urgent, but they may not actually be important, meaning they do not add anything to your productivity rate. Decipher when a new task comes in whether it is important or urgent, and deal with it accordingly.

Routine

Many people think routine is paramount to productivity, but your routine could be filled with monotonous tasks that are actually wasting your time. While having a routine is beneficial, you should review and revise your routine regularly, to make sure you are using your time and resources in the most effective and productive way possible.

Goal-setting for your business

No matter the size of your business, setting goals will always be an essential part of running a successful business.

Consider the following strategies for effective goal setting:

When: you should set goals at the beginning of a business milestone, such as when starting a new marketing campaign or developing a new product. You should also set new goals and review existing goals at the beginning of every calendar and financial year.

Type: the types of goals you set will be paramount for achieving success. Goals can be either short-term, medium-term or long-term and can be interrelated. For example, you may have a short-term goal of taking on 500 new customers per season, which lends itself to a long-term goal of increasing annual profit by 30 per cent.

SMART goals: all goals you set, whether business or personal, should be SMART goals. They need to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. Goal setting



is not just about knowing what you want to achieve, but establishing a plan of how you are going to achieve it.

Review: reviewing the goals you set and analysing whether you are on track to achieving them is pivotal for business success. By tracking goals, you can make appropriate changes along the way to make sure you are on the right track.

Financial tips to make your money stretch further

There are no steadfast rules for saving money. Everyone's financial situation is different; people earn different amounts, need to save different amounts and have varying expenses. Luckily, the following tips can apply to anyone.

Budget

Planning ways to cut your expenses and save money is important if you want to save but at the same time, it's important not to over-restrict yourself otherwise you'll burn yourself out. Be realistic in your budget, if you earn \$500 a week, it's probably unrealistic to say you will save \$450 a week. Start with a budget that's achievable and work your way up.

Track expenses

One way to stop spending on things you don't need is to keep a list of all your expenses. There are so many things you spend money on because it's cheap and

you think it doesn't matter, but it all adds up. If you record each time you buy a \$3 coffee, or a spend \$15 on lunch instead of packing your own, you'll realise how it all adds up. You will be amazed at the money you spend on things you can go without.

Change the way you view money

So many people look at money as a barrier, despite how much they have. Regardless of how much money you earn, if you are ruled by money you will always find yourself in a position where you blame money for not being able to afford the things you want or resent that you have to use half your paycheck to pay your bills and living expenses. When you free yourself and stop looking to blame money for all the things you can or can't afford, you are more likely to relax into saving and not feel the need to spend as much.

Be more materialistic

This may seem counterproductive, but if you view materialism in the true



essence of the word, you are bound to save money. True materialism means placing value and appreciating the materials you do have; it means buying what you need and not spending frivolously on things you don't.

Hiring the right staff

Finding the right staff is imperative to a successful business. Employees can help you to grow and excel in your business and industry; and shape your business' overall culture and ethic.

Here are three things to consider when searching for the right people to hire:

Focus on skills more than experience

Probe people beyond their resume. A candidate may have a lot of experience but this doesn't necessarily mean they will be a good fit for your business. Try to match a candidate's skill set with the skills you need for the best fit. Skills in communication, problem-solving, teamwork and initiative are much harder to teach and may be critical for the job.

Create a solid interviewing process

A solid interview process acts a blueprint for how you approach interviewing and the hiring process in general. Have a plan for what style of questions will be asked, i.e, behavioural and so on, and how these questions will differ

depending on the role you are hiring for. For example, you may have a few standardised questions to gauge the candidate's fit with your business and the rest of the interview may be tailored to the advertised role. Furthermore, you might choose to follow the same process of checking referees and providing candidates feedback and so forth. Having a process in place helps to streamline interviewing to make it time efficient; maximising your hiring success.

Always be on the lookout for new talent

Great companies are always on the lookout for new talent as they know and value the contributions of their staff to the business. Making it known that your business is always seeking new talent is important as it encourages people to send through their resumes even when there are no openings. This provides two main benefits: you can create a talent pool for when you do need to hire and it can provide you with an opportunity to create a new role to strengthen your business.

About us

Leenane Templeton

Achieving better results for your business

At Leenane Templeton, we can:

- Positively help you identify opportunities to improve your profits
- Work with you to achieve your business goals
- Give you more time to run your business

We use our business advisory experience and expertise to monitor your business and give you proactive advice on how you can improve your bottom line and net worth.

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