

GROWING & DEVELOPING Your Franchise



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Growing a business can be challenging at times and also extremely rewarding, but what can you do as a business owner to help create momentum week by week, month by month and build the business of your dreams?

Whether you are just starting out or you have been going at it for a while, my intent for our time together in this article is to share with you some simple business growth tips that when implemented into your business will help you start to produce some solid results.

Grab a tea or coffee, a notepad and pen and read on. It's no use reading this article and not doing anything about it, so as you read through the points outlined, I encourage you to think about how it relates to your business and what you can do to get going, moving and taking action so that you can in fact grow and develop your franchise into a top performing business.

SUCCESS STARTS WITH PLANTING THE SEED AND DOING THE RIGHT THINGS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

I would like to share a little story with you. Imagine your business as a freshly

planted seed of a tomato plant. You have taken care to plant this seed in fresh, nutrient dense soil, in a place where it gets the right amount of sun and shade. You've got down on your hands and knees and with your finger have poked a hole in the fresh soil where you gently placed the seed. You then covered the seed with more fresh soil and gave it the right amount of water to allow it to grow.

WHY DID YOU PLANT THE SEED?

This is the same for your business. Why did you get into your business in the first place? What's your ultimate vision? Without knowing your why, it's almost impossible to produce the consistent and long term results you first set out to achieve. It will also make it near impossible to stay inspired and motivated day in and day out if you don't know what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Let's continue with the story....

As you get up from planting the seed you vividly imagine all the delicious tasting tomatoes this plant is going to produce for you and your family as it grows over the following months. As each day follows you check on your seed to see if it has peeked out of the ground. You can

barely contain your excitement because you know how gratifying it will be to successfully grow something of your own.

You check the soil to see if it's moist enough, you give it water when it gets too dry. A week goes by and still nothing peeks out of the ground. You ask yourself, "Did I give it too much water? Did I give it enough? Did I plant it in the right place? Maybe it's just the weather?" You go into the house and look on the internet to see how long it takes for a tomato seed to sprout once it's planted. You find that it takes about two to three weeks for a leaf to show. You now feel a sense of relief knowing that you are probably on track. You continue reading and you discover that the average plant will not produce fruit for about two full months. You remember reading about this earlier and now you are very content to have fruit in two months.

You can almost taste and feel exactly what it's going to be like biting into that perfectly ripened tomato and then you read one last fact that no one ever told you before. The tomato expert writes, "Some plants won't produce fruit the very first year depending on the seed. Sometimes you have to care for the seed until it grows

then wait till the plant germinates and drops another seed in the ground that will grow the following year." You stop and think, "I wish I knew this before I started this whole thing". You make a mental note to plan better next time before embarking on a farming adventure. As you absorb this information, you feel less excited than you did just one week ago. You hope that all your work will produce fruit this year. As another week goes by you check on your seed only to find that it's not a seed anymore, it's now a tiny little plant with one leaf peeking out of the soil. You feel your excitement return because even if this plant does not produce fruit this year at least you have the satisfaction of knowing you made something real. You planted a seed and it's now growing every day.

With your new found excitement that comes from noticing your successes, you begin to ask yourself, "Is there anything that I can do to make this tomato plant grow faster?" Is there anything you can do that will tilt the scale in your favour that would get you fruit this year? So, you make a wise decision and decide to seek advice from an expert. After a short consultation from the best tomato grower in the business, someone who knows how to get these tomato plants to grow and produce more fruit, you go back home to your tomato plant and follow the instructions to the letter. You tirelessly do everything that's required and your plant now grows and grows and grows. Two more weeks pass and you are getting so close to when most tomato plants will produce fruit. Will your plant produce fruit this year? You can barely wait, you feel confident because you have done everything right.

The next morning you wake up and to your surprise you notice several tiny tomatoes on your plant. You feel great; you feel immense satisfaction that you will get ripe fruit this season and your efforts will be rewarded.

It's time to celebrate and like any good tomato grower you also know it's now time to make even better decisions regarding your plant. Feeling confident and ready you now take all the appropriate action to ensure that you will be biting into a perfectly ripe and fresh tomato in just a few more weeks.

Building and growing your business is just like growing the tomato plant. It's important to do the right things in the right order to build higher levels of success. The expert in the story is, in fact, your franchisor and possibly even a business growth consultant like myself.

Support, knowledge and expertise are available to you so ensure you tap into that regularly. If you just so happen to have a franchisor who isn't as accessible as you had hoped, then find the support elsewhere. There are so many resources out there to help you grow your business. It's up to you to go and make it happen. The seed has been planted. How will you nurture and care for it to ensure you produce fruit year in and year out?

SETTING GOALS. CREATING A NEW BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

As part of a franchise group, you should have a blueprint or plan for business growth to follow, but it shouldn't stop

there. What can you do to take ownership and work that plan? The sentence should now read. It's a new year so it's time to review your goals and plans as you progress forward in your business. Perhaps you are not as close to where you wanted to be, or perhaps you have reached the next stage of success. Whatever your position is right at this moment, NOW is the time to REVIEW YOUR PLAN and DESIRED OUTCOMES for the year.

Here's a quick review of how to successfully set and achieve your goals.

SET GOALS THE SMART WAY AND TAKE CONSISTENT ACTION TO ACHIEVE THEM

I am sure you have heard this before either from a past article, from my newsletters or even another resource. Your goals should be SMART goals. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound or Time Framed.

Here's the flaw in this. **It's no use setting goals if you are not going to take the action on a daily basis that will move you closer to achieving them.** How many times have you set a goal only to review them in six or 12 months time and have become overwhelmed or disappointed at how many you just didn't achieve? It happens often for many business owners and here's the reason why:

You have to take the necessary action to achieve your goals. Setting them just isn't



going to do it for you.

With this in mind, start to review your current plan, think about what you want to achieve this year and put a plan of action in place to ensure every day is moving you closer to achieving your desired outcomes and not further away.

YOU MUST BE COMMITTED TO YOUR SUCCESS

Make a total commitment to your success. Once you have made the decision to be in business, be in that business. Get into it with both feet and don't let anything hold you back. I have found there are two types of people: those who are interested in success and those who are committed. Those who are simply interested, do what is convenient to them. Those who are truly committed will do whatever it takes to achieve their desired outcomes and the next level of success.

What are you doing every day to ensure the best outcomes for you, your customer, the franchisor, and the franchise network? Make a commitment right now to start doing whatever it takes to make your business a success. Start with writing a list of all the things you could do better in your business, or what you could do to go a little bit further for your customer, your staff, with your suppliers, and in other areas of your business. It only takes one or two things that could make a massive difference to your bottom line.

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL FRANCHISE

Now, of course communication is not the only key to success. There are many other areas that are equally important

but, here's the thing: if you cannot communicate effectively with your staff, your franchisor, or with your customers - you will have to work 10 times harder to make things happen.

In a franchise it is vital you maintain communications with your franchisor.

Keeping the communication lines open has major benefits. You also have to know how to communicate and when to initiate communication. As the franchise network grows your franchisor may not be as accessible as they used to be. It is important though to chat to them about it and find out what other methods of communication and support are available. Don't wait until your business is almost nonexistent and blame the franchisor for not being there. You as the franchisee should be 100 per cent responsible for your success.

Effective communication can be the difference between someone achieving average revenues and someone doubling and tripling revenues every year. With this in mind **it is vital you also communicate effectively with:**

- your prospects
- your clients/customers

Without prospects there are no customers.

Without customers there is no business

Before your communication begins, you've got to know **who** you will be communicating to and **what** you will communicate. In other words, what's your message? What and how will you say it? These fundamental elements should be part of your **sales and business growth process**, a process that every successful business relies so heavily on. As part of your sales process you should put together an ideal client profile and review it regularly to ensure you are maximising your potential, year in, year out.

Take time now to consider who your ideal client is. Your ideal client profile should include elements such as:

- how they think
- why they buy (*wants versus needs*)
- what they want – 'hot buttons' (remember: people don't buy what they need, they buy what they want)
- who to target – (decision makers and influencers)

Once you know **who** your ideal client is and **why** they buy your type of products and/or services you have to find a way to effectively communicate your message,

focusing on the benefits of your product or service **and matching the reasons why they buy.**

Taking a close look at your ideal client's decision-making process reveals who you REALLY need to be communicating your message to.

Communication is more important than ever and not just in your initial lead generation or once you have secured a customer. **With only four per cent of leads ready to buy right now and therefore 96 per cent not ready, if you don't have a process in place to nurture your leads you could be wasting your time and your money in your upfront marketing efforts.**

Every time you communicate to your prospect it's vital you stand out of the crowd, grab their attention, create a strong interest and desire for your product and service and, of course, lead them over the finish line. With this in mind, all of your marketing/communication efforts must follow a strict formula.

You must grab the prospect's **attention**, build a **strong interest and desire** in what you are offering, including the benefits, all which must then be supported with a strong call to **action**. Gone are the days where it's enough to say "we are the best and this is why...." It's all about the prospect now. It has to be about the benefits you will provide to them and what value you will add to them. They are tuning into "What's in it for me?" and unless you can match your solutions, services and products to what your prospects want, you will have a very hard time growing the business of your dreams.

Maximising your potential in business is not that hard. It just requires commitment, clear communication, daily action and doing the right things in the right order.

Tania Allen is author of the newly released book *Franchise Profits* and is the founder of Vision Alliance, a franchise consulting firm delivering holistic solutions to both franchisees & franchisors. If you are interested in learning more or having Tania support you in your franchise feel free to contact Tania on 1300 76 49 20 or tania@vision-alliance.com.

