



50 Top Tips
to running a more
successful business



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50 Top Tips to running a more successful business

What's your definition of success? Many people naturally think success is ever bigger turnover, larger office, status car or exotic holiday.

For some though having a stress-free work life and time to enjoy family or personal time is more important than financial success.

The truth is there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer and it's important that you spend a little time to focus on what's important to you and at least start to think about. So ask yourself:

“What does success look like for you?”

Your strategy for success should aim to achieve what you want for your life and what you want your business to do to enable you achieve your goals.

This booklet shares 50 things that many successful business owners do naturally which we hope will help. It may be that you only need apply one of these ideas to have a dramatic impact on your business and a dramatic impact on your life.

It all depends on what you do. Because above all, success requires action. So, don't just read these ideas. Take action.

We're here to help along the way. Visit us at www.bb-bmg.uk for updated help and advice on running a better business,

Take action regularly. Take action today.

JDI – Just Do It!

Successful People Value their Customers

They:

1. want to know what customers really think, they don't assume, but go out of their way to find out, striving to always improve and delight customers.
2. focus on delivering what customers need and want. They don't just assume supplying the same old goods or services is enough.
3. discover your customers greatest fear and make sure that it never ever happens.
4. discover what delights customers and continually strive to do it bigger and better.
5. know exactly where each new customer came from. They ask, record and analyse every enquiry.
6. understand the real lifetime value of a customer. Value each customer as a potential lifetime purchaser and not just a function of today's transaction value.
7. keep records: what customers buy, what they like and when the next sales opportunity might be, For example: the next holiday, the next haircut, the next case of wine, the next carpet.
8. focus on the little things that matter and obsess about them. Scandinavian Airlines Chairman knows that, "coffee stains on the flip trays tell our customers we don't service our engines properly". What are you telling your customers?
9. ask for their team's inputs and opinions. The team often knows how to do the job better, but frequently no-one asks them and they like to know their views are valued.
10. hire attitude and teach skill. When looking for a new team member, an enthusiastic, positive attitude is more important than job experience. You can teach people how to do the work. You can't teach attitude.
11. motivate their team and share their vision for the business' future. They show appreciation for a job well done with a simple thank you and make the job more fun to do.



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Successful People Value their People

They:

12. empower their team. Nothing impresses a customer more than a problem solved quickly, efficiently and politely. To achieve this, they give their team the authority to see to it themselves, and back them up on their decisions afterwards.
13. delegate. First, they set out exactly how they want it done, and what they have to achieve. Then they train them how to do it. Finally, they pass over the responsibility for it and set reporting criteria.
14. don't abdicate the responsibility like most small business owners do. For example, by taking on an experienced salesman, and just telling him to get on with it in his own way.
15. aren't scared to let their team deal with their customers. They train their team to do it superbly, and then stand back. If you insist on seeing every customer yourself, you've got a job, not a business.
16. schedule their time off and their holidays. Unless it's in the diary, like work commitments are, it won't happen. There's always something else to do first.
17. realise they are mortal. There are only so many hours and minutes in which to achieve your life's ambitions. Yet most small business owners just work from day to day, as if they have all the time in the world.
18. value time as their most precious resource. Each day, they list what's most important (rather than just most urgent) and make sure they do it. Bill Gates says that being acutely aware of the value of his time is one of the most significant factors in his success.
19. know the difference between working for their business and making the business work for them. They don't take people on to help them with their work. They take people on so they can escape from doing the work.
20. plan their escape! They know that if the business depends on them being there, working in it, they're holding back its growth potential. No-one will want to buy it when they retire.



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Successful People Value Themselves

They:

21. appreciate that their health and fitness is important. They know that if they're too busy to exercise, they won't have the energy of mental agility to make the right business decisions.
22. view problems as opportunities to learn and improve. They will use a complaint as constructive feedback and a chance to turn the customer into a raving fan of the business.
23. are flexible in approach and prepared to take a new direction, when a new opportunity arises, whilst keeping their focus on what really matters. They don't get distracted by the next 'shiny new thing'.
24. understand that the future cannot always be predicted by the past. They look forwards and make their own futures whilst learning the lessons of past mistakes.
25. believe in themselves and are passionate about what they're doing. This rubs off on everyone around them, their colleagues, their team, their suppliers, and their customers.
26. use the 80:20 principle. They direct their effort and energy to the 20% of things which make an 80% difference, and actively manage the 80% that doesn't so that it doesn't tie up valuable time and resources.
27. don't try to do everything. It's easier to be really good at just a few things. They outsource or refer customers on for things they can't do superbly themselves.
28. structure the business properly, setting out who's responsible for what, and who's answerable to whom. Then leave their teams to implement the business strategies without micro-managing their actions.
29. question everything. They are constantly looking for a better way, and asking for feedback. They are happy to change when the evidence points to a better way of doing things.
30. Plan, plan and plan before acting. They don't get carried away on a wave of their own enthusiasm. They make sure the business case stacks up then they implement the plan.



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31. Systemise the process then humanise the system. They see problems as weakness in the business system to be improved whilst ensuring the human touch is maintained at all times.

Successful People Have a Positive Attitude

They:

32. look for opportunities to make things happen rather than reasons why they shouldn't.
33. understand that they don't have all the answers and are happy to engage professionals, and understand the value attached to that advice. They believe a lack of knowledge isn't a weakness but an opportunity.
34. have a firm understanding of where they are going, and how they intend to get there. Failing to plan is planning to fail and they review their performance against plans setting milestones along the way.
35. understand the true value of networks. Everyone they meet is to be taken seriously and their ideas listened to, you never know where the next 'big idea' might come from.
36. spend time building relationships. Rather than chopping and changing to save a little money, they stick with a cohort of trusted advisers and build relationships with people they trust and can rely on.
37. aren't afraid of saying no to commitments that will tie them up or take up resources without a clearly defined outcome.
38. understand that turnover is vanity, profit is sanity, but cash is reality. They keep a close eye on the financial cash flows through good times as well as bad and keep a tight rein on customer credit and debts.
39. believe that commitments are important, and their reputation has to be carefully nurtured. They believe it's better to be honest with customers rather than over promise and under deliver.
40. Take work seriously but make sure they have time for themselves and their families. It's important to have that balance in life and understand what their true motivation for success is.

Successful People are Effective

They:

41. create systems for their business processes. The business may have some exceptional team members but what happens to all their knowledge if they leave, or they need more of them.
42. pay their taxes on time... They accurately accrue forecast costs including all outgoings and corporation tax.
43. create key performance indicators around the financial aspects of the business to quickly and easily reflect the health of their business. These provide an early warning system providing enough time for remedial action to be taken if required
44. begin a task with the end in mind - when they started the business, they had an exit strategy in mind. This philosophy is applied to every project and task in the business
45. understood the phrase “revenue is vanity, profit is sanity and cash is king.” Many profitable businesses have run out of cash with dire consequences. You cannot assume the banks will always increase your overdraft.
46. are always aware of their brand and messaging - cheap equipment, poor email addresses, mobile phone numbers, homemade signs and stationery give a message which may be inconsistent with the brand you have created.
47. have an awareness of digital marketing both the potential and the pitfalls. They collect feedback in the form of testimonials from satisfied customers and effectively promote their business using as much free marketing as possible
48. understands their ‘why’ and is able to communicate a strong sense of purpose to both staff and customers. A strong set of values define both the team and the operations.
49. use every opportunity to get publicity using blogs social media posts and testimonials. A well written, and educational press release and sent into appropriate publications stands a very good chance of being printed.
50. create the “insert business name” way of doing business. This is part their brand and is widely promoted using free and paid promotions.