

10 Ways to Make Your Business Outstanding

In this current climate, with so much competition and some businesses struggling to survive, it's not enough to be "good" or even "excellent." To achieve the success you deserve, like the gold medallist at the Olympics, your business needs to be "outstanding." Read and follow these 10 tips below, then prepare to step up to the podium!

- 1. Adopt a Positive Attitude.** Your business is all about you...YOU determine whether people buy from you or not. Someone with a happy, positive attitude is much more likely to attract customers than a person who is not. Keep yourself positive by writing a list of affirmations that you can look at or repeat to yourself during the day, for example, "I am a total winner in everything I do." Read or listen to something uplifting every day. Mix with positive, like-minded people. And when something does not go according to plan, get into the habit of looking for a solution immediately.
- 2. Be Clear about Your Brand.** Think about the value that the customers place on your products and services. Do you deliver what you promise? What words do you "own"...in other words, what words do your clients associate with your company when they buy from you? Do you have a mission statement? If not, create one now. Your mission statement is the foundation on which your business is built, and needs to be in a prominent place where staff and customers can see it. You might also want to consider putting your mission statement on your business cards. What sets your business apart from any other? Do you make sure that prospective clients know your USP? Your USP should be client centred, stating how the client will benefit from it.
- 3. Be Persistent.** You've heard the saying, quitters never win and winners never quit? Well, it's true. Those who never give up on themselves, despite all the knocks and falls they encounter, are the ones who come through in the end. Remember Colonel Sanders, who visited 1009 restaurants before someone showed an interest in his chicken recipe? Remember Thomas Edison, who invented the light bulb after many, many attempts? Keep your belief and your positivity strong, focus on where you want to go, and you'll get through those difficult times.

- 4. Set Challenging Goals and Keep them in Mind.** A business without goals is like a body without a skeleton. Goals are the framework of the business...without them, everything will fall apart. Goals are the maps that help you reach your destination quickly and easily. They should be **SMARTIE** – that is, **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **E**vidential, **R**esponsible, **T**ime-bound, **I**nspirational and **E**motional. Make sure you look at them first thing in the morning and last thing at night, and if possible keep them with you throughout the day so that you can refer to them. Oh....and remember to celebrate when you've achieved each one!
- 5. Monitor What You Do.** Keep track of your results. They will help you determine where to focus your energies. Which of your products and services are selling the most? Are you spending enough time on them? Are there any areas you can save money? Market yourself more effectively? Gain clients quicker? According to the Pareto Principle, 80% of your efforts give you 20% of your results, and vice versa, so make sure you're concentrating them in the right places.
- 6. Empower and Involve your Staff.** Staff who feel involved in the development of a company will contribute far more than those that do not. As far as is feasible, give your staff as much responsibility as possible. Is each member performing to his or her maximum potential? Could their roles be adapted to ensure that this is the case? Are you communicating with them in a way that brings the best out of them? Your aim is to have staff who love coming to work every morning...yes, such a thing does exist!
- 7. Go the Extra Mile for your Clients.** Just as staff need to be made feel special, so do clients. Are you giving the best possible service? What little things could you do to give them an even better experience? Do you know what their hobbies and interests are....for example, if you have a client who is interested in golf, invite him to a golf day. Do you know when their birthdays are? Then send them a message! You can do this without being cheesy...a genuine wish will make them feel valued.
- 8. Manage your Time.** This is a major issue for many, if not all, business owners. Are you managing your time effectively? Many successful business people get up an hour earlier to plan their day, claiming that they can gain two hours by doing this. Do you prioritise? If you have a

task that needs to be completed urgently, are you focused enough to shut out interruptions? Also, delegate as much as possible. Many hands make light work!

9. Be Seen. Your aim is to make people think of you whenever someone mentions your particular field of business. Do you attend as many networking events as you can? 80% of business comes from word of mouth, so the more you do, the more business you will get. Look for ways of getting free exposure...radio shows, press releases, putting your links on business websites, social networking...the list is endless. Tell 10 new people a day about your business and you'll never be short of work!

10. And finally...Invest in a Good Coach! Richard Branson once stated that, "Business Owners are not as effective as sports people, because they don't have their own coach." 90% of the top FTSE companies in the country must have agreed with him, as they all use a coach or a team of coaches. Business owners who employ a coach set themselves apart from the rest. They are more focused, have more clarity in their business, and know how to save themselves time and money. With the coach's input, they are able to set themselves dynamic goals and start to achieve them in the shortest possible time. For anyone serious about success in business, a coach is a vital member of the team!