



# your business

Inspiration | Advice | Opportunities

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From start-up  
to **growth-stage**

Get ready for  
the challenges  
of expansion

Leading for growth  
**Reinforce the  
foundation**

**Lead with  
Emotional  
Intelligence**

ENHANCE YOUR  
LEADERSHIP  
SKILLS

**How to protect  
your intellectual  
property**

- **safeguard your  
creative idea**

**HOW TO  
KEEP YOUR  
CUSTOMERS**

Customer retention  
should be a top  
priority

**5** tips to  
create the  
perfect social  
media post

WHAT MAKES A  
**GREAT BUSINESS  
IDEA** STAND OUT  
FROM THE CROWD?

HOW TO MANAGE  
YOUR SUPPLIERS  
TO IMPROVE YOUR  
CASH FLOW

**3 STEP PLAN**  
TO BOOST  
DAILY STAFF  
PRODUCTIVITY





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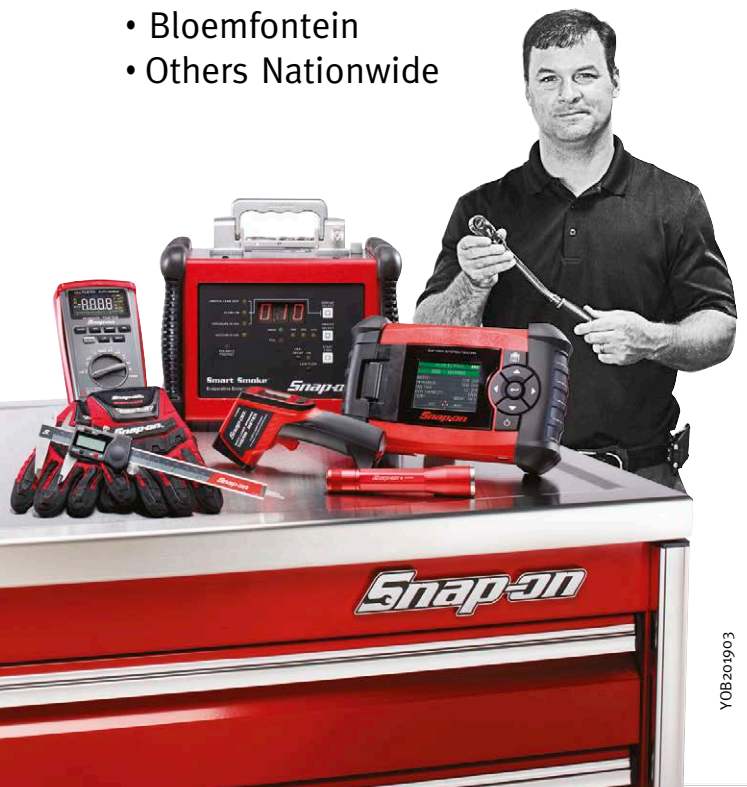
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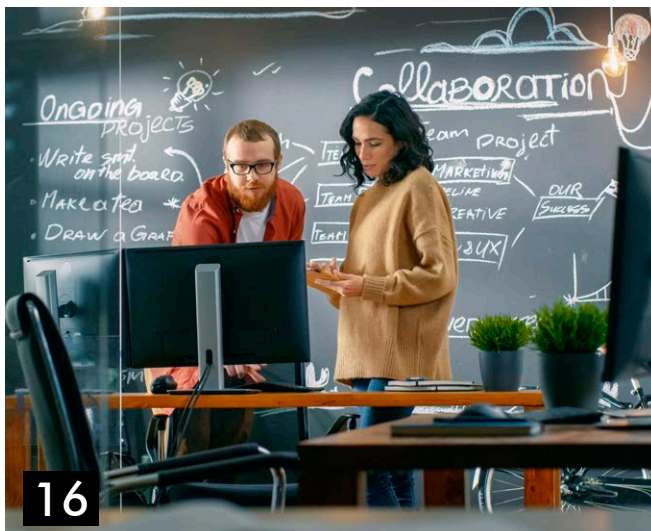




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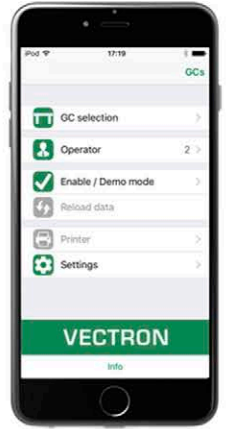
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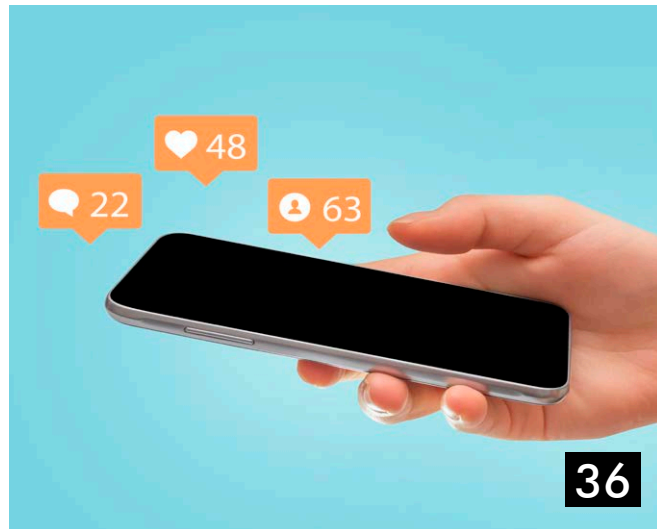
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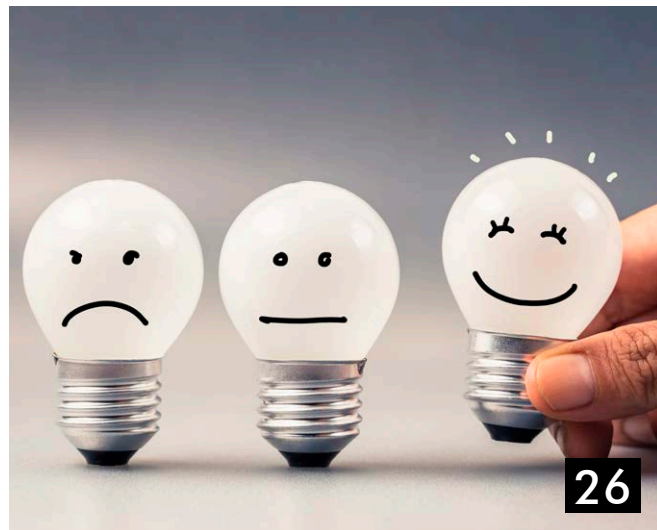
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# From start-up to growth-stage company

Every stage of a business comes with its unique set of benefits and challenges.

Growth comes with higher demands of your products or services, and with that comes consistency in your offering, that quality is maintained and that client expectations are met.

Busi Raphekwane

Starting a business can be the most thrilling and challenging thing one can do. This is a time where either a dream is coming to life, a solution is finally put together and commercialized, or a passion is turned into a business opportunity. This stage of starting a business is full of all kinds of uncertainties; not been known by your target market, trying to define exactly what you are selling, finding clients, raising funds for the business, finding business premises, not having enough money to cover all the expenses of the business and so the list goes on. Many entrepreneurs are excited at the idea of finally overcoming this stage in their business and moving to a stage of growth and market expansion.





Transitioning from a start-up stage can be one of the most exciting processes that entrepreneurs experience in their business. This process is characterized by finally having a solid client-base, a brand that is recognized by its target market, a specific loyal clientele, well defined product or service offering and a profitable business. With all these things in place and the prospects of growth in the business; what could go wrong?

There are a few things an entrepreneur should be aware of when the business finally starts to experience growth. Every stage of the business comes with its unique set of benefits and challenges. Some of the challenges entrepreneurs can expect are as follows:

“ Transitioning from a start-up stage is characterized by finally having a solid client-base, a brand that is recognized by its target market, a specific loyal clientele, well defined product or service offering and a profitable business. ”

### Finding the right people

As an entrepreneur, you are the most valuable asset in your business. The success of the business depends on the quality, competence and skill that you possess as the leader of the business. However, when the business grows, the focus shifts from the entrepreneur to the team within the business. The people in your business are your most valuable assets and can make or break your business.

It is therefore important to find the right calibre of people to add value to your business. This can be challenging, but if you know what to look for, you can get it right. The following should be considered when setting up a team:

- Find people that have the **relevant skills** to perform their duties or someone with the potential and capability to learn quickly.
- **Understand the culture** you are trying to establish in your business and find someone who can easily blend into your culture and further enhance it.
- Understand the **values** of the potential team member and see if they align with the values of the company.
- You need a **self-starter**, some one who can take responsibility of their role and doesn't need too much hand-holding. As a growing business you may not have time to train people or micro manage. Therefore, it is important to find people that can take responsibility for their work and are naturally self- motivated and self-sufficient.
- Conduct thorough interviews; **all interviews should follow a 5-step process**. Think of hiring as making an



investment, when you do this you want to make sure that your investment will yield the anticipated returns and even more. So, this process is extremely important.

The 5-step process involves the following:

- ▶ **Conducting face-to-face interviews.**
- ▶ **Practical assessment to be administered.** This would involve giving the candidate real-life tasks that they need to perform. This will show you how your potential candidate approaches problems and whether they have the relevant skill and competency.
- ▶ **Personal assessment.** Get the potential candidate to complete a personal assessment. It's important to understand the character of the person you are bringing on board. There are various personal assessments tests you can use to do this, some are free, and some are chargeable. If you go online, you can try out a few and see what would best work for you.
- ▶ **Reference check.** Perform checks to see whether the information provided from the interviews ties up with what they've done before.
- ▶ **Conduct final interview with your current staff members or an external party.** This will assist you in getting a well-rounded view of the candidate and to see whether they can blend into the culture you're trying to build.

## Having adequate systems and processes

Growth comes with higher demands of your products or services, and with that comes consistency in your offering, that the quality is maintained and expectations to clients are met. You as the entrepreneur will have less time and may be unable to oversee every single transaction in your business. To ensure that you can sustain, support and enhance your growth you need to have solid policies, processes and systems. Have a clear outline of how things are done from the time a client requests a quotation to the time the product or service is delivered. This does not have to be a complicated process, you can write down how you are currently delivering orders to your clients. When you do this, make sure that every single step is noted. Your team must be trained on these processes and follow consistently to ensure service levels are not compromised.

“ You as the entrepreneur will have less time and may be unable to oversee every single transaction in your business. ”

## Cash Flow

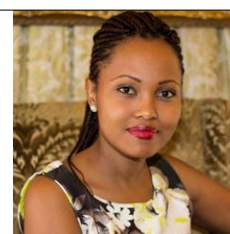
This is one of the challenges that come with growth. The more demand you have, the more cash you require to fulfil your demands. It is very important to manage cash flow effectively to be able to continue providing good quality service to your clients. Some of the things you can implement are as follows:

- Have shorter payment terms with your clients- negotiate shorter payment terms with your clients.
- Extend your payment terms with your creditors. It is important to negotiate longer terms from your suppliers.
- Start saving. It is important to start saving money from the time you start operating your business, even if its small amounts. These funds you can use as and when you have to fulfil new orders.
- Have a budget in place so that you can plan for your expenditure. Its also important to evaluate your actual expenses against your budget.

## Conclusion

Going into the growth stage does not have to be daunting. If you prepare well for this, you can continue to reap the rewards of your hard work and enjoy this new stage in your business. The key thing is to plan for your growth and anticipate exactly what you will need to support this stage in your business.

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# The **all-in-one** solution for busy entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs are amazing. They are true visionaries who want to make a positive difference in their lives and their communities. This is what they love. This is the reason that they become entrepreneurs.

However, what most entrepreneurs hate (and are really terrible at) is the admin side of having a business. This is the day-to-day operations, handling client phone calls, invoicing, following up on payments, chasing outstanding debt, accounting, financials, tax compliance, online marketing and just general business administration.

Entrepreneurs just do not have the time to juggle all these functions. So they either grind their way through it during evenings and weekends, or they have to hire staff or consultants to do it for them.

## Enter Kitrin IsoForge

This has now changed with a new product, **Kitrin IsoForge**, that offers all entrepreneurs a phenomenal solution within a phone call away.

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Kitrin IsoForge originally pioneered their service offering for practitioners in the healthcare industry, but due to the huge success of the service and many satisfied clients, it is now being offered to all qualified entrepreneurs that want to make a positive difference in their business.

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**Growing your organisation is an exciting time, but leaders and entrepreneurs too often forget to reinforce the foundation before reaching for the stars.**

Organisations choose to grow for various reasons such as the expansion of products and services, increased footprint, acquisition or amalgamation or adapting to keep up with industry competitors. However, no matter the reason, a strong purposeful culture and sound leadership capability is critical for the long-term success of the brand.

In most smaller businesses the organisational brand is closely related to, and very dependent on, the leader and/or founder's personal brand. Thus, to maintain the integrity of the organisation's brand, it is vital to put measures in place to ensure consistency and accountability when you can no longer manage all aspects on your own. True leaders inspire leadership in others and this is what will sustain the organisation as it grows.

Brian Eagar

Starbucks is a well-known example of a successful expansion. Founder, Howard Schultz, believed that a powerful, aligned culture was the key to its success. Therefore, he invested heavily in: appointing and empowering regional management that he could hold accountable, inspiring loyalty to the brand on all levels of the organisation and training staff to deliver the quality and service that Starbucks promises its customers.

I would like to share a few practical habits that you can put in place to build leadership capability and ensure your organisation remains both authentic and flexible:

### **Ensure that everyone stays connected to the organisational culture.**

It is relatively easy to sustain the culture of a small business where all team members work closely together, and perhaps more importantly, close to the leader. This becomes challenging when the organisation expands, especially when expanding geographically. Culture is the glue that keeps the team together and teamwork (functional and cross-functional) is what ultimately drives quality performance. For a consistent



culture the values, purpose and promise must be more than just communicated, it must be role-modelled by leadership and championed by every employee.

► **Get into the habit of practically displaying your organisation's values, both in your behaviour and your communication, and hold all leaders accountable for doing the same.**

### **Hold leaders accountable and empower them to hold those in their charge to account.**

We are all dependent on one another to build the culture and achieve the organisation's objectives. Since culture and achievement are symbiotic, leaders must actively focus on both these aspects. Accountability ultimately boosts employee morale and fosters an environment where employees can trust each other to honour their commitments.

► **Get into the habit of encouraging robust conversations where leaders and employees feel safe enough to challenge ideas/decisions before they commit and hold each other accountable when they make the commitment.**

### **Maintain a healthy balance of autonomy and consistency.**

An environment marked by consistency lays the foundation for accountability to flourish. It enhances productivity as well as a sense of security and belonging. Consistency also builds trust with clients and customers. However, remember to leave room for employees to play to their strengths and bring their ideas to the table. When everyone is clear about the purpose of the organisation and connected to the culture, it is much easier to foster autonomy and ownership without compromising your brand.

► **Get into the habit of collaborating with your leaders so that they contribute to the growth process and then be diligent about enforcing the guidelines you agreed upon.**

### **Never take your eye off the results.**

Although you must make room for new leaders, this does not mean that you should become a passive leader yourself. The skill lies in keeping your finger on the pulse so that you know when it's necessary to make adjustments, provide support or hold your leaders accountable for achieving results. We might not ultimately be in business to make money, but no business can survive without it.

► **Get into the habit of using the financial results of the business as a mirror of what might need work - or praise - and act on it with speed, consistency and discipline.**

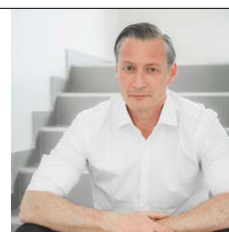
### **Keep learning and mentoring.**

When growing your business, it is vital to free up your time and your mind for thinking strategically. When you effectively apply the above four principles, you can safely step out of managing the detail and step into a mentoring role. Crucial to this is to keep learning yourself and to adopt a coaching and/or mentoring leadership style that gives others the opportunity to grow. If you want your business to be sustainable beyond your tenor, you must be intentional about transferring your skills and inspiring tomorrow's leaders with your vision. Ultimately, you should become replaceable.

► **Here it is so important to get into the habit of listening (and reading) more than you speak and rather letting your actions do the talking.**

So, why does culture and leadership development deserve your focused effort? Simply put, it is the foundation that will help you realise your dreams together while keeping you grounded and connected at the same time.

Brian Eagar is a founder and the CEO of TowerStone Leadership Centre, whose vision focuses on empowering leaders to build a values-driven culture for sustainable success. Visit [www.towerstone-global.com](http://www.towerstone-global.com)



# Leading with emotional intelligence



In an era where competition is rapidly on the rise, leaders of the organisation play an even more critical role in business, in ensuring its survival.

Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, stated that: "Research shows convincingly that EQ is ... many times more important than IQ, in leadership roles." The Emotional Quotient (EQ) may be described as, the measurement test of an individual's capability to understand and actively apply their emotions.

## What is emotional intelligence, you may ask?

Daniel Goleman, a thought leader on Emotional intelligence (EI) in the workplace, describes emotional intelligence, as the ability to identify, evaluate and control one's own emotions, emotions of others and that of other groups. With this in mind, emotional intelligence may assist you, in enhancing your leadership skill in the workplace. Let us review some tips for you to consider in the future:

### Understand yourself

As a leader, you need to be self-aware. Understand your strengths and weaknesses. Place emphasis on being able to identify and understand your emotions. Make a concerted effort to continually improve yourself, in how you react to the emotions of others. This may enable you to communicate and relate better both personally and professionally.

### Control your emotions

Emotionally intelligent leaders, are able to control their impulses and emotions. Do not react, out of emotion. Take a deep breath. Walk away, if needed. Most importantly, think before you respond to a negative outburst, comment or situation.

“ Leaders with high emotional intelligence, collaborate well. This can be attributed to their ability to understand others. ”

### Display empathy

Listening skills, is key here. Allow others to share their viewpoints, in an attempt to understand their wants, needs, concerns or views. The aim is to find a common ground and solution together. Do not judge or stereotype others. Be honest, factual and mindful of others feelings.

### Collaborate

Leaders with high emotional intelligence, collaborate well. This can be attributed to their ability to



understand others. In addition they value and use the strengths and contributions of others well. Promote collaboration.

### Self-driven

Emotionally intelligent leaders are self-driven and motivated. Research indicates that they enjoy being challenged, are highly productive and often focus on longer term success, instead of immediate gains.

### Display high integrity

Be honest and 'walk the talk'. Do as you say, and behave ethically. This will assist you in building trust.

### Strong interpersonal skills

Leaders with high emotional intelligence have strong interpersonal skills. They communicate well and are able to inspire and motivate others. They handle conflict and difficult situations well.

### Team centric

Emotionally intelligent leaders are team players. They build and maintain relationships well. Their focus is on others, rather than a self-centered approach. These leaders also build their team members, through support and training. Handling emotions within and around you, can become quite intense and can challenge you as a leader. Unlock your emotional intelligence, by getting to know who you are first. Then, take it a step and tip at a time. Hopefully these tips shared, together with other available online articles on this topic, will further enhance your existing leadership skills set.

Terine Lott-Cupido is the Managing Director at EmpowerLink Services, a Human Resources consulting company, focused on providing HR solutions to small business. For more information visit [www.empowerlinkservices.co.za](http://www.empowerlinkservices.co.za).



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# LEADERSHIP, focus and passion

The LFP Group is focussed on creating empowerment and driving transformation by providing end-to-end BEE solutions that help businesses soar and the country move forward into a bright new era. We talk to CEO, Louis Pulzone, about leadership and his approach to the industry.

## Q How and why was LFP Group founded?

I believe that success is determined by great leadership, and great leadership ensures change. The great Nelson Mandela once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". LFP Group was born out of exactly this and started from the ground up. Much like Nelson Mandela, we have always believed that a life should be without limits.

We have seen the tragedies associated with inequality and poverty, and out of this our passion and our purpose was born. By partnering with corporates and establishing a network of Associates, we provide endless opportunities to those less fortunate and have also absorbed many learners into our own company structure. By aligning our service offering to the BEE Codes of Good Conduct, both learners and companies can benefit.

## Q How did you get LFP Group off the ground initially, and what insights did you learn on startup journey?



I was born and bred in Kroonstad and made the big move to Johannesburg six-plus years ago. During the day I recruited learners and saw potential clients for my new business, LFP Training. At night I worked as a waiter at the Spur in Bright Water Commons in Randburg. I identified a gap in the market and in order to make LFP successful, I needed to surround myself with the right people who shared my vision and could help me bring it to life.

At that stage, BEE compliance wasn't as widely embraced as it is now so education around it was key. The conversations were still fairly new, but clients soon started to recognise the importance and began to see the tangible benefits that our offering made to their businesses and to the economy. To date, we have helped more than 700 clients to achieve a 100% pass rate in

their BEE verification audits and our service portfolio has grown extensively to meet their needs.

I believe in the power of people, passion and persistence. Without passion and determination, none of this

would have been possible. LFP stands for Leadership, Focus and Passion and this is what we live by – it's engrained into each of us. With very little initial money and resources, we took the leap together and here we are today. Our company today is the leading provider of skills development initiatives and B-BBEE compliance solutions. From a small team, we have grown to 200 people and offer a nationwide footprint.

### **Q You are passionate about South Africa and skills development, why?**

I am a proud South African and with vast experience in the education and training industries, I have seen the difference that it makes in people's lives. I believe that everyone should have equal opportunities.

### **Q Why should businesses care about their BEE status, what is also in it for them?**

The Government has been particularly verbal in highlighting the need for BEE compliance and there are plenty of incentives and rebates in place for compliant businesses. There is also pressure on compliant businesses to favour compliant businesses as their suppliers (ESD).

At last year's State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that "We (South Africa) will improve our capacity to support black professionals, deal decisively with companies that resist transformation and use competition policy to open markets up to new black entrants." Thus, all organs of state, public entities and any private enterprise that undertakes business with a public entity must implement the BEE codes. Whilst some companies create fraudulent compliance certificates in order to avoid having to comply with the BEE codes, others simply altered the dates on their out-

“ I believe that success is determined by great leadership, and great leadership ensures change. ”

of-date legitimate BEE certificates to avoid the costs involved in having to renew a certificate. In one case, a billion Rand corporation reported their annual turnover to be less than R5 million in

order to secure BEE exemption. Fraudulent practices like these have caused experts to estimate that 'up to 5%' of all BEE certificates are invalid.

The penalties for a business being found not BEE compliant are hefty. These penalties, enshrined in the Employment Equity Act, can be anywhere between R1.5 million and up to 10% of an employer's annual turnover, depending on the nature and frequency of the non-compliance. Ultimately, if a business fails their annual BEE Compliance Audit due to substandard BEE suppliers, the large financial investment made in order to ensure compliance is lost.

### **Q Why is skills development a critical element of the B-BBEE scorecard?**

Skills Development in-line with the BEE Codes of Good Conduct is one of the most cost-effective elements to gain points on your BEE scorecard. Skills Development initiatives not only help to improve your BEE score, but also equips your business and its people with the skills needed to succeed. The sub-minimum requirement for skills development is 40% of the points available for skills development. Companies must take note that the target for skills development has increased dramatically and specific programs must be put in place as early as possible in its financial year to achieve the sub-minimum targets.

### **Q How do you set yourself apart from competitors?**

We set the tone for innovation in the industry and we are flexible in our approach. Rather than looking to the ways of our competitors, we have developed several industry-firsts and our team of experts has the know-how to deliver value to our clients. When a client joins us, they join a family and as such, we offer them a transparent, personalised and legally compliant service offering.



# Boosting daily productivity

## 3STEP PLAN

With an infinite number of apps and wearable devices now tracking our health and wellbeing, it would be natural to assume that all this data is making us into super-humans - and ultra efficient workers! Yet when you take a look at the data on employee engagement (which gauges how motivated and productive people are) the statistics are pretty dismal.

Studies by global performance-management consulting company Gallup have revealed that only 13% of employees across 142 countries are “engaged” in their work - while 87% of workers are “not engaged” or “actively disengaged”. In South Africa, the numbers are even worse: a paltry 9% of the workforce is reportedly engaged, 46% are not engaged and 45% are actively disengaged.

For small business owners, a disengaged team can be the kiss of death – particularly in such a tenuous economic climate. Fortunately, there are some very practical steps you can take to boost motivation and productivity levels. (Technology to the rescue!)

### 1. Promote collaboration

In addition to the sense of camaraderie and human connection that collaboration promotes (those warm and fuzzy feelings!) studies have shown that it boosts productivity. A [pivotal Stanford](#) study found that just the perception of working collectively on challenges is a sure-fire way to ignite better performance. In 2017, a



study by the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp) supported this finding, and revealed that companies that promoted collaborative working were five times as likely to be high performing. Interestingly, the study highlighted the importance of incentivizing collaboration:

“The lack of incentives and rewards is the most common and powerful barrier to effective collaboration. Yet, most talent management systems are designed to reward individual achievement, not team accomplishments,” noted Kevin Martin, Chief Research Officer, i4cp. “Finding ways to recognise and reward individuals, leaders and teams who engage in productive collaborative behaviours can pay off in a big way.”

In other words, there’s hard science behind those warm and fuzzy feelings – and business leaders should take note!

To boost collaboration, technology proffers up many colourful and compelling options: [Slack](#), for example, is a fun, Cloud-based collaboration hub that enables teams to communicate and work together online. It has evolved to become an interesting content hub as well as a key management tool. In addition to Slack, other



Cloud-based tools such as [Trello](#) and [Google Docs](#) are simple but efficient ways of boosting collaboration.

## 2. Enable mobility

For most of us, smartphones have become a bodily extension – we simply do not leave a room without it. And while this may be a social dependency (how does one live without WhatsApp?), it is clear that businesses are developing a smartphone dependency of their own. Increasingly, studies are showing that the use of mobile devices, and more often than not, personal mobile devices, boost employee productivity. According to [Forbes](#), employee mobility leads to ‘30% better business processes and 23% more productivity – with 100% more satisfied employees’. For most companies, and especially SMEs, any discussion around mobility is essentially a discussion around BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). Most leaders have already recognised that employees prefer using their personal devices at work, in addition to ‘mainstream’ tools such as WhatsApp, Dropbox and Gmail. And getting in the way of employees and their personal devices (and social platforms) can be the equivalent of declaring civil war. The key is to find intelligent ways of managing the use of personal devices so that the productivity benefits can be

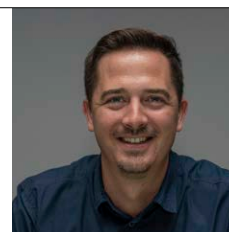
“ In South Africa, the numbers are even worse: a paltry 9% of the workforce is reportedly engaged, 46% are not engaged and 45% are actively disengaged. ”

reaped – without compromising on IT security and data management. Importantly, employees must be educated around the security perils of using mobile devices for business – and should take steps such as implementing stronger password protection and encrypting sensitive data.

## 3. Become more energy efficient

While it may seem strange to talk about energy efficiency in the same breath as productivity, one only needs to mention the word ‘Eskom’ and it all becomes clear! As it stands, SA businesses have to operate under the ever-present threat of power outages – which arguably present the greatest menace to productivity levels. Yet for forward-thinking business leaders, load shedding need not interrupt work. The key is to take some savvy precautionary steps: invest in a UPS (stands for Uninterrupted Power Supply and is essentially a battery that will keep electronic devices running for a short period of time); and protect your equipment with surge protection plugs. For leaders who want to get ultra serious about power saving, you can also replace power hungry desktops with micro computing devices. The CloudGateXs, for example, is a locally developed mini-PC that uses less than ten percent of the electricity that a typical desktop requires. This type of energy saving device allows SMEs to continue operating for a longer time – and to thereby maintain productivity (along with sanity!).

Aaron Thornton is the Managing Director of the newly merged businesses of Dial a Nerd and Turrito networks. Visit [www.dialanerd.co.za/](http://www.dialanerd.co.za/) [www.turrito.com](http://www.turrito.com) or call (010) 007 0012/ (021) 200 1460.





# Payroll and HR:

## The perfect first step toward your SME's digital transformation

Any entrepreneur with a growing SME knows the pressure of wearing many hats. Most of them are CEO, CFO, Accountant, Marketing Officer, Sales Agent, and a dozen other employees, all rolled into one extremely time-pressured individual.

Time is money, and anything that can help streamline your multitasking should be embraced with open arms. Payroll and HR functions are a prime example. Today, technology is taking out much of the complexity associated with digitising these functions in a fast-moving business. Growing staff complements and complicated regulatory requirements used to mean small business owners spent hours poring over spreadsheets just to get salaries out on time in a way.

Luckily, with the advent of cloud-based service delivery, even small businesses can make use of digital tools that make these functions easy. Most digital payroll and HR vendors, PaySpace included, have developed products and solutions for even the smallest enterprise. In fact, PaySpace allows smaller employers all the convenience afforded to much larger businesses for as little as R25 per payslip.

Apart from having more time to focus on growing your business, there are many advantages that make using such software a no-brainer for any business owner.

### ■ Compliance for you

With the national budget stretched to breaking point, government is very actively stepping up its tax collection procedures and PAYE compliance regulations to make up for spending shortfalls.

Some businesses may have gotten away with non-compliance in the past, but today they can't afford to get this wrong or they may face penalties such as censure, interest and fines from SARS and other authorities, and even imprisonment in cases of fraud or extreme negligence.

### ■ Convenience for your employees

Let's face it: your workforce needs proper payslips and needs them to be readily available at short notice. Home loans, car financing, housing applications and many more everyday application processes require correct, compliant salary records.

### ■ Easy automation

With the risks of non-compliance this high, even small South African businesses need help with calculating their payrolls and filing returns. Automated solutions are helping business owners do this more quickly and easily than ever before, taking care of keeping accurate records, generating compliance reports, and responding to changes in the legal and regulatory framework without missing a beat.

### ■ Taking care of business anytime, anywhere

An entrepreneur nurturing a growing business is rarely desk-bound. In fact, they spend a good portion of the working week on the road, seeing clients and closing deals. The great thing about cloud-delivery of payroll and HR software is that it can be done securely and conveniently on-the-go, anytime and on any device.

Small business owners hoping to gain a competitive edge through greater efficiency, time- and cost-savings and effort-free legislative compliance need only look to technology for the answer. Payroll and HR is a prime candidate for digitisation and automation – and with the right partner at your business's side, compliance, reliability, and convenience are assured.

For further information please contact PaySpace on [www.payspace.com](http://www.payspace.com) or +27 87 250 2500.



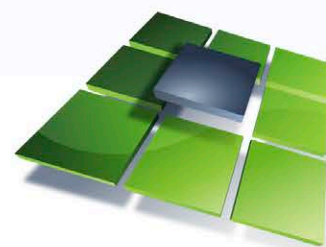
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# Sensible legal services for SMMEs

Legal Sense was established in 2006 and specialises in providing affordable and accessible legal services to SMME's across South Africa. Recognising the fact that we live in a very diverse country with plenty of challenges, Legal Sense has developed a service offering to cater for, and support, South African businesses.

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We are living in a very litigious environment. New legislation has also changed the business landscape, and it is hard for business owners to keep up with all these changes and the potential risks they can pose to a business.

Being embroiled in a legal dispute with a supplier or service provider, a CCMA referral from a disgruntled employee or trying to collect outstanding monies from a debtor can be a very stressful and very time consuming. Managing these kinds of legal issues demand a lot of time and money from a business owner – both very valuable commodities in a small business – which should rather be used to increase productivity and growth.

We also know that small businesses very rarely budget for legal fees. So, when disputes arise, most businesses do not have the financial resources to acquire the services of an attorney to assist and guide them through the process. This is when vital mistakes are made, which often leads to an undesirable outcome with even worse financial implications in the long term.

Legal Sense has recognised the need for AFFORDABLE and ACCESSIBLE legal services for SMME's and has developed a one-stop legal services solution to small business owners without breaking the bank.

Proactive legal services include, for example, the drafting of all contracts, assistance with problematic employee and labour issues, the drafting of HR and Company manuals, the chairing of disciplinary hearings, the collection of outstanding debt, general legal advice and assistance on all business-related matters and disputes.



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# How to **protect** your **intellectual property**

**When businesses fail to adequately protect their intellectual property, they are exposed to the potential risks of competitors imitating their ideas and/or passing them off as their own.**

Unfortunately, it is often the case that well-established, macro corporations with an abundance of resources prey on the vulnerability of small and medium sized enterprises ("SMEs") by way of theft of the intellectual property of such SMEs. Without adequate intellectual property rights to fall back on, SMEs usually have very little chance of taking on big corporations. The world is becoming increasingly competitive and successful innovative ideas tend to attract copycats, making it of vital importance that businesses understand the risks that they face in failing to properly protect their ideas.

## **What is defined as Intellectual property?**

Intellectual property refers to intangible property that is the product of human creativity and which often attracts substantial commercial value. The law of intellectual property allows creators of such inventions to attain various rights to the intellectual goods that they create, known as intellectual property rights. It is important that SMEs have a solid leg to stand on in circumstances where potential disputes as to who is the original creator arise.

## **Registering a design**

SMEs are advised to register the new and unique physical features of their products as registered designs, the sooner the better. A design may have both aesthetic and functional features, both of which can be protected separately. If a design has been registered, the person or business who registered the design will be granted a monopoly of rights in respect of the external appearance of the product and this will effectively protect the look-and-feel of the product against copycat designs. By registering a design, the owner of the design is able to control the way in which the design is used, enabling them to prevent the big corporations from copying and profiting off of their design without consent and monetary compensation.

In the event that copying occurs despite the registered design, the owner may then decide to charge the imitators royalties for the use of their design and take legal action against them. In terms of the Design Act, two of the most important requirements when registering a design is that the design is both new and original. A design is deemed new if it can be distinguished from what has been done before and it is therefore important that the owner of the new design is careful not to disclose the design publicly before filing a design application. However, in terms of the Design Act a grace period of six months, from the date of the first public disclosure of the design, makes it possible to obtain valid design protection. Therefore, it is very important for SMEs to be aware of the opportunity to register their design rights during the early stages of the design process in order to avoid any potential stumbling blocks further down the line.

If SMEs are aware of the potential risks as well as the benefits of registering their designs, internal procedures can be put in place to identify opportunities to protect their intellectual property and prevent copycats from using their designs.

## **Registered trade marks**

Further to the registration of a design, it is also possible to safeguard intellectual property in the form of a registered trade mark. Trademarks are words or other marks, such as a logo or slogan, which identify the product or service of the trade mark owner from the goods and services of other providers, with very little limit as to the form which the trade mark can take.

According to the Trade Mark Act, a mark is defined as "any sign capable of being represented graphically." In terms of our law, trademarks may be registered, and the registration remains in place for a period of ten years,



after which the registration can be renewed. Much like the advantages of registering a design, the registration of a trade mark allows the owner to prevent and stop the use or registration of another trade mark in respect of the same or alike goods or services if the other mark closely resembles the registered mark so as to cause confusion. SMEs should be aware that trade marks which are not formally registered enjoy only a limited form of protection in terms of our common law and proving ownership requires far more evidence than what would be required had the mark been registered.

### Copyright

On the other hand, copyright is a form of intellectual property which does not require any formal registration but still provides protection against another party copying the work. In order to be eligible for copyright protection, the particular type of work must be covered by the Copyright Act and must be in a material form. The Act also requires that the 'work' is original and includes works such as literature, art, music, sound recordings, cinematograph films, broadcasts and computer programs. SMEs should ensure that their original works are reduced to material form in order to protect their intellectual property in terms of the Copyright Act.

### Patents

Another category of intellectual property that has been recognised for legal protection are patents. A patent is an exclusive right granted for an invention which can take numerous forms such as a process, a method, a machine, a device, a new material, a chemical compound or chemical composition. The requirements are that the invention is new, that the invention is not an obvious variation of known technology it must be capable of being applied in trade, industry or agriculture. If SMEs have met these requirements, they are advised to file a patent application in every country where they wish to

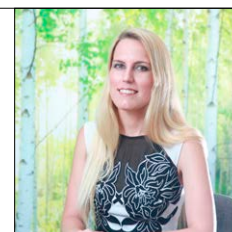
patent their invention, especially in circumstances where the invention will be disclosed to the public.

Filing a patent for an invention secures and protects the rights of the inventor and further, adds value to the invention. Once a patent is secured in a particular jurisdiction, the owner of the patent will have a monopoly over it, allowing them to make the invention, use the invention as well as having control, over the sale, licensing and leasing of the invention. If SMEs fail to protect their inventions by filing a patent application, they run the risk of larger competitors stealing their ideas and out-competing them.

It is vital that SMEs understand the commercial value of intellectual property and the importance of protecting these assets against imitators. SMEs should identify the types of intellectual property they may have, whether it be a trade mark or an invention, and take steps to guard against any potential risks by adequately protecting their intellectual property.

It goes without saying that a large retailer capable of manufacturing and producing products at much cheaper rates than local SMEs typically can, can cause great damage to a local business and even cause them to go under. Although it can be said that big corporations have a corporate social responsibility to support small enterprises it is up to SMEs to ensure that their intellectual property rights are protected to ensure that these big corporates in fact "toe the line".

Natalie Macdonald-Govender is an Associate Attorney at De Beer Attorneys. De Beer Attorneys specialise in all aspects of Intellectual Property Law including patents, trademarks, design rights and copyright in South Africa and the African continent.





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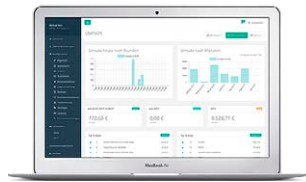


The new posmatic is perfect for restaurants and hotels of any size, and will optimize and simplify your operations. It is 100% safe offline due to unique AnyWay technology. Reliable, flexible, modern!

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The posmatic dashboard can be viewed anytime, anywhere via your browser. Monitor in real time the processes in your company. Detailed statistics help you to optimize your offer. Change master data such as prices and articles during operation. For all devices with just one click.



### ■ Mobile bonus

Accelerate your process flows by direct order intake at the customer. Incoming orders are transmitted in real time to the kitchen or counter.



### ■ Waiter lock

Authentication in seconds! Optimize your ordering and cashier processes by using waiter locks.



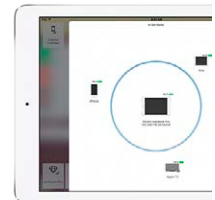
### ■ Voucher and customer administration

Accelerate your process flows by direct order intake at the customer. Incoming orders are transmitted in real time to the kitchen or counter.



### ■ AnyWay technology

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### ■ Customer display

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### ■ Kitchen monitor

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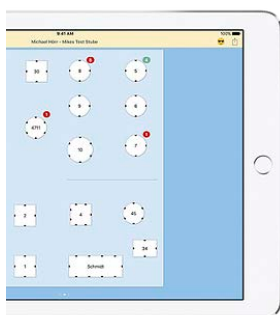
### ■ Customer pager

posmatic supports customer pagers. The finished order will be automatically reported to the pager.



### ■ Kitchen Monitor for customers

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# How to keep your customers

Customer retention should be a TOP PRIORITY in every company.



Acquiring new customers can be exciting and even exhilarating as you see 'the needle move' in the positive direction of increased turnover and profits. Plus there is the added nuance of new relationships being built that adds the 'spice' of enjoyment to the experience.

But staff turnover, loss of focus, diminishing quality of your product or service and other challenges may erode the customer experience over time, resulting in customer attrition

Losing customers means losing money. More importantly your brand becomes less impactful in society. A well planned and executed customer retention strategy should be at the core of your business model. Only having a great product is not enough in modern times - it has to be underpinned by a customer-centric focus if you want sustainable success.

Here are three critical factors to keep in mind for your keeping your customers:

“ There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else. ”

-Sam Walton

## Embrace change

Demonstrate to your customer base that you are an innovative and cutting edge brand that evolves with the times. Constantly stay abreast of industry changes and developments and adapt in a creative way. It will excite customers to see that you are constantly refining your offering and coming up with innovative new products and services that add value to their lives. If you get stuck in your old ways you are likely to lose existing customers to more customer-centric and innovative companies.

## Communicate

Pro-actively engage your customers using multiple platforms and methods of inspirational communication. Platforms such as Youtube, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn can be used to regularly communicate your vision, purpose and your brand story that resonates with customers.

Newsletters should have content that is informative for clients. Well-researched surveys can be invaluable for identifying problem areas where your client service or products needs improvement.

Ensure that all team members are well trained on customer engagement and handling conflict in a positive way. Empathetic listening is a core people skill that can be developed and trained on.

## Continuous improvement in service and support

Have a strong focus on 'Kaizen' (continuous improvement) on all aspects of customer service and support. Constantly review your customer retention strategy and involve your team to creatively improve every customer engagement.

Pay attention to how phone calls, e-mails and responses on online platforms are handled. Especially all customer facing team members should be highly trained, skilled communicators and problem solvers. These skills should be constantly refined and reviewed.

Actively measure your customer retention/attrition as a key performance metric. For example, if you have a total of one hundred customers and this month you have lost ten, then your attrition rate was 10% for this month. Focus on driving customer attrition down.

Dirk Coetsee is a business leadership coach for start-ups and established entrepreneurs. He is also a qualified Master Life coach and assists individuals to get "unstuck" in their lives and careers. You can contact him at: [dirkcoetsee3@gmail.com](mailto:dirkcoetsee3@gmail.com).



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# If SMMEs are key to economic growth, why are they battling to secure funding?

While the failure rate of small businesses in the country is high, they remain the backbone of the economy, providing the majority of the job opportunities and contributing significantly to GDP.

With the recent announcement of government job cuts over the next three years and with only 22% of corporate CEOs being “very confident” of their company’s growth in the next 12 months, the country is depending on the small business sector to deliver jobs. To achieve this, a supportive environment must be created to bolster small business survival and to facilitate growth. Access to finance is a critical component of this survival and growth and is one that needs urgent attention.

Finfind published **South Africa’s Inaugural SMME Access to Finance Report** last year. The report, sponsored by the SA SME Fund, details the SMME access to finance landscape in the country and identifies the lack of skills by micro, small and medium-sized business owners as a substantial challenge to accessing finance. A free copy of the report can be downloaded from [www.accesstofinancereport.co.za](http://www.accesstofinancereport.co.za).

Darlene Menzies, CEO of Finfind remarks that, “Many business owners lack the skills required to find the right funders and to identify the appropriate finance product that matches their particular funding need. Many also struggle to prepare the relevant business documentation required by finance providers and lack the know-how to ideally present their business funding case in a way that will enable them to access the finance they need. While access to the funding is crucial for business sustainability and growth, sadly many applications are rejected due to poor financial skills and lack of funding experience by the business owner.”

The report suggests that there is a need to raise the skills level of many of the startup and early-stage businesses, to equip them to build companies that:

- Are better managed.
- Have viable business models.
- Maintain up-to-date financial records.
- Understand how to manage their cash flow.
- Can articulate their funding need.
- Can prepare a business plan that is properly positioned for funding.
- Can develop the trading history and track record necessary to secure funding.

“There is a definite disconnect in the industry between the amount of money available to SMMEs from funders, and the number of SMMEs successfully securing these funds.” ”

Menzies further explains, “Funders need to determine that the business applying for finance is bankable, meaning that it is a viable business that is going to generate future income. Funders also have to assess that the business can afford the funding, so that it will be able to repay the money it is applying for. To do this, the funder needs to examine documents such as the SMME’s business plan or project plans, their income projections, outstanding debtors, latest annual financial statements, latest VAT statements, up-to-date management accounts and latest bank statements. Many business owners struggle to provide these documents as they find the financial recordkeeping side of their business challenging, and do not have access to the necessary financial management and accounting resources needed to produce these vital documents.



Darlene Menzies

Poor financial recordkeeping and the lack of up-to-date financials is not only a problem when it comes to applying for funding but is also a major hinderance when it comes to owners making sound business decisions.”

**To improve their chances of securing funding, some of the things business owners must focus on include:**

- Ensuring that they have a viable business model.
- Knowing what their personal credit score is and making sure that they address any outstanding unpaid issues.
- Being vigilant about settling monthly credit repayments on time – many funders will reject an SMME’s application for finance if the owners have bad credit scores.
- Keeping their business admin and financial recordkeeping up to date.
- Staying on top of their business cash flow management so they apply for funding a few months before they actually need it, as opposed to when they have already hit a cash cliff.
- Being able to properly articulate their funding needs.
- Maintaining a good business trading history.
- Ensuring access to an accredited small business accountant to assist with financial management, signing off of financial statements and to provide sound tax advice.

There is a definite disconnect in the industry between the amount of money available to SMMEs from funders, and the number of SMMEs successfully securing these funds. There are over 200 funders with more than 500 different finance products available for SMMEs.

Menzies concludes, “Business owners need to upskill themselves and get the basics in place and funding will become easier. Very few funders offer support to become funding ready, the onus is on the business owner to properly prepare their application and their supporting documents and present their case to the funder. Business owners are advised to seek assistance from small business accountants and business advisors when it comes to preparing and submitting funding requests. To find out which funders and finance products they should apply for, they simply need to go to [www.finfind.co.za](http://www.finfind.co.za).”



# What makes a good business idea

## a GREAT IDEA?

I was fortunate to be a facilitator in Pitch and Polish, a national competition helping entrepreneurs to better pitch their business. I am somewhat perplexed though, as many of the competitors believe their business idea is scalable and will easily warrant investment.

It is not too difficult to come up with an idea, but is it a great idea? Here are 3 "tests"...

### 1 The Grandma Test

Are you able to easily share your ideas with say...your grandmother?

Your business may solve a complicated problem, but you should be able to explain it in simple terms so that anyone can understand it, said Kris Duggan, CEO of BetterWorks. Duggan suggested using what he calls "the grandma test." "When you typically hear someone pitch their idea, it's often full of buzzwords that rarely makes sense," Duggan said. "When you think about your new business idea, ask yourself, 'Can it pass the grandma test?' In other words, would your grandma understand what you do? If your idea is easy to understand, chances are it's more likely to succeed with prospective customers or investors.

### 2 The viability test

Does your idea offer real solutions to real world problems, and will people be willing to pay for it? When you're first considering a new business idea, skip the formal business plan and start with a one page business model canvas. At a minimum, you'll want to cover the following:

*Why are you doing this?* What's your mission? All new businesses need a sense of purpose. Are you trying to improve people's lives in some way? What are the core differentiators of your business that set you apart from the next person trying to build a similar business?



*What problem are you solving?* You need to be solving some sort of real problem that exists in the world. If you aren't solving a problem for potential customers, then how will you get people to buy your product or service?

*Who are you solving this problem for?* As important as having a problem to solve, is having customers that have this problem. Knowing who your ideal customer is and how you can find them is critical to starting a successful business.

How are your potential customers solving their problem today? This is where you want to write down a few notes about your competition. What choices do your customers have today? How is your solution better?

### 3 The Talk test

Have you tested your idea with both friend and stranger? Have you been willing to engage with those who think your idea soars and those who think it sucks?

Shockingly, talking to potential customers about your new business idea is the step that most entrepreneurs overlook. Not talking to your potential customers raises your chances of failure substantially, so head out the door and start talking to people as soon as you can.

When you interview your potential customers, you're trying to validate your key assumptions that you documented in your business pitch. Do they actually have the problem you assume they have? How do they solve their problem today? What do they think of your idea?

As you bounce your business idea off friends and family, it's easy to end up only hearing positive feedback. Even potential customers might not want to hurt your feelings and not give you their completely honest opinion.

This is where finding a few naysayers is important. Find people who don't like your idea and get them to poke holes in it. Why do they think it's going to fail? What do they see as your weak points?

By hearing comments on your product that come from a broad range, you are more likely to bring out your first product/service with greater success.

Steve Reid has been involved in business coaching for the past 15 years with four years dedicated to the establishment of a successful business incubator in Port Elizabeth. He opened a Centre for Entrepreneurship for False Bay College in 2015; with a Rapid Incubator Hub launched in 2016.

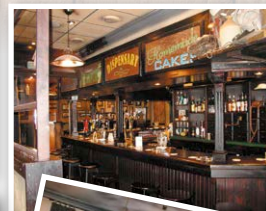


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# Dream much bigger than your current constructs

KFC franchisee, NISHID DOSA from AKM Foods recently walked away with the Franchisee Partner of the Year and the Operator of the Year awards, at this year's annual KFC Franchisee Summit.

Nishid's entrepreneurial journey has been a long one. He joined the corporate world and spent time in the insurance and micro loan space for a few years before deciding to pursue something different on his own. He resigned from his job without any concrete plans for what was next. While on a golf course, he met a business broker and started his KFC journey.

Nishid talks to *Your Business* about his entrepreneurial journey:

**Q** What prompted your move to leave the corporate world behind?

I have always had an entrepreneurial mindset. The exposure I received from growing up in a family that owned supermarkets steered me into the business world. I joined the corporate world and spent time in the insurance and banking space for a few years before deciding to pursue something different on my own.



“ You will surprise yourself when you make yourself uncomfortable. The bigger the dream, the more people will line up to support you. Trust your gut, your attitude is everything. ”

**Q** Why did you choose to become a franchisee as opposed to starting your own independent business?

The risk of starting my own business was higher than getting involved with a great brand like KFC. It allowed me to follow the entrepreneurial route but with less risk and a greater network to plug into.

**Q** What advice would you give to other potential franchisees who are looking for a franchise model to invest in?

Go with a reputable franchise, an established brand. Ensure the Franchisor is registered with FASA and follows ethical business practices. Do your homework.

**Q** What is your top advice for other business owners?

**Dream much bigger than your current constructs.**

You will surprise yourself when you make yourself uncomfortable. The bigger the dream, the more people will line up to support you, you will be surprised. Trust your gut, your attitude is everything. Just like when playing golf: look at the ball, hit the shot - visualisation is powerful.

**Good leadership is key and is all about serving your team and providing support.** The decision-making philosophy is important, any decision needs to be right for the business first, the team second and the individual third.

**To be a great leader, you need to be flexible and able to work and engage with different people.** Have your finger on the mood of the organisation and be aware of outside influences on the business. Empower your team and trust their abilities. Knowing when to lean in and when to step back has been one of the biggest learnings in running this business.

**Top advice, don't be scared to go big, the bigger the opportunity the more support you will get from outside stakeholders.**

Treat people with respect, and remember to create a fun environment for you and your team!

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# Lessons from your fellow entrepreneurs

## Building a sustainable construction company

Just over two years ago, SHERWYN ESBEND's office in North Coast Road was an empty space. Today it is a vibrant construction business that repairs properties on behalf of insurance companies.

But it has been a challenging journey. A few years ago, Esbend was so broke that he couldn't scrape together enough money to buy a loaf of bread. His wife Karen, who he says has been by his side throughout, dipped into her salary to help pay workers. Without a car, he relied on public transport and hired a bakkie to do jobs.

Having his wife's support has been one of his biggest assets, though. "If we face a hurdle, we only give ourselves one day to mope. After that, we look for solutions and pick ourselves up," he says.

Esbend's business philosophy of delivering quality



results and ensuring top notch service have stood him in good stead.

“ I tell people who want to go into business that the more they grow, the bigger the challenges they will face and the larger the potential problems will be. In the school of life, before you go to the next grade, you have to pass the test. Always keep your eye on that next level.”



## The storyteller

Simpiwe Pumani is passionate about telling stories through film - especially the unknown ones. "Did you know the Great Wall of Benin is four times longer than the Great Wall of China?" he asks. "Or that the kingdom of Mapungubwe mined and designed gold statues, and created bead work long before white colonists came to Africa?"

Simpiwe started Southern Power Media five years ago with the aim to inform, educate and entertain. His video production company specialises in film production, sound production, concept development, brand management, radio production and media auditing.

Simpiwe's mantra "If it is to be, it's up to me", has helped him through the most challenging times as a business owner. He wants to break stereotypes in the film industry and give young, aspiring filmmakers the skills to tell their own stories. This, he says, will improve the lives of the next generation.

## Shattering the glass ceiling

Lindiwe Mukhuba knows how to succeed in a man's world. She has been doing it for more than seven years running her own business, Alpha and Omega Financial Services, and even longer when she worked in the banking industry.



Alpha and Omega Financial Services is an authorized funeral service provider offering affordable, accredited funeral policies as well as administration tools, compliance solutions and training for customers.

Says Mukhuba, "Alpha and Omega is successful because being a black woman in a male-dominated industry gives me the edge," says Lindiwe. "Everything I do has a woman's touch: I work harder and smarter. My team is also extremely committed to driving the company's vision and values."

Mukhuba shares 6 lessons she learnt in business:

- **Lead by example**

Your team must know what's expected of them and as a leader you should in the field, getting your hands dirty so that your team can learn from you.

- **Follow your passion**

Your passion will drive you to meet your business goals. Without

passion, it's just a job.

- **Consistency**

It is crucial to be consistent in everything that goes into running the business: treating customers and staff fairly.

- **Integrity**

As a black business its paramount to maintain a high standard of service and because I am competing with major players like Hollard, Old Mutual and others, it is important to maintain a good reputation.

- **Be patient and never give up**

It might take time, but success will come remember that Rome was never built in a day.

I started my business in my spare bedroom. Today I have branches in Johannesburg and Polokwane, and I operate in the Free State as well.

- **Have faith that your business will succeed.**

My faith has helped motivate me and believe that everything will work out.

---

## Adding a human face to insurance

Yolande Van Niekerk is CEO of Ibiliti Underwriting Managers, an insurance agent founded in 2011 that offers tailored niche solutions such as excess covers, business policies and bus and coach cover.



Business always has a human component, because customers are human beings who have to be treated in a sensitive and compassionate manner." Despite the world-class systems, cloud technology, transparent and easy-access innovations for all parties in each transaction, Van Niekerk reiterates, "it is not about success but about improving lives. It is important to be human-centric, as all of us have a story and nobody is perfect. I also believe that no-one has been granted life on this planet without vast potential for significance. The possibilities to create new versions of ourselves are endless and every moment is a new beginning", says van Niekerk.





# 5 TIPS to create the perfect social media post

## Writing for social media sounds pretty straightforward right? How hard can it really be?

Those of you that have tried your hand at a post or two will probably have a knowing smile reading this... as it's not as simple as it seems.

It takes time and a certain amount of skill to craft copy and design images that people will actually read, let alone engage with. So here are five tips to get you started.

### ✓ Know your audience

A simple, yet effective technique is to create customer personas. What does each segment of your target audience think, feel, do and want to read? Where are they based and what are they doing right now? Create a story for each one and speak directly to them when creating your content. This will help you use the right tone and write in a relatable way.

**TIP:** Try to make your audience feel understood and included to build trust and brand loyalty.

### ✓ Pick the right platform

The list of platforms is constantly growing, but important ones to consider include Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram (don't forget about Instagram Stories), IGTV, YouTube, Pinterest and Twitter.

Before you dive in and spread yourself too thin, ask yourself two questions: what social media platforms are my customers most likely to use; and what makes sense

for my brand? Rather pick one or two and use them well, than a scattergun approach which isn't likely to have any impact.

For example, if you have a lifestyle brand with a library of beautiful imagery then Instagram and possibly Pinterest should be at the top of your list. If you're playing in the B2B space, then LinkedIn may be more appropriate.

Facebook and YouTube are relevant to most businesses – Facebook due to the sheer number of people that use it and the option to create really targeted adverts; and YouTube because video is a must-have in 2019. According to a recent article published on social media today, 86% of marketers use video content, and 93% of people say videos will be a priority in 2019.

**TIP:** Once you've decided on a platform or two, brush up on best practice. For example, hashtags shouldn't be used on Facebook, and there is an optimal image size for each platform.

### ✓ Tell a story

Don't just talk about products and special offers. Your customers want to know what your brand stands for, what happens behind the scenes and how you can add value to their lives (or solve a problem they may not yet even know exists).

To do this, you need to be clear on what your brand's voice, tone and story actually is, so take time to map this out as a team.

**TIP:** Your brand voice is the consistent, overarching message of what is being said and tone is the manner in which you are saying it. Tone is the emotion, attitude or mood that is most appropriate to a specific context and message. It must change to demonstrate empathy.



### ✓ Tag relevant people and brands

This point is short and sweet: if you mention a brand or person, make sure you include their username.

**TIP:** Identify micro-influencers and thought leaders that you can collaborate with and tag, as this lends credibility to your content and ensures it reaches a wider audience.

### ✓ Include an eye-catching image or GIF

What do you look at first – the image or the copy? My bet is on the image, so make sure yours stands out! Use your own photos where possible, rather than stock images, and try to create a consistent style to suit your brand.

**TIP:** Include your logo subtly in the corner of any image accompanying a post on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn (but not on Instagram). When it comes to text on an image – use it sparingly, and make sure it doesn't detract from the image itself.

Getting started is often the hardest part of any task, so my final tip is to get stuck in and learn along the way. There is a plethora of practical advice available online, and you'll soon figure out what works best for your brand.

Sources: <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/13-video-marketing-statistics-to-know-for-2019-infographic/545791/>

**TIP:** Include your logo subtly in the corner of any image accompanying a post on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn (but not on Instagram). When it comes to text on an image – use it sparingly, and make sure it doesn't detract from the image itself.

With her big picture thinking and ambitious ideas, Emma Donovan of Yellow Door Collective ensures that the business keeps growing without losing sight of their values. She sees to it that every campaign is strategically thought out and executed in the best way possible. Visit: [www.yellowdoorcollective.com](http://www.yellowdoorcollective.com).







# How to make your brand **stand out** on social media

Often times, small business owners fall into the trap of perceiving social media platforms as merely tools on which they can have their logo and company name appear, and hardly ever see the need to have it properly weaved into their integrated marketing strategy.

Social media should not be an after-thought but instead an essential component of overall marketing strategies to help businesses position their brands while maintaining strong online communities. In March 2019, I attended an Instagram workshop that was facilitated by Facebook Africa in partnership with Heavy Chef. The key takeout and a reflection point for me was that more work still needs to be done in empowering businesses to maximise the use of social media by taking advantage of the various functionalities of each platform that can be used to have people fall in love with your brand and ultimately generate leads and sales for your business. Here are a few tips on how you can make your brand stand out on social media.

■ **Use your offline platforms to create awareness and to inform both your existing customers and prospects of your soon to launch social media accounts.**

If you have a brick and mortar establishment, consider the installation of cues that will encourage your existing customers (some may already be your brand advocates) to authentically share their brand experience with their followers. The norm has become reaching out to one's followers and virtual friends when seeking product or service recommendations. When people are aware of your offering and your social media accounts, it becomes easy for them to tag your business account on the platform. I continue to witness small business owners generating new business leads and sales on online communities such as Brownsense.

■ **Gain consistency and get more people to discover your business through social media by branding your content.**

Make use of your logo and other brand elements such as sonic triggers that you might have already created and used in previous marketing campaigns.

■ **Select content pillars that will guide the type of content that you share on your business's social media accounts.**

Consider identifying your business' unique selling factors (USPs) that prospects are most likely to find valuable. For example, a restaurant owner may choose the presentation of the food on their menu, ambiance and special events as their content pillars. The selection of content pillars will also help trigger the need for you or your Social Media Manager to capture the moments that form part of the content pillars.

■ **Share valuable bite-sized, visual and engaging content.**

Invest time in crafting captions and resources in photographing or recording your content. Furthermore, conduct an audit of your social media content and make the effort to keep the aesthetics of the brand consistent at all touchpoints. Your customers ought to know what to expect from you as a business and as a brand.

■ **Avoid constantly sharing hard sales-focused content by compiling valuable content that is related to your product and service offering.**  
A brand such as Bathu; selling stylish sneakers and loafers may choose to share a time-lapse video in which we are shown a DIY process of cleaning a specific pair of sneakers (sensitive to the type of material of the shoes) using some ingredients from a typical kitchen cupboard.

■ **Be authentic in your brand communication at all times; ensure that your communication**

“The challenge comes due to the fact that most businesses focus on the description of the actual product instead of the value that we are selling to consumers through the product. If we could speak to the heart as brands, we can find simplified ways communicating our brand message.”

reflects your brand's character, personality, values and beliefs.

Stand for something. I recently read an article by one of my former CEOs Abey Mokgwatswane who is now the Managing Executive of Brand and Communications at Vodacom. He says: “Too often, we've been too responsive to the requirements of the product set vs focusing

on the brand story”. We are used to being elaborative especially when it comes to what our business is about. Traditionally, brands have had to put together their pride and joy; a whole company profile.

With the way in which people now consume content, it has become important to produce bite-size content although it is hardly ever easy. In my observation, the challenge comes due to the fact that most businesses focus on the description of the actual product instead of the value that we are selling to consumers through the product. If we could speak to the heart as brands, we can find simplified ways communicating our brand message.

While you work on implementing these tips, remember to ensure that what your words (marketing communication) match your actions by consistently delivering on your brand promise. With the growth and impact of social media on the way in which people consume content, word of mouth travels faster than ever before – let it be what your business is chasing.

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& Future Females Ambassador  
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Email: [info@amantle.co.za](mailto:info@amantle.co.za)  
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# Inspiring entrepreneurs, amplifying brands

**NADIA HEARN is a PR & Brand Marketing consultant and Founder of Get Published. She also hosts #OnTheFLIPSIDE on 2oceansvibe Radio, a show featuring fresh marketing insights by successful entrepreneurs and industry specialists. Her passion is to inspire and amplify local business brands to enable growth through building credibility.**

During a 16-year PR and marketing agency career where Hearn got to work on some of the largest brands in the world, she was lucky enough to gain a lot of insight on how much creative license there is in developing innovative marketing campaigns and how to do it.

However, after seeing many fresh and forward-thinking strategies get binned by corporates for being just 'too innovative' or 'too out of box', Hearn fell in love with the freedom, energy and 'madness' of entrepreneurs and started her first agency at the age of 25.

"Entrepreneurs take risks, they love new ideas and they are quick to take action. This was an instant magnet and a solution to never getting bored with work. I made the bold choice and restructured Get Published in 2015 to service the small to SME industries. With Get Published my quest is to inspire and grow businesses and their brands by acting as the conduit and link for them to reach, speak to and build real relationships with their ideal target customers. Each successful business adds to our local economy and offer employment opportunities", says Hearn.



## Q What keeps you motivated?

Focusing on our business purpose and helping our clients achieve their business objective and goals create an endless motivation for me and my team. We aim to be seen as a business partner, and to treat a clients' business as if it was our own. Clients are free to bounce business decisions and pretty much anything off our team for input.

I am passionate about business, and I believe that is what makes me passionate about my client's businesses; I don't just focus on the marketing. I look at the entire business and what it needs right now and how to support it. That said, we also set-up long-term strategies for each of our clients.

## Q How did you get your first client when launching your agency?

When restructuring my business to focus on SMEs, I found my first client from Facebook. I noticed her products on a friend's post and simply messaged her to tell her what I do for brands. Often even I forget the power of social media, and neglect using it in my business-

to-business agency to gain new clients. Since then I have found my two biggest clients on Facebook. That said, many of our business come from referrals through my business networks and word-of-mouth.

I've learnt not to focus on what we sell and offer, but to instead focus only on what the customer's needs are and helping them with that. This approach has brought massive success to my service orientated business model.

### **Q What's next for Nadia Hearn, as an entrepreneur?**

We are super excited to have just launched our new youth division get.Media, born out of our passion to make media, design and PR services available to start-ups under 18-months. We were also looking for a new model where we could take on and train media students. get.Media aims to solve two issues: Helping start-ups get out of the starting blocks and surviving their initial launch phase, and

creating work for South African youth creatives.

At networking events we constantly hear the frustration from small business start-ups who are feeling overwhelmed and hopeless about where to start and to get their brands up and known.

With get.Media we have partnered with other small businesses that have been through this themselves, and offer innovative, established and tested marketing tools and products. Combined with our expertise, we are now in the fortunate position to offer very reasonable affordable tools and services to start-ups. get.Media will offer start-ups media exposure, websites, logos, social media training, marketing & PR up-skill web-classes, design, visuals and most importantly cleverly designed plans and strategies.

For more information mail: [info@get-published.co.za](mailto:info@get-published.co.za) or visit [www.get-published.co.za](http://www.get-published.co.za).

## **HEARN'S TOP 3 BRANDING TIPS:**

### **TIP 1: Use the free tools available like social media and newsletters.**

Explore where your ideal customers are, which areas they live in, what their likes and dislikes are, and where they hang out.

Establish from here which social platforms are best for reaching these target audiences. (And no, you don't need to be on all the social media platforms.) Then start thinking about what matters to them and why they need your services before you start shooting out posts from the hip. What do you want to say and why? Then start writing. Always get one or more people to edit your writing before going live or sharing it.

Plan, invest time and effort to upskill yourself about how to use marketing and brand communications. You don't want your brand to come across as inferior against your competitors. No excuses about being overwhelmed or outsourcing it. As a business owner, you should know about marketing.

### **TIP 2: Understand that emotional branding is how you get people to buy from you, not because of what you sell, but why you are selling it.**

It's said that risk and emotions both play a 50/50 % part in any buyer making a choice to buy or not. Yet, when

looking at marketing content (text and visuals), we see that using emotionally toned content yield a 30% better result than content that was centred around risk.

Getting the message and emotional connection activated with your ideal client is the difference in having a view or a click/lead. Look at how you can emotionally speak and connect, and why the customer is looking to work with you or buy.

### **TIP 3: Be consistent in all marketing, branding and communications.**

This must be the oldest rule in the book of PR, branding and marketing, yet in today's instant culture this is often left on the backburner for newer, more exciting things. We are not saying stick to the same boring content, we are saying stick to the same themes of what the perception is that you want to create with your ideal customer.

Never stop communicating as it derails trust. Always re-fresh the angle of your message whilst keeping the message consistent. Understand your objectives with each activity before you start. What reaction do you want? What is the call-to-action. Ask yourself why they would respond and if your message is strong enough to get the desired outcome. Be realistic with your objectives.

# Brand building drives **customer loyalty**

Who would say no to landing a new customer in this economy? The answer is, nobody. We all want new customers, new sources of income, and new ways in which we can sustain our businesses, pay salaries and ensure growth.

There again, using conventional means, it costs up to five times as much to land a new client compared to retaining an existing one. In addition, when we consider that the probability of selling to an existing customer is 60% to 70%, while the probability of converting a new prospect is between 5% and 20% [1], it's clear that we need more focus on retaining customers and optimising their lifetime value to show real growth.

So, what is it that makes a customer stay with you and ignore competitors all vying for their attention? A lower price may work for commodity goods, but it is no guarantee of customer loyalty; in fact, competing on price is almost a guarantee that your customer will go elsewhere as soon as the opportunity to save money arises.

The answer lies in your brand. When customers buy into your brand, they are far more likely to stay. This is because a well-defined brand addresses all points of value, not just price and quality. It also focuses on how customers experience the brand and the potential emotional connections that can be created.

Research shows that 89% of companies see customer experience as a key factor in boosting customer loyalty and retention. Moreover, Gartner found that companies that prioritise customer experience generate 60% higher profits than their competitors. The same study says that 80% of your future profits will come from just 20% of your existing customers [2].



A consistent and distinctive customer experience is often heavily reliant on interpersonal interactions with employees. Therefore, ensuring that your brand culture aligns with your customers' experience of the brand is critical. This relates back to the full brand lifecycle: your brand culture impacts and energises your employees, who in turn impact and energise your customers, who become brand ambassadors without even thinking about what they are doing because of the holistic brand culture they are invested in.

When your customer experience and brand culture are aligned, you improve your ability to win customer loyalty with intangibles that can't be copied or easily beaten by lower pricing.

When you consider that an increased customer retention rate of only 5% can boost your profitability by anywhere from 25% up to 90% [3], customer loyalty becomes a critical aspect of a successful business and the ultimate goal of your brand engineering. And customer loyalty can't be bought or manufactured, it is only obtained through a consistent, authentic and believable brand culture that stands for and represents the values and ideals your customers hold dear.

---

Brand enthusiasts are welcome to follow Kyle Rolfe's latest thoughts on brand building in South Africa and his analysis on relevant global trends and issues via Twitter @kylerolfeSA or on LinkedIn at [linkedin.com/in/kyle-rolfe-brand-engineer](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kyle-rolfe-brand-engineer).





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- Lowest Royalties in the industry @ 3%
- Initial deposit R65 000 ex Vat

Apart from rapid growth throughout South Africa, the 3@1 is expanding in Namibia, Zambia, Botswana and Uganda.

"The group is well positioned for expansion across Africa, and our next 3@1 Business Centre franchise will be opening shortly in Lusaka, Zambia", says Franchise Director Belinda Dunn.

**Prospective franchises are encouraged to download an info pack at [www.3at1.co.za](http://www.3at1.co.za), email [enquiries@3at1.co.za](mailto:enquiries@3at1.co.za) or call 0861 359 834 for more information.**





## Health Island

Unique opportunity to start your own vending business!



Health Island is the ONLY vending company in South Africa specialising in HEALTHY snacks and drinks in South Africa. It was founded in Cape

Town in July 2010 by Philip Rubin as a result of his passion for health and nutrition.

This winning concept is growing in demand and offers a wide range of affordable, nutritious and flavoursome health products.

If you are looking for a business opportunity with exceptional return on your investment then this could be the opportunity for you!

Health Island currently has 8 franchisees, 70 sites across South Africa and 15 000 product sales per month.

Locations available in Gauteng include Edenvale, Sandton and Midrand, as well as Diep River in the Western Cape or you are welcome to identify your own potential site in an area close to you.

Vending machines take 30-40 unique products and all machines are refrigerated with 6-8 different drinks. Full training, support and assistance are included in the franchise cost.

Ideal franchisees should have good health, a passion for nutrition and health and be willing to offer a good service. Basic computer skills and some basic admin skills are beneficial.

To learn more about this unique vending opportunity that is fun and highly measurable, please email Phil at [info@healthisland.co.za](mailto:info@healthisland.co.za). Visit [www.healthisland.co.za](http://www.healthisland.co.za) or [www.facebook.com/healthislandsa](https://www.facebook.com/healthislandsa).



# Opportunity to Start Your Own Vending Business

## Why Health Island?

- Your own highly affordable start-up business
- Exceptional return on investment
- We are the ONLY vending company in SA specialising in HEALTHY snacks and drinks
- 8 Franchisees, 70 sites, 15000 product sales per month
- We operate nationally
- Many corporates subsidise the service, assuring you of better profitability
- Be part of the global awareness of health and nutrition
- Identify your own potential sites

## Locations Available

- **Gauteng:** Edenvale, Sandton, Midrand
- **Western Cape:** Diep River

## What our customers say

*"Thank you for your really great products – it's my saving grace on campus, because I really like to munch and it keeps me from grabbing junk!!"*  
- Tasneem, UCT



Enquire today: [info@healthisland.co.za](mailto:info@healthisland.co.za)  
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# Snap-on to this great opportunity

Invest in a brand that's renowned for delivering personalised, professional service...right at the customer's place of work.



Snap-on Incorporated is a leading global innovator, manufacturer and marketer of tools, diagnostic and equipment solutions for professional tool users. Since 1920, when Snap-on first developed the interchangeable socket wrench, the name "Snap-on" has been recognised as the leader in providing the finest quality tools and equipment for the professional technician. Snap-on first entered the international arena in 1931 and today has a presence in over 130 countries around the globe.

During this time, Snap-on pioneered and perfected the idea of direct sales to technicians, right at their place of business, while providing credit programmes so they could purchase the tools that would build their business. The company still does that today, and as a leading marketer of tool and equipment solutions, Snap-on provides aspiring business owners with an opportunity to partner with a financially strong company with an outstanding reputation for quality, service and innovation. If you are

seriously considering an investment in a business, give yourself the benefit of starting with an established industry leader, and join the over 4500 dealers worldwide that represent the Snap-on brand of high-quality merchandise.

## What's on offer

Snap-on dealers are offered the opportunity to purchase high-quality tools manufactured and distributed by Snap-on at a discount from suggested retail prices, and to re-sell those products at recommended prices. Dealers call on their customers each week within an allocated territory, which include a wide variety of businesses such as auto dealerships, independent repair shops, auto-electricians, body shops and others. Dealers need to have a suitable van (approved by Snap-on Africa) with the Snap-on designed tool display area to encourage impulse buying. This "Showroom on wheels" also allows you to take products right to your customer's place of business and deliver that personalised, professional service associated with the Snap-on

brand. A successful Snap-on dealership requires hard work, planning and the development of personal relationships with customers. As a Snap-on dealer, you will enjoy a professional and respected position in the tool industry with good income potential.

## Support to succeed

One of the most important steps in getting a new business off to a good start is training. After a rigorous week in the classroom learning the basics of the business, new dealers will be assigned a Sales Development Manager (SDM) and a Diagnostic Sales Developer (DSD). The SDM or DSD accompanies dealers on their route for an initial period of two to three weeks, to assist with training in the day-to-day aspects of the business. During this in-territory training period the SDM or DSD covers sales training, product knowledge, van display, credit programme management, policies and procedures and record keeping.

The good news is that the training doesn't stop there; the SDM &/or DSD continue with on-going support, holding regular Field Group Meetings to discuss all aspects of the business; including new initiatives, promotional



programmes, and developing product knowledge.

## Getting the word out

Snap-on spends thousands of Rands each year to promote Snap-on products and the Snap-on brand through sales and marketing campaigns. However, unlike many companies that charge their dealers an additional fee for advertising, Snap-on provides advertising and promotions as part of its service. Some of the promotional arenas that the Snap-on marketing department is involved in includes media and trade publications, sales contests and promotions, promotional products, weekly promotions backed up by electronic marketing material & printed summaries of items on promotion once a month. These are all designed to help dealers grow their business; with Head Office realising that their own success as a company depends on the success of its dealers.

A strategically planned DEMO VAN programme exists currently, and is available to participating Dealers to show case other Snap-on product to their customers that they wouldn't ordinarily have available in their own stock holding. Take a virtual tour of the current demo van by visiting [www.snapon.co.za/Content/Virtual\\_Tour/](http://www.snapon.co.za/Content/Virtual_Tour/). Dealers have the opportunity to invite their customers to regular

seminars to learn from experts in the field of Diagnostics & to expose their customers to the latest range of Snap-on Diagnostic & similar equipment. The investment cost of a Snap-on dealership depends on one's circumstances and there are a few options available. However, the minimum amount of cash available to invest must be no less than R150 000. Applicants must also have their own panel vans. A Sales Development Manager (SDM) will explain costs, panel van preferences, and options available at an initial meeting.

Buying a business is a serious undertaking and a decision that must not be rushed. That is why Snap-on makes no excuses for having a lengthy application programme that not only includes a number of meetings, but also a minimum of three days spent with existing dealers in their territories. With many unique features that sets it apart from other opportunities on the market (including being an established company with a comprehensive product line, on-going training and assistance, financing and credit assistance programmes), a Snap-on mobile dealership is well worth investigating.

## What type of person does this business suit?

Like all owner-operated businesses, it requires a highly motivated individual to

make a success of this opportunity, and although a person who is technically savvy, with sales experience could be better suited to this business, this is by no means a pre-requisite. Support in the form of a family member to assist with the everyday running of the business, and perhaps the book-keeping & reporting side would also be an advantage.

## What expansion opportunities are available?

The owner of a successfully run Snap-on dealership can apply for a second territory. This is quite common in other countries where the dealership is well established. It is not uncommon for the original business owner to have invested in a second territory for a family member or sibling. This option would need to be considered very carefully and in collaboration & with final approval by Snap-on management.

Contact The Business Manager on 031 569 7637, email: [biz@snapon.co.za](mailto:biz@snapon.co.za), visit: [www.snapon.co.za](http://www.snapon.co.za) for more information.



# Managing your suppliers

**Every business has the problem that clients want to take their time to pay you, but suppliers want you to pay them as soon as possible.**

So, what happens is that a poorly managed cash turnover cycle causes you to fall into a negative cash cycle, meaning you are giving money away before receiving money from your customers.

In the previous edition of *Your Business* I wrote about debtor management, which is part one of a three-part series around managing your cash turnover cycle. This article will cover the second part, namely managing your suppliers.

Supplier management consists of many parts but due to your time constraints as an entrepreneur there are two aspects that you need to focus on:

1. Price negotiations
2. Supplier payment management

## Price negotiations

The reality is that any you cannot deliver

products or services to your customers without purchasing goods or services from suppliers. Who is a supplier? That will be anyone who you pay for goods or services during the year to enable you to deliver your service.

Suppliers can be further separated into two categories, namely: Cost of sales and overheads.

Your goal with overheads is to reduce them over a period of a year. The questions you need to ask yourself is: Where I can obtain this service and pay as reasonable price over a period of a year. You generally don't correspond with these suppliers on a monthly basis and only tend to contact them when there is a problem with the service agreement you have set in place. Examples are: Internet, telephone, electricity.

Cost of sale suppliers (COSS) provide the direct materials or services that enable you to provide your product or services to your customers. For example: If you manufacture clothing your COSS will be those suppliers that provide you with material, buttons, zips, etc. If you are a plumber your COSS





“ Remember the goal is to reduce the cash turnover cycle as much as possible as you want to be in a position where you receive money first, have it in your account for a period of time to earn interest and then pay your suppliers. ”

will be your providers of geysers, pipes, etc. You tend to correspond with them on a regular basis and they are also where you spend the most of your money during a year. Your goal with price negotiations is to improve one or more of the following indicators:

1. Price per item;
2. Delivery time;
3. Payment terms;
4. Reorder quantities.

You, like most people have likely tried to find a better price by shopping around for goods or services and this has led to you purchasing goods from different suppliers. For example, a restaurant owner who purchases their dry goods from different suppliers scattered all over the city.

Your negotiating power is realized when you combine all your purchases and discuss your “grocery list” with each of your suppliers to find out what their best price will be for the goods that you need and enter into conversations with each of them to find out where they are willing to make concessions.

### Supplier payment management

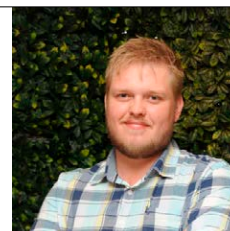
As mentioned earlier your problem is that your suppliers

want their money today, and your customers want to pay you next month. The reality of your business is that you have more bargaining power than you realize.

As business owner you constantly need to renegotiate payment terms with your suppliers as you improve your working relationship and prove that you are a reliable payer. You also need to ensure that you negotiate for early settlement discount as this is another way that you can lower your COGS. Then you need to ensure that you pay your suppliers within the payment terms allowed.

Remember the goal is to reduce the cash turnover cycle as much as possible as you want to be in a position where you receive money first, have it in your account for a period of time and earn interest and then pay your suppliers.

Frans van Eden, AGA (SA) is MD of Prioritise, specialising in tax planning, insurance, financial advice, accounting and corporate structuring. Email [frans@prioritise.co.za](mailto:frans@prioritise.co.za) to find out more about using your cash turnover cycle to improve the cashflow .  
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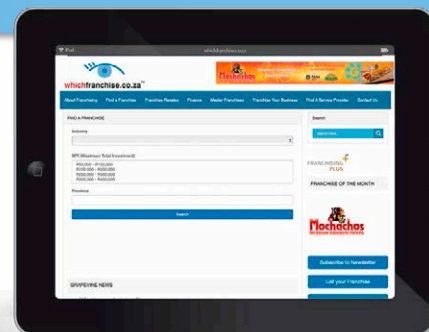


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# There will be admin...



## Tips to help you spend less time on business administration and more time on improving and growing your business.

It is said that there are two things that you can be sure of in life: “things will change” and “you will die.” I’d like to add a third and that is “there will be admin.”

This is no truer than in business, especially when starting out and if you not a ‘natural’ admin person – it can frustrate you like nothing else ever will.

Unfortunately there is nothing to be done but to put your head down and just get on with it. Some of the more gruelling stuff like getting the business registered with CIPC, SARS, DoL etc., should be outsourced. But you will still have to complete some of the documentation for the person or organization and believe me, there is a huge amount of leg work involved.

Once this is done and dusted, the daily type admin must be done. The raising of quotes or invoices, e-mails and social media, accounting and other type of financial requirements and of course the ordering, receiving and despatching of goods, stock maintenance and control, receipting of funds and credit notes and so on.

Clearly to get on top of it and stay on top, it is essential if you are to run and manage your business effectively and efficiently.

*Let’s break it down:*

### ■ Company books and financial related admin

If you are not a qualified Bookkeeper or Accountant, either outsource this function or employ someone who is suitably qualified.

Please understand that irrespective of whether you outsource this or employ in-house there is still a fair amount of admin that you will need to do as it is not a good idea to relinquish total control over your bank account. You should still be doing the releasing of funds yourself as you start out.

### ■ Great teams

Getting the right team in place will also ensure that your time is freed up, so that you can focus on improving and growing the business.

Remember that it is far better to match the individual to the job and not the job to the person! Trying to fit the job to the person is like trying to fit a 3 prong round plug into a two prong square hole. It will cause endless frustration and irritation. Rather find the right person for

the job. It might cost you more up front but it will save you a huge amount in the long run.

### ■ Automate

Where you can, automate. Let the computer or the system “remember” the tasks for you and then also “check” to see that they are done. It will hold your staff accountable and ‘see’ where everyone is in the process, whilst giving your valuable information on prospective clients and repeat customers. A great CRM will also measure the customer’s experience and keep their information up to date, by prompting them to update the their own information. Who better to update client information than the customer themselves who ‘know’ all their own information?

The great thing about automation is that where there was once only paid software there are now free ‘open-source’ applications that can save you money and give you peace of mind. Your only outlay is the time that you take to find the one that is the best fit for your particular and specific requirements.

### ■ Dreamtime

Always allow yourself some ‘dream’ time in order to quietly think about what is best for your business, yourself, your customers and your employees. Give yourself the time and the peace and quiet to think things through and decide on the best solution for you and your business.

Finally, whatever you decide to do, remember to keep it simple. Richard Branson says “Complexity is your enemy. Any fool can make something complicated. It is hard to make something simple.”

Once you have your action plan in place make sure you execute it with realistic execution dates and reward those who accomplish their tasks efficiently and on time.

The easiest way to succeed is to dream, then plan, then action and then measure. Then adjust and measure again. Repeat until you achieve success.

Good luck!

Nikki is an Internal Auditor and Business Administration Specialist who can be contacted on 083 702 8849 or [nikki@viljoenconsulting.co.za](mailto:nikki@viljoenconsulting.co.za) or [www.viljoenconsulting.co.za](http://www.viljoenconsulting.co.za) for any policies and procedures that you may require.



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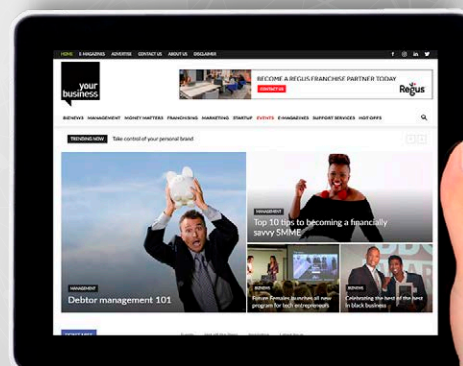
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# Conventional sales training is dead...

## So, what's the alternative?

As a specialist sales training company for over 24 years, we know how sales training traditionally works and why it continues to fall short of expectations and fail in the improving of sales results.

Usually it begins with an enquiry from a Sales Executive along these lines, "My salespeople are not hitting targets and not closing enough deals – can you teach them those skills?" Sure of course we can, that's our business.

We conduct our normal training course, the client is happy and we get paid. It's a win-win on the surface. Scratch deeper and you'll discover some unpleasant facts, like:

- Within 3 months 87% of the training is forgotten
- Without continuous practice trainees relapse into old behaviours fast
- The comfort zone is hard to shake and trainees prefer to stay where they are

Training in the conventional sense is done by 'saturation', which means that people take a few days out of the office to receive training. This is not the way people optimally learn. By the end of day 1, they need time to practice the skills learned and when day 2 ends, they are suffering from a severe attack of 'information overload'. Has any learning 'transfer' really happened? The reality we now know is "No". Hardly a win-win for anyone!

We figured out some years back that traditional training does not last and the ROI is poor. When one looks at some research the facts speak for themselves.

Here's what *Sales Performance International* say: "Most expenditures are made with good intentions, but largely wasted. Our research indicates that approximately 50% of the learning content is not retained within five weeks. This indicates that something is seriously broken in the traditional sales training model".

We actively set about finding a new training methodology to address the pitfalls in conventional training and conducted an international search to find an alternative. Finally, we discovered a learning model called 'Peer-to-peer sales learning' that addressed our concerns about the problems with traditional training.



## What is Peer-to-peer learning?

Peer-to-peer learning is the process of sales reps helping each other solve problems. These problems can range from broad sales skills such as “how to close this deal” to very specific sales process issues such as “getting my customer off credit hold.” This system places the responsibility of training and learning firmly onto the shoulders of the learners. After all, these are the people we rely on to keep the company thriving and growing.

## How do you start peer Learning?

Sales reps are asked to brainstorm a list of sales challenges that are impeding the growth of the company and after a healthy, and often heated debate the group draws up an annual time table that stipulates the sales topic for the month and the trainer who will present that lesson.

This is pure democracy at work. We treat the group as adults and they have total freedom of choice when it comes to the design of their timetable. This ensures that participants really “buy-in” to the program from the very start. Essentially, they are taking on the responsibility of addressing the sales challenges their company is facing.

To ensure meaningful outcomes are achieved, these peer-2-peer sales sessions follow a strict set of guidelines and a formal lesson plan.

## During the monthly peer meeting

The appointed trainer introduces the new sales topic and is responsible for guiding the discussions, getting everyone involved and leading the group towards clear outcomes. Naturally every team member needs time to research and prepare for their lesson. We are stunned by the content and quality of materials created by these sales reps - don't forget technology is a friend to the millennials.

Before the meeting concludes, participants are asked to commit to an action plan that conforms to **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.**

These action plans are the focal point when the group formally re-assembles the next month because these individual commitments are carefully scrutinised by the salespeople and discussions ensue on what was achieved and what not. This monthly meeting only lasts for 2 hours. In today's world where hectic schedules predominate doesn't it make sense to learn in smaller 'increments' that are easy to digest?

All of this is achieved without the sales manager being present. Sales reps start to take on the responsibility of learning for themselves and “peer pressure” builds up.

## Why does peer Learning Work?

Sales skills are re-enforced and statistics show 97% of the learning is retained into the long term. This retention is not by accident; it occurs through constant repetition and practise. Ask any sports pro about the importance of continuous practice – it's what creates their success. Peers get to see so much of each other, either at work or in the field, so who better to coach them than their peers? As peers swap real world experiences relevant learning takes root and sales reps become natural peer coaches. It's wonderful to witness this transformation. Historically, the manager is blamed when performance does not improve. Now it is easier and more beneficial for learners when they hold each other accountable and responsible. This concept of peer-2-peer sales learning is new, fresh and suits the times we live in. The very essence of this learning is collaborative learning and who better to learn from, than your peers.

## Summary

Good news for those companies that have made an investment in traditional sales training ... all is not lost. Linking the acquired sales lessons to the peer-to-peer learning agenda will encourage ongoing learning, enhance retention and guarantee sustainability. Stay clear of out of the box, generic packages. Today's learners are mainly Generation X and Y and we must be aware of their learning styles that are totally different to the previous generation of learners.

Finally, we are not recommending you should do away with customised and formal sales Training as it still plays an important role. Just be sure that a sustainability model is bolted onto conventional training. This is the safe and wise choice as it gives your salespeople an opportunity to grow and excel in the company of their peers.

Clive is Managing Director of The Peer Group in South Africa. He has personally trained over 150 000 delegates in improving their sales competencies in 8 countries. He specialises in these areas: Motivational Sales Speaker, a Writer and an Executive Coach.  
[clive@mypeergroup.com](mailto:clive@mypeergroup.com)



# 3 Things social entrepreneurs do differently

**According to the Gordon Institute of Business, social entrepreneurship in South Africa can be defined as “a blend of the for-profit and not-for-profit approaches, which balances the value and trust of social organisations with the efficiencies and profit motives of business.”**

This hybrid business model has seen a rise in the last decade due to rampant social challenges as a consequence of our complicated history; the aftermath of which is characterised by large scale poverty, poor education, high income inequality and unemployment.

TRACEY GILMORE, Co-founder of The Clothing Bank, highlights the characteristics required to succeed in this sector.

## SOUL OF A CHARITY, MIND OF A CORPORATE

The driving force of social enterprise is to contribute to alleviating social ills. To do this, funding is required. The “for profit model” ensures sustainability to continue making an impact.

The successful social entrepreneur is powered by purpose and a single, specific and defined goal which guides decision making and actions. This goal prioritizes changing lives for the better over personal gain. Social entrepreneurship is an emotional, raw and honest journey requiring continuous reflection and big picture thinking.

At the same time, these types of

entrepreneurs are disciplined, strategic and indefatigable business people with their eye on governance, accountability and measurement.

## SUSTAIN THE HELPING HAND

A prosperous social enterprise applies corporate best practice to strategic and operational activities. You need a strong business plan, vision, skilled staff, precise financial management and governance compliance to build an enterprise which elicits trust and remains viable. All these resources and processes, in most cases, may not be readily accessible at the start of the enterprise. Start anyway but make these a key development focus in forward planning.

Measurement and evaluation are of paramount importance; differing from corporates and charities in that profit and social impact carry equal weight as benchmarks of success. Efficient data gathering, and analysis are key in these endeavors.

“At the Clothing Bank, for example, our goal is to empower women with the skills and opportunities to run their own businesses to ultimately eradicate poverty in their families. Besides the standard profit metrics, our social impact monitoring tools include detailed assessments at the start of our program participants’ journey with us; specifically, their physical (health and environment),



Tracey Gilmore

emotional and financial position. Assessments are performed at set stages of the program and progress measured against previous assessments”, says Gilmore.

## KEEP IT MOVING

Thoroughbred social entrepreneurs are tenacious and stubborn in purpose through hardships, disappointments and the emotional toils this industry presents; most often through sheer force of will. They are excellent communicators with a high EQ to solicit buy in and support for their vision from investors, staff and the very people they are trying to assist. Their authenticity inspires hope and motivation; focusing stakeholders’ attention on the end goal despite challenges.

While structured and disciplined in approach, they are open-minded, absorbing new learnings and flexible in adapting course accordingly.

As the Clothing Bank, we are excited about and inspired by the increasing numbers of brave and determined individuals joining this sector. The more of us there are making an impactful, sustainable difference, the greater a society we will become.





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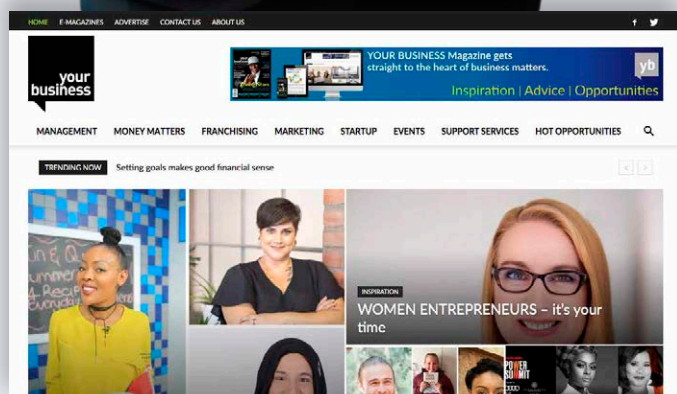
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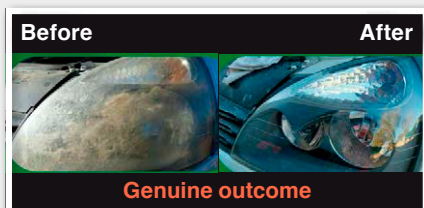
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