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5 Personal Problems Preventing Your Business From Prospering

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**May 10, 2011 -**

When a company struggles, sometimes there's an obvious, business-related reason, such as a poor economy or a new technology that has made a key product obsolete.

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But sometimes, the roots of the problem lie outside of the office. You don't have to be in the middle of a messy divorce or family illness for personal challenges to affect your focus on your business. Resolving these five common problems should have a big positive effect on your business, according to business coaches.

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Lack of support from loved ones

It can be tough to grow a business if the key players in your life would prefer that you get a traditional job instead. Before you demonize these naysayers, consider whether you're becoming an entrepreneur has hurt them or is putting them under financial pressures they don't want. "It doesn't mean they're not good people," says Julie Melillo, a business and life coach in New York City. "If it affects them in a bad way, they might not be supportive."

The remedy? Have an honest conversation with the doubters in your life about their concerns, and make sure you're both on board and feeling good about your moving forward with the business, she recommends. Be prepared. You may need to take certain actions—like getting a side job—to put any legitimate concerns to rest.

A confidence deficit

"We tend to see ourselves a certain way," says Melillo. For instance, you may view yourself as someone whose business earns \$100,000 a year, not \$1 million—and therefore talk yourself out of the steps it would take to grow the business to its full potential as a result. "Whenever you take a step in a new direction, it changes your self concept," she says. In reality, she says, "You're not changing who you are as a person." When you find yourself backing away from ambitious goals because they're intimidating, remind yourself that if you achieve them, you won't be losing yourself, you'll be growing, she recommends.

Oversensitivity to rejection

No entrepreneur likes hearing the word "no," but you won't be able to stay in business if getting the brush-off sends you spiraling into depression to the point that you stop going after additional work.

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If you're delivering a sales pitch, says Melillo, "detaching from the outcome is very important." Remind yourself that sometimes customer rejections spring from arbitrary factors that have nothing to do with you. Also familiarize yourself with common response rates to sales and marketing campaigns in your industry. Sending out 50 direct mail pitches and hearing from one may be a good outcome in your field—but if you're not aware of this, you could be beating yourself up for no reason.

In cases where a rejection has really stung you, it sometimes helps to dig beneath the surface. "What's the message?" Melillo suggests asking. In some cases, a rejection may be telling you that you need to fine-tune your sales methods.

Lack of preparation

“If you plunged into running a company without basic business skills or without finding a way to manage problems with issues like anger management or personal disorganization first, you’re likely to find these factors working against you as the business grows,” says Deborah Brown, Ph.D, a business coach in Deerfield Beach, Florida. The remedy? Get expert or professional advice or help now, so these challenges don’t continue to sap your performance as a CEO.

A poor online reputation

“Celebrities are starting to pay attention to their online reputation,” says Dr. Brown. “I think small business owners would be wise to do the same thing.” If there’s material floating around in cyberspace that might negatively influence customers who Google you—even, say, an article about a namesake who has gotten in legal trouble—it may be worthwhile to hire a company that specializes in cleaning up your online presence. You probably can’t purge the offending material from search engines, but an expert can help to push it lower down in the results pages.

As a business owner, you have to live with many factors you can’t control, from high fuel prices to difficult customers. Why continue to live with obstacles you can tackle with a bit of effort?

Tags: *entrepreneur, communication, lifestyle, wise bread, personal problems, elaine pofeldt, julie melillo*

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