

# **Success Strategies Guide**

# **10**

## **Keys To Success For Small Business Owners**

Dear Small Business Owner:

Are you facing the same frustrating business issues day in and day out? Is creating an action plan for your business still on your to do list? Are you working harder and harder every day with no increase in your bottom line? Do you look back at the end of the day and wonder where it went? Has your dream business turned into a job you hate?



How do you stop this vicious cycle?

Perhaps you've been thinking about those tough business issues and maybe you've even identified a course of action, but you just can't seem to get started.

It's common for small business owners to run into obstacles that make optimal business performance difficult to achieve. And small business owners are the best at procrastinating about changes because they think things will get better.

The Reality?

Things won't get better until you make a focused effort to cause it to happen. These 10 Keys to Success are universal. Whether you have a business of one, ten or one hundred, they can help you have the business you hoped for when that entrepreneurial spark was first lit in your life.

To Your Success!  
(With time left to enjoy it!)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise O'Berry". The script is fluid and cursive.

Denise O'Berry  
Small Business Expert  
[www.whatspossible.com](http://www.whatspossible.com)

# **1 Identify Your Vision For The Future**

Where will your business be when it's done? Deciding now what that looks like will help you map your strategy. Be specific. Identify when it will happen and what it will look like. Create a visual picture with words. If you can't articulate what your success looks like, how do you expect to get there? Do you want to have ten locations with each providing five million in revenue? More? Less? Is your business local, national, or international? What does the corporate structure look like? How many employees do you have? Taking steps now to document your vision (in words or pictures) will help you get there faster.

# **2 Document Your Business Processes**

How will work get done in your organization? Who hands off what to whom? Identify your inputs, actions and outputs for each process in your company. Identify how all of your processes fit together to make up your business systems. Create a system for quality control. You can't run a business that's all in your head. As your business changes, it will become more difficult – and overwhelming – to accomplish this task. Do it one step at a time and it will be a piece of cake.

# **3 Make Your Business "Process, Not People" Dependent**

People can come and people can go and your processes will work effectively as long as you have key inputs, actions and outputs documented. This helps your business run smoothly along no matter who is at the helm. Create your processes and identify their dependencies within your business system. Teach your people to run the system. This makes you less vulnerable to major personnel changes in your business. Transitioning to new staff will be like crossing speed bumps rather than mountains.

## **4 Define Company Roles And Procedures**

Who will do what? When? Job descriptions are useful, but they don't go far enough. Identify every role in your company from telephone greeter to bathroom cleaner. Develop procedures that identify when these roles are required to take action and how it is accomplished.

## **5 Measure Your Success**

Identify key indicators for the success of your company. Don't be dependent on financial reports that can often lag behind. Two to five key metrics can be instrumental in helping you watch the ebb and flow of your business. You might want a metric such as 2 defects per 1000 items shipped or 3 returns per 500 customer orders. You'll have to decide what the key indicators are for your company.

## **6 Practice Open Book Management**

Inform your employees of your goals, your hopes and your dreams. Involve them in creating the success of your company. Tell them how it's going. Let them know how their piece of the pie fits into the whole. Listen to their feedback.

## **7 Continuously Improve**

The best companies are continuously improving the way things get done. Just because you've always done something a certain way doesn't mean it's the best way to do it. It could be costing you money. Build assessment of your business systems, processes and procedures into your yearly plans. Identify areas for improvement, create action plans and implement.

## 8 Practice Open Communication

Communicate, communicate, communicate. When you think you've communicated enough, do it again. Use several different channels to inform the people in your company. Company newsletter, town meetings, bulletin boards and plain old chat sessions are just a few. Do more listening than talking. Your employees have their fingers on the pulse of activity in your company. Help them help you.

## 9 Establish And Track Your Goals

Goals are your road map to success. Make them manageable. Celebrate success along the way. Do a regular check and balance to ensure that your goals are keeping you on track with your business vision. Use the SMART method. Make sure your goals are specific, **m** measurable, **a** attainable, **r** relevant and **t** trackable with a deadline. Create an action plan and follow the steps you've defined.

## 10 Value Your Customers

Never forget that customers are the lifeblood of your business. Without customers, you have no business. Educate your staff on the priceless value of your customers. Create processes to manage your customer relationships. Survey your customers to get their feedback. Most importantly, listen to what your customers have to say.

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Take just one hour per day and spend it on these ten strategies for your business. Soon you will discover you have the business of your dreams and a life you want to live!

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[www.whatspossible.com](http://www.whatspossible.com)