

Connecting Entrepreneurs, Philanthropists and Influencers.

BUSINESS

BOOSTER TODAY MAGAZINE

THE #1 GERMANY BASED MAGAZINE FOR THE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEUR

VERONICA TAN

&

RICHARD TAN

THE LEADING
PROMOTERS



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FOUNDERS CORNER

Business never sleeps! And the big 5 of success are branding, building relationships, marketing, negotiation and sales.

By Sue Baumgärtner-Bartsch & Christian Bartsch

The fall is the time when business people look towards the last 3 months of the year and to take action to reach their goals. If you are starting out as an entrepreneur, you have to build your brand first.

People who have been successful in business understand why branding is important. Branding helps you get noticed, so you stand out from the crowd. Whether you are a speaker, coach, investor, or authority in your niche area, it does not matter who you know. What matters is who knows you.

In September, we attended an amazing business event in Munich Germany with entrepreneurs from all around the world. During that event, we connected with people we knew and deepened our relationships, and we built new ones. We spoke to 150+ people about the power of branding

and building your credibility to become a game changer.

Once you are branded, you gain higher credibility and people seek out you to do business with. It is much easier to build valuable relationships. Business is foremost about having the right resources, the right people in the right position on board to success. People do business with people they like and trust! Don't be a "know-it-all" person, but instead keep growing and learning every day. That is what we do too. We learn, grow, adapt and change to become better and to provide even better services, coaching and opportunities to our

clients.

Investing in coaching is important, because it is the shortcut to success in whatever you do. And then it is all about your follow up and follow through in business. IF you don't do your part, you cannot succeed. You need to work on your sales, your marketing and negotiation skills to win the deal and expand into new territories and grow.

For us founders of this magazine, it is an amazing experience to connect with driven entrepreneurs from around the world and building not only relationships but helping them to become branded by being in a global magazine and getting their story or event into the press. ↗

YES, YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL

... and you are NOT a Superwomen!

By Christine Nielsen

After coaching and working as a woman in business, as an Entrepreneur (CEO), Senior Partner, and COO as well as a mother, I have come to understand one fundamental principle. Yes, you can have it all, and you do not have to suffer "Superwoman" syndrome.

"Women in business, have to work harder than ever, it doesn't matter if you are in corporate business or you run your own company. We will always work harder. We are designed for it. We are inherently designed to hold it all. Our brains are wired that way."

Women's brains, are interconnected to understand how emotions drive behaviours which ultimately impact the actions and results that our businesses will have. This is what makes us incredible business women, and at the same time can drive us mad. We think about everything, all of the time. As the mother of 3 children I have had to adapt, and innovate not only my business life and pathway several times, but my parenting style as well.

When my older two children were younger, I worked as a senior consultant for a large consulting firm, and coached executives of large corporations. My eldest son used to say that Mommy takes the plane to work, and Daddy takes the subway. We used to laugh at this. There was however, a harsh reality to it. I would leave Monday mornings, and fly home Thursday evenings. I would work in different cities' and travel every week. As a business woman, it made me incredibly effective being

on the road and free from the distractions of managing my family. How I made those times work is by having great systems in place, the right caregivers, community of other women, and the right programs to support having it all. So many of us think we have to do it alone. Many of us suffer from this unrealistic notion of being a perfect mom, partner, business leader. Let that notion go, or you will soon find yourself medicated, depressed, burnt out or resentful. We are not superwoman, nor do we want to be!

I have found the following things very helpful to navigate the world powerfully yet, with grace and ease.

The Key's to Having it all:

- There is no such thing as Perfection! Let go of your false notions of how things should look, the house, the kids, the bank account, your body, your hair. Most of those things are false sets of expectations we put on ourselves that we inherited from our youth and from the past. They are irrelevant. Be Happy with who you are right now. Today.

- Don't compare yourself to anyone else! Be the best version of you that you can be, without compromise and sacrifice.

- You need strong powerful women in your life: There will be days that you are winning, and there will be days that you feel like you are drowning. On the days you feel like you are drowning, call a friend who lifts you up. Lose all friends that do you harm or judge you.



- Have amazing support structures in place so you can be the best version of yourself. Hire the right people to do things you shouldn't be doing. Outsource or automate things like groceries, laundry, cleaning. Have a great childcare system in place if you have kids.

- Take care of yourself in a way that empowers you. Things like a great hairstyle can go a long way! Make sure "YOU" are in your calendar!

- Be where you are!!! If it's time with your kids, be with them. Put work away. If you are working, be at work, Being Present will give you the freedom you deserve in your life to have it all.

Today I travel internationally, coaching, speaking and consulting to top business executives all over the world. Being confident in who I am gives my children a guide post for what is possible in life. When you follow your dreams, you give your kids the freedom to do the same. There is no "right" way to do this. Find the one that works best for you!

"Life is a roller coaster, keep your hands and feet inside the car at all times, until the ride comes to a full stop" - CoachC ↗

MR. SUCCESS & MRS. RESOURCES

Power couples can turn an idea into a wildly successful global business

By Christian Bartsch

Every successful business starts its journey with an idea. This idea becomes the passion of its founders who work days, weeks, years and decades to build its phenomenal results. The greatest challenge for entrepreneurs is to make something they love a sustainable business that is capable to grow beyond its local national and regional borders.

Vision and mission

The speaking and event industry is a tough area to be in. If you push every day to **turn your vision** and mission into a **niche dominating enterprise** then you have reached the sky. The clouds are at your reach. People often see successful people and question how entrepreneurs can sustain a healthy relationship.

You can move Mountains

Power couples are the best proof that if you love your business and run this business with the person you most love, you can move mountains and go beyond the imagination of a common mind set. Non-believers will cross an entrepreneurial couple's path and try to derail them. Narrow minded people are lacking the imagination that drives entrepreneurs to transition from working hard to being a **smart innovator**. As success helps you

gradually grow your business activities on an unforeseen scale, other business leaders will want to do business with them.

When you look at the business Richard and Veronica Tan created, you will happily acknowledge that Success Resources is the global market leader in educational events. They attract the best of the best speakers. Their portfolio holds the best niche coaches and speakers worldwide: Tony Robbins, Gary Vaynerchuk, Robert Kiyosaki, T Harv Eker, Les Brown, JT Foxx, Peng Joon and many other well-known names.

Their events are happening on **5 continents** from Singapore to spreading across North & South America, Australia, Russia, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In countries where other event organizers fail to attract large quality crowds and conquer the market on a healthy strategy, Success Resources **achieves the impossible**. In countries where people do not usually like buying educational products or even going to large events, unless it is some singer, this power couple and its success team deliver an awesome event again and again.

Passion leads to Success

This success is not based on luck or

some clever magical spell. When you are able to inspire a team, business partners and guests to believe in a vision that will build a **legacy for generations to come**, that is when success will appear to reward the power couple.

Those who work hard to turn a vision into reality are humans like anybody else. The key difference to those who do not succeed in building a unique business model is the **positive mind set** and **relentless will** to continue to push to overcome any kind of difficulty that may try to stop them from reaching the desired success. When you listen to the powerful speakers like Robert Kiyosaki, JT Foxx, Tony Robbins or Gary Vee you recognize why this power couple is capable of travelling from event to event with short breaks in between.

So what does success mean to Richard and Veronica being a power couple in business? When they look at the wonderful couple photo of Facebook founder **Mark Zuckerberg** and wife **Priscilla Chan**, Richard and Veronica can't help but redefine "success" for themselves. "Success" to them is when they are able to achieve spending time - quality and quantity wise - together. Furthermore, being able to communicate well often avoids misunderstandings. As a power couple they are able to agree upon important issues. By

committing to one another they have a rock solid foundation.

Never stop Learning

Successful entrepreneurs will often confirm that in order to reach the ultimate peak of their success they had to endure many failures. What made them strong was that **they kept learning from their mistakes** and adapting their strategies to stay on track towards success.

According to Richard and Veronica, their biggest failure as entrepreneurs taught them valuable lessons. Once, they entered a business partnership with a partner in a new country. They gave the partner access to their knowhow and brand. They even supported the partner in helping them to start their business. Contractually, the partnership was not documented

properly and resulted in falling apart of the partnership. It was a hard lesson for Richard and Veronica.

Our power couple's recommendation to the global readers of Business Booster Today Magazine:

"Even when dealing with a friend, do take the time to clearly put everything in writing. Do not feel awkward about this. It brings clarity and ensures long term understanding."

Strategies of Power Couples

Building a business from scratch requires a lot of courage and strong will to never quit. Nevertheless, life has its ups and downs. This is what makes us all human beings. People often ask why people accept such massive challenges. For Richard and

Veronica it is a **lifestyle** that has helped them **grow their own magnitude of legacy** and achievement:

They are fun people. Richard and Veronica love challenge, too. What is more appropriate than "changing life" through their work and have fun doing it?

What does it take to succeed in business as a power couple? Working as a couple offers them the unique opportunity to **share their goals** with each other. Here is what they do as a couple.

Richard and Veronica share the same vision for business and yet they create **separate working conditions** for themselves. They always remind themselves that they are on the same mission and don't become the enemy. They divide responsibilities based on their interest and strength. They are



always forgiving. Most important, they don't forget to be a couple. Richard and Veronica **enjoy family time** with their children and grandchildren, when they are not working.

Combining Talents for a Vision

As the time flies by, every partner in a relationship continues to develop their talents into a competitive advantage that will make a power couple a wildly successful team.

Richard and Veronica's vision for Success Resources is to be the leading provider of life changing education.

They change lives globally through

their extraordinary, high impact, and experiential breakthrough programs, resulting in both immediate and long-term changes through transformed mindsets, wealth, relationships and a sense of purpose. The Success Resources events present an opportunity for sponsors, partners and speakers to showcase and connect their brand to tens of thousands of people all over the world. Those who join them want to be featured on a tangible platform that **combines substantial outreach with value enhancement** that elevates their brand to the next level.

Those who partner with the largest educational resources firm in the world, become part of a unique Success Resources family. Partners gain access to an unparalleled array of speakers, assets, and support that

will provide their learners with the same high quality educational experience anywhere else around the globe. Success Resources already has a presence in over 30 countries and growing.

Richard and Veronica's vision is inspiring many people around the world to join the Success Resources team. The team don't just learn new skills, make new friends or have something to add onto your resume. They will be exposed to world-class events, developing the experience one need to be ahead of one's peers as well as the confidence to take on any new challenges that come their way.

Exclusive World-Class Speakers

When world-renowned speakers



choose to become exclusive speakers for Success Resources, they know what fantastic opportunity they are being provided through Richard and Veronica's event business. They will share the stage with top speakers in a multitude of fields.

Significant Outcomes

When people flock to each event and Success Resources is able to fill large convention centres with thousands of people then there is a true reason why people come to their events.

Success Resources believe that their work has the potential to positively impact individuals, communities,

cities and the world. Success Resources family is committed to it with tenacity, passion, love and joy.

For more information on the upcoming events please visit www.successresources.com

SUCCESS RESOURCES
YOUR LEARNING PARTNERS

LEARN FROM ACTORS

By Gabor Dobos

Did you know that an actor has to refresh their portfolio every 6 months in order to be current all the time? I do wonder why entrepreneurs don't do this? They don't do it with their business, with their staff but mainly with themselves! How many times have you seen a person on a website, social media platform or in a magazine and then when it came to meet this person **in real life that person looked different**. No, I am not talking about some dating sites even though the experience can be similar. You expected to meet someone else, don't you? Or when you see the same picture everywhere! Some entrepreneurs may have spent some money once for a photo-shoot and years later they are still using those photos. If you are so successful as you project it **why are your pictures old** and the same everywhere?

So many business owners forget to update themselves regularly. In today's world unfortunately you can't afford not to be current. Moreover, you can't afford not using the latest technology. "**A picture is worth a thousand words**" surely you have heard this many times. But today one picture, one headshot, one photo-shoot are simply not enough! They don't get your clients, potential business partners, investors and future clients excited. With great videos and awesome pictures you don't just stand out but talking to these people without actually talking to them. You can project your success and by using the *5 senses effect* (sight, sound, touch, smell and taste) on them without meeting them in person.

Now you might say that you have a great phone and you take many photos with the latest iPhone. It's true that these latest technologies have so much potential in them, and it is also true that it's possible to create a magazine cover photo with a phone. However, do you actually know how to use the phone's camera and all its settings, and the lighting when it comes to take that **magazine cover photo**?

Probably not! I do teach my clients and show them tricks how they can take better photos with their phones if I am not around. Because it's not enough to have the right tool when it comes to photography. You should be able to use the settings on them and you should have an eye for it as well. That's why there are so many photographers out, because they



don't just click like a tourist but they take the whole surroundings into perspective and create something magical from it.

I am so happy that I am working with some amazing entrepreneurs, speakers and business owners who do take photography not just seriously but **part of their success**. But equally I am sad to see some entrepreneurs using some blur photos in a magazine appearance, on leaflets, on social media or some event promotion. It just makes the whole thing...well, put it this way: not too serious. Even though I know they are the real deal!

I also wonder when a business owner has an opportunity to be on a stage in front of thousands of people or with some celebrity and they don't spend money on a professional photographer who **captures their moments** from the right angle and make them shine. These captures will

be there for the future and you can use them anytime. If you were so careful **choose the right dress**, the right question, the right presentation and so on then why is it not so important for you to capture the event with **excellent photographs and videos**?

This year with my team we offer video recording as well. But not just an ordinary video recording. We help our clients with their script, help them to choose a location, advise them what is the best for the video, **enhance the colours**, do special effects, use drones and the list goes on. We do this with not an ordinary camera, but a real movie camera so we can create the absolute best for them. Now you can say that your phone is there to take a video. That is true when it comes to do some "**live videos**" on social media, but it's the worst thing you can do when you have an event, or when you want to

showcase a property which is up for sale. A **shaky phone video isn't going to sell** your property quickly. Quality doesn't cost millions of dollars like a movie. We are creating affordable Hollywood quality because we know it is the future of your business. When it comes to recording, it's not enough to have you on it. In order to have a great movie you have to have the right actor, a director, a cameraman, a stylist and so many other persons who makes the whole movie to be whole. Why don't you want to do this with your business?

Do you think the right videos and photographs will assist in your success? My clients say YES and probably that's why I see more and more of my photographs on magazine covers and, in newspapers all over the world. It's time for you to capture your moments before they go away and say YES to be current today! ➔



AHEAD OF TIME

Hublot's - BIG BANG UNICO KING GOLD CERAMIC

By Christian Bartsch

Entrepreneurs trust Hublot

In life there are a few very valuable elements that will not last for ever. This is where time is a significant influencer of a person's success. If you do not make good use of your time, you lose business opportunities,

watches and the imprecise cheaply made watches. The price tag gives a relative impression of the **time and effort** that goes into the making of a high quality watch. In the watch making industry there exists a wide range of quality levels.

Hublot stands out

That is where Hublot displays a focused but stylish variety of designs. When you invest **4 years** into developing the technology and design for the Unico movement then you must definitely admire their wonderful results.

As previously remarked, this is not a mass production product. It has 330 individually hand assembled components. That makes up the unique and distinguished movement of this watch. Although the complexity of this product is so massive, the engineers were already 8 steps ahead in their thoughts. They were able to allow the system to be even **upgraded to include** additional complications and modules.

Who else is able to add the Flyback Chronograph, GMT or the Bi-Retrograde Chronograph? That is what gives Hublot the competitive advantage in its own market niche.

Hublot is Sports and Luxury

Entrepreneur needs to keep fit. A passion for sports requires a watch that is reliable and can take on the dynamic life of its owner. When you look back in time, you must recognize that when **Carlo Crocco** founded Hublot in **1980** he wanted to combine luxury and sports.



deals and unforgettable experiences. That is why successful entrepreneurs take care of this valuable resource by trusting on their particular brand of watches.

There exists a definite difference between high precision designed

When you look at the engineering skills that go into a Hublot watch then you see this is not something you can mass produce at low pricing. A valuable long lasting product requires technical expertise but also a feeling for beauty.





Why Crocco founded Hublot

He was a passionate sailor and unsatisfied with the metal bracelets and leather straps solely available at the time. This kind of material had a great disadvantage when in contact with water. That is when **he chose rubber** as the better partner of a watch that will accompany its owner – "*whatever the weather and the sport.*"

Being **ahead of the industry** eventually made Hublot an industry disrupter. Rubber became the product other watch manufacturers adopted after they had to accept that **Crocco had made the best decision** for this type of application.

Even then knowing the tear and wear that a sports watch will be submitted by its owner, Hublot makes use of

Ceramic to substantially remove the risk of its products accumulating signs of wear. Ceramic is considered to be a **scratch proof material** naturally protected against signs of aging.

The manufacturer's research and development department is working ahead of time to astonish its clients with new products. These can have a bright red or yellow ceramic touch.

When it comes to the **Big Bang Unico Gold Ceramic** you need to step back and admire the composition:

The casing is a polished and satin-finished **18K King gold** case. The bezel is a stain-finished black ceramic anodized black Aluminum lower bezel with **6 H-shaped titanium** screws. The dial is a

magnificent mat black dial and gold-plated upper layer.

The **satin-finished indexes** include a white luminescent. Furthermore, the satin-finished and micro-blasted **gold-plated hands** come with a white luminescent, too. As highlighted, rubber is the material used for the black structured lined straps.

If you are new to high quality watches, then you know how annoying it is to have to get a new battery every few months.

With a Hublot you are better off. This watch comes with a **self-winding** chronograph system. As you move during the day, the watch makes use of the owner's lifestyle to rewind itself. Hence, you also avoid forgetting to wind up your watch manually. Even if you do not move,



the watch has a **power reserve of 72 hours**.

Hublot's success shows in its contribution to the community. By being a luxury and innovative brand, the business has been expanding. The plant built in Nyon **doubled its surface area within 6 years** of opening that plant in 2009.

The competitive advantage of Hublot is based on the combination of traditional mechanical movements using *principles dating back 300 years* while using the latest technology, materials and processes.

That is why it makes Hublot the preferred watch for sports loving entrepreneurs, artists and professional athletes. Famous Football managers like *Jose Mourinho*, Football icons like **Diego Maradona**, the golfer *Dustin Johnson & Patrick Reed* and Boxer *Floyd Mayweather* are passionate Hublot watch owners.

Where gold comes gold unites

Olympic gold medalist Usain Bolt won 8 gold medals and 11 world championship titles. Hublot watches accompany him on his path to success and contribute to good causes that help preserve traditional cultures.

Hublot watches are also a part of successful women. Tennis star Simona Halep and Karolina Pliskova love the watches for their beauty and sportiveness. The **supermodel Bar Rafaeli** is a huge fan of Hublot and the first female face to represent the brand.

Being at the top of the game is not easy. The **Australian** cricket team Captain *Michael Clarke* and the explosive **Indian** cricketer batsman *Rohit Sharma* are great brand ambassadors for Hublot.

If you are not into sports but love music then you will love the harmony of a Hublot Big Bang Unico Gold

Ceramic clock system. Even the artists and musicians of *Depeche Mode* are part of Hublots activities. That is where business, craftsmanship and music come together to help people gain access to clean and safe drinking water to people in developing countries.

Craftmanship and innovation

Hublot is the ultimate love for craftsmanship combined with innovative thinking. Hence, an entrepreneur who believes in the sport of business will also believe in the business of sport.

When in need of sportive precision, you will find a Hublot watch all around the world in their specialized boutiques. To find the authorized dealers just visit the manufacturers website for a directory:

www.hublot.com ↗

IN VINO

Why Piedmont in Italy is attracting investors

By Jan Erik Horgen

The picturesque region of Piedmont in northwest Italy, bordering France in the west and Switzerland in the north, is one of the richest regions in Italy. The regions capital, Turin, has been home to no less than 37 motor companies, including the sports car brand Abarth and legendary designer Pininfarina.

These days, however, investors are attracted by another of the region's claims to fame: wine production. Piedmont, which means "at the foot of the mountain" has a hilly landscape beneath the Alps that is ideally suited for wine production. It is home to some of the most famous types of red wine, each named for the local region that produces it. Barolo, Barbaresco, and Nizza are three of the best known.

When demand outgrows supply

So why are investors turning to this area, now? After all, they have been producing wine there since the days of the Roman empires! Oddly enough, the answer can be found in Asia, especially in China.

"Economic growth in China has created a large number of very wealthy entrepreneurs and Business Boosters. Buying and serving high quality wine is for many of the nouveau riche Chinese a way to both enjoy and show off their newfound wealth."

Although China, unbeknownst to many outside of Asia, has several excellent wine producers, it is hard to

compete with thousands of years of production excellence in the best regions of France and Italy.

Therefore, we have in this decade seen a dramatic price increase in the French regions Burgundy and Bordeaux, as well as Tuscany in Italy. And now investors are pushing up prices in Piedmont as well. Considering there are millions of dollar-millionaires in China, and that only 3% of the roughly 1 million hectoliters of red wine produced in the region comes from Barolo and Barbaresco, it's no wonder prices are going through the roof, especially for the top brands.

Could I have some Coke with that Barolo?

Wines from Barolo, especially the younger ones, do pose quite a challenge to the Chinese palate. These wines are rich in tannins, and when they are young often very intense and dark. Wine connoisseurs will be shocked to learn that many expensive bottles that have found their way to China have been mixed half-and-half with Coca Cola to better

suit the tastes of the buyer.

The taste of the buyer is what the market adjusts to, so investors are now looking at Barbaresco. A single top vintage bottle from the brand Gaja can cost upwards of USD 900 at a Michelin starred restaurant. Savvy investors are likely to look a bit further, to the eastern part of Piedmont, home of the rising star of the region: Nizza. While the powerful Barolo wines are made with the grape variety Nebbiolo, the Nizza is made from Barbera, a grape that produces a sweeter and softer wine. Strict rules limit the production yield in Nizza to only 7 tons per hectare of land, creating wines that at their best have exceptional concentration and complexity.

The challenges of producing liquid art

Unlike assembly line production items, high quality wine has very strong natural limitations on how much production can grow. Take Nizza as an example; the yield restriction is already mentioned, and only the sunniest slopes of the hills

VERITAS EST

At the foot of the mountain

will do, so the suitable geographic area is very limited. Taking in to consideration that the vines producing the grapes need at least 5 years after planting before being suitable for wine production, you can see that supply growth is strictly limited for years to come.

Making matters even more interesting is the weather. Being exposed to all kinds of weather is healthy for the vines and the quality of the grapes in the long run, but drought and excessive rain can seriously affect the production. Especially dangerous are hail storms – they have been known to wipe out the entire crop of smaller

vineyards. When grapes are finally able to be harvested, it is no wonder that they are treated with utmost care and attention in the production of the wines themselves. Because of these weather variations, the quantity, quality and taste can vary a lot from year to year.

Long term asset play with intermediate benefits

As an investment object, vineyards can be treated as a real estate asset play, riding on macrotrends like the Chinese millionaires increasing appetite for high quality wines. Investors should note, however, that producing some of the finest wines in

the world is more of an artform than production. The best winemakers are rock stars in the industry and can command high fees for being credited with a wine.

As always, brand building is essential, and leading brands like Gaja command a hefty premium compared with the hidden gems of similar quality.

For investors wanting to inspect their assets, it must be noted that not many inspections will beat visiting beautiful Piedmont and enjoying its culinary delights. Cheers, or as they say in Italy, salute! ↗





DO YOU HAVE A BUSINESS OR JUST A ANOTHER J.O.B.?

By Orsi Beata Nagy

One of the most successful franchise companies in history is McDonald's! Ray Kroc was a genius creating their franchise system that made many entrepreneurs super rich and customers' bellies full for cents. Franchise owners are still making very good money from it today. What was his success? He didn't just create their franchise systems but created the system that is working for over 60 years and worth about \$130 billions!

Why am I telling you this? Most people start their business for 2 main reasons: either to get out of their J.O.B. (*Just Over Broke*) and be their own boss – a bit similarly to Ray Kroc- or to fulfill their dreams, something they are **passionate about**. Whichever it is, we all hope that so many people will be our customers and before we realize it, we are crazy rich and we can do whatever we want.

However, the truth is far from that. Whatever your reason is for starting a business, soon you will realize that it's not easy, not so many people are interested in it or not so many people know about it, it eats money rather than makes more of it and it is a hard work. You never worked such long hours before.

Then you start feeling that this is just another "**Just Over Broke**" syndrome ("**J.O.B**") rather than a "**Joy Of Being**". Does this sound familiar to you? If you are an

established business owner and you are having the above problems, then you do not have a *REAL BUSINESS!* You just have another job. Not so good news, right?

"Are you working ON your business or IN your business?"

So how do you know that you have a real business?

Most entrepreneur's starting point is wrong. They all start at having a business name – you know that cool name that you fall in love with - or a logo, a website etc. These are important elements that can be figured out later and believe it or not they are not the crucial points when it comes to starting a biz. You must begin with the **end in mind**. What do I mean by that? You have to have an overall goal; you must have an exit strategy that you drive your business to. At the end of the day you might not want to do the same for the rest of

your life, do you? I think life is much more than running one business.

What is an Exit Strategy?

An exit strategy is a strategic plan to sell your company to an investor or another company. You probably ask me "Why the heck would I you do that?". Well, just think about it! What if you **lose your passion** towards it? Or it's time to retire and there is no family member to pass it onto. Another reason is that you want to do something else which needs capital to invest in. Believe me the list goes on and on. In some cases, it is not even selling your company but replacing yourself with a very competitive person who can do things similarly to you while you are still earning by doing close to nothing. So it is always worth to start with the **exit strategy**. Exit strategy is not just defining when you want to sell your company, but it is a strategic plan how you get there, by what time you will get to this milestone. Once you have the end



goal you have to reverse engineer and **simply work backwards**. This is going to result in a detailed plan on how you are going to achieve this end goal. But I wouldn't settle with a plan...

"87% of all businesses will never be sold because most people don't run their business in a way that they can legitimately sell it - they have no systems, no exit strategy and they'll cease to exist."

Time to increase your company value by 3-5 times!

When you have an exit strategy plan in front of you then it's time to systemize your business and how you run it wherever you can. Create processes from day one. Start with the immediate processes that you do from your first day in business. Write them down how to process orders, how to handle telephone calls, how to hire someone etc. Each process is going to

help you to achieve the overall goal.

Another problem most business owners face: investors and companies do not want to pay the amount the business owner thinks his/her company is worth! Do you know why? Because an investor aims is to buy a business that **makes money** from day one.

Think about it: would you invest in a company which needs your attention and further investments in order to operate and sometime in the future makes money OR would you invest in one that makes you money from tomorrow? Let me guess! You chose the 2nd option, don't you? So why don't you **have the right systems** in place?

It is also your responsibility as a business owner to get your employees to write down how they do their work. So, when the time comes for them to leave, you are not standing

there without the knowledge how to do their job. The knowledge that you paid for month after month. Especially writing down the processes your team uses in the early days of business will save so much time and energy for you.

Most entrepreneurs who turn to me have hardly any processes and systems set up. Even if they want to sell their business they are unable due to the lack of these very important written operational practices. I assist them to create an order from chaos, together we create a manual for their business which immediately increases the value of the company. It is possible for You to achieve that, and you can sell a business with a manual and a turnkey for 3 or 5 times more than a business without one.

Are you ready to be the owner of the next \$130 billion business? ↗

HOW TO TURN A COMPANY

from being in the red figures for 5 years around within 15 months

By Udo Bartsch

Once a business of a company has reached a certain volume, management starts to look over the boundary of their town, their country and even their continent. As a result OSRAM, the big German lamp manufacturer had established branches in many countries. They started with sales offices and in many countries followed by factories serving the local markets.

One day they decided, due to custom regulations, that it is advisable to set up a factory in Ecuador (Latin America). Permission by the local authorities was granted. A plot which fulfilled all the necessary requirement was bought, followed by the erection of the buildings for the production lines, warehouse and offices. Then the first production line was set up and the employees got trained. By then the CEO, familiar with the Spanish language, similar to the “Castellano” in Spain, had been chosen and sent to Ecuador.

Somehow he got the company working. The Controlling department in Germany was very patient. But after a couple of years still showing red figures, the Controlling department decided a new manager was needed. By then I was still working in Spain for the same company, first in **Madrid** and later in **Barcelona**, they asked me if I would go like to run the business in Ecuador. I told my wife about this offer and since she did not mind moving to new shores, I accepted the offer.

After we arrived in Guayaquil (Ecuador), the next day was **my first day as CEO**. At that time, labour

unions in Ecuador had been very strong, so I got myself a copy of the law-booklet and as expected it consisted also of some pages explaining the worker obligations which the Labor Union members must have forgotten. The workers wanted to let me know their immediate demands and their rights, all written in the official “*codigo de trabajo*” (work laws).

In the next meeting, I told them that I am not denying them their rights. But what it meant was that production must start at 7:00 AM and the company bus service arrives at the factory a few minutes before 7:00 AM. Whoever arrives later will not be let in until the afternoon and as the law says, will work the complete shift without pay.

Since then, **Punctuality and production efficiency improved** immediately.

Prices and Bribes

The previous CEO had bought the needed packing material, cardboard boxes of different sizes, from one local manufactures. Usually this is done by a contract covering the demand for 6 or 12 months. Soon

after I had arrived in the country it was time to negotiate the contract for the next year. The still supplying company came to inform me about the new prices for packing material and also mentioned some bribe for me.

I asked him to check his prices and to let me have a new quotation, but without any “palm oil” for me or anybody else in the company. I also told him that I will contact two other companies for their quotations. In the first round, the prices I received were about 10...15% below of what the company paid before on identical quality. In the third and last round we ended on **35% below the prices paid before**, plus an extra bonus if we exceeded the quantity mentioned in the contract.

Maybe it was still not the optima price but I had to make sure that we would not end up with an interruption of the supplies. By the way, in the following years we achieved even lower prices.

Insurance costs on the rise-why?

Packing material was not the only cost factor that needed to be checked. The insurance costs for the transport



of components imported from Europe **seemed to be quite high**. It turned out that our claims for transport breakage were the reason for this. The question was, **where did the breakage occur?** On bad roads to the factory, in the factory, on the production line or during the sea transport?

I decided to have look in the port, when next ship would arrive, bringing a new consignment of glass bulbs from Europe. Looking at it from the wharf the handling looked normal and smooth. But inside the ship's hold it looked quite different. The boxes containing fragile glass bulbs were strapped on pallets and various pallets stowed on top of each other. So far nothing unusual. But to get them out of the ship the longshore men pulled them down, by dropping them on the ships floor. This was what caused the breaking of the glass. Therefore, unloading had to be stopped immediately, until a forklift was lifted into the hold. This took only a few minutes and a forklift was lifted into the ships hold. As a result, our **breakage losses went down to a minimum**, as well as the insurance costs.

Sine there is nothing that can't be improved further, on my first trip to Europe I included a **visit to our new glass supplier in the UK** as well the Head-Office of the Ship owners whose vessels usually brought us the glass made in the UK. The result was that a way was found to **improve the packing** even further and that the stevedores want special attention that the whole consignment would be stowed in a way that not even in a rough sea damage could be caused.

Not long after I had started that job in Latin America I had my doubts concerning the qualifications of the technical manager of the plant as far as electricity, gases, mechanics and pneumatics were concerned. As an example, he told me that in one of the positions of production line is an 8 Amp fuse.

He had already tried fuse of more Amp, but without success and was trying to find a 20Amp fuse in the market, but without success. I said that he should remember, that if a newly replaced fuse blows again, he should have the cause of the problem determined and [...] rectified in a qualified way. *He must be able to remember the famous “Ohm's Law”* (

$U = I \times R$).

When I asked the Human Resources Department for his file, it did not contain any testimony or report. The only paper it contained, was written by the National Quality Control Agency saying that he had worked there. Of course, the Head-Office in Germany was convinced that we had the usual problem that *technicians and merchants sometimes don't get on well* with each other. The technical manager from Mexico was sent to us to have a look what was going on. His report to Germany was: *“This man is useless and he was replaced by a technician from Germany!”*

If the food is good enough for the CEO, it is good enough for the factory workers.

So that life was not boring. The Shop Stewards had come to the decision, that food served for them free of charge in the canteen is below their standard and has to be improved. But as everybody knew, I had every day the same food on my plate as they had. So, I reminded them since this food is good enough for me, with a much higher income than they have, it should be also good enough for them. Meeting closed.



Uniforms, shoes, spectacles and fake certificates

Next problem: the people in the factory got every year two new uniforms and shoes. Until then, the uniforms were always blue. In the usual corresponding meeting I told them, that we will have little changes: Orange top, the company colour, and blue trousers or shirts. For the mechanics: red shirts but they did not want to accept this color, because this is the colour the butchers wear.

I told them why I chose this colour: Every time a mechanic **is urgently required** at the production line, they have disappeared somewhere. It will be much easier to find them in their red shirts.

I noticed that **none** of the women on the production line **were wearing spectacles**. Maybe that was also a reason of some faulty end-products. Therefore, I got an oculist to come to the factory to check the eyesight of all employees and where necessary provide them with spectacles.

Later we had 2 more medical services:

We organized over 4 Saturdays for the about **150 women**, between the age of 18 and 30 years lectures by a Dr. of Medicine and a nurse under the title *“Family planning and hygiene”*. But at end only 5 women attended the first Saturday lecture.

It must have been **very informative**, because the following week a delegation came up and asked for a repetition of the lecture, so that all the other women could attend it. On the 4th Saturday they were all provided with a certificate to prove that they had attended these lectures. Another medical event was the **invitation of a Dentist**, well appreciated by the employees.

In between the Shop Steward came up with new activities. Two women handed papers from their Dr. in, saying that they have been ill for 3 days. It seemed to be strange that the same Dr. had 2 completely different

handwritings. A check-up with the National Health came to the result that **both certificates were fake**. Both had been written with green ink, a colour only used by the two shop stewards, the boyfriends of the 2 women.

Since what the 2 women had done was legally a **“serious offense”**, enough for 2 dismissals. The next day when I came home from some friends, I was immediately **surrounded by about 50 people from the factory**, demanding annulment of the 2 dismissals. I refused as well as any further midnight discussion.

At this time it also happened, that some people who were asked to work on a different position in the production line, they refused this, claiming that the labor law grants their refusal. So, the problem was solved in some other way. It was quite usual that employees asked for credit or advance salary, which was usually granted, even the company was not obliged to do so.

For **cooperative employees** the questions were: How much do you need and how will you pay it back.

For the **non-cooperatives** the answer was: there is no law that the company must assist you financially.

It did not take long and flexibility returned to the factory.

A Strike with death threats

The problem about the 2 fake Doctor certificates resulted in a strike. When the morning shift was finished, the women remained at their place and evening shift did not start. It was an **illegal strike**, giving the employer the right to dismiss who he likes to dismiss. An agent of the local authorities was called. He interviewed one by one.

Everybody told the agent the truth, that the strike was ordered by the shop stewards. By request of the Shop Stewards the Labour authorities sent in 3 Agents to repeat the

questioning. The result was the same as in the first round.

Even as the **Shop Stewards offered the Agent 3 salaries**, if they change the reports in favour of the Shop Steward. This did not help him. I received in the meantime **two letters**, saying if I do not go back to Germany voluntarily I would **leave the country in a coffin**.

They asked a Labour Union of the USA and another one in Germany for assistance. Both Unions tried to frighten the German-Head Quarter by telling them that they have the power to get all their Affiliates outside Germany on strike.

They even arranged meetings with the Minister for Labor Affairs which I was also ordered to attend. But I did not attend this meeting and nothing happened.

After the troublemakers had left the company, in a few days peace and a pleasant climate had returned,

production and quality went up.

Results of consistency

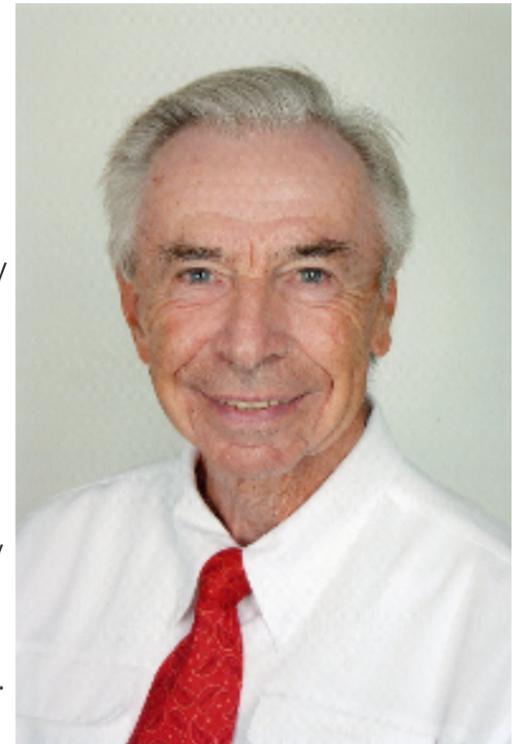
An additional production hall was built. Production was extended by an additional line. The losses accumulated in the 5 years under the first CEO were **in the following 15 months** turned into black figures and **high profits were reached.** ↗

Udo Bartsch successfully restructured and ran companies in Europe and South America. As a result from his turn-around approach, he quickly got the companies to become profitable and overcome previously existing problems. Thereby expanding the operations and creating many more jobs.

Later on he became a **sales speaker on photo optics and lighting**, travelling to over **100 countries** and returning with many order requests, hereby exceeding the division's sales targets. As a senior export manager he **built relationships around the world** that last till today. In order to grow a market share you have to educate your importers and their core client base. This way, products get to be used in a much more satisfying way.

Based on his experience from working with clients such as film studios and television broadcasters, he eventually started to enjoy journalism.

Being active in business also requires a sportive attitude. He is a passionate sailor who won several regattas in Spain and Germany. Even tall ship regattas would not hold him back from climbing up a 60 meter mast. He enjoys water sports but also passing on his experience as CEO.



BUSINESS FIT

By Richard Peutherer & Tomer Spitkowski

Stephen Hawking is famously known for his quote “intelligence is the ability to adapt to change” and, being able to change quickly in business, ensures the continued, successful growth of an agile organisation.

The definition of being agile is “*being able to move quickly and easily*”. However, business agility is the ability of a business to rapidly respond to change and in our fast-changing world, today, this ability **to be agile is a matter of survival**.

Some of our abilities as entrepreneurs is to come up with new ideas and create new businesses. However, all too often, ideas that seem great on paper and look amazing in a business plan, **face difficulties when introduced to the market** and to potential clients. This is where the entrepreneur’s agility is measured. An

agile entrepreneur must pay attention to the market and give it what it wants. Being rigid and falling in love with your own ideas might lead to failure. Even **if prospective Investors are happy** to give you their money, if the market doesn’t respond well to your idea, you need to be able to let it go.

Being agile and able to react quickly to change can be a competitive advantage. It gives you or your organisation the ability to **overcome unexpected roadblocks**, risks or market changes. It also means that you are able to quickly adapt to situations as they come along and,

most importantly, protect your Investor’s capital.

Being agile, also means that when you identify a **potential risk** or a change that might impact a former decision you’ve made in the past, you have to act. You can’t just sit and wait for things to get better. You have to take action and that action has to be quick and decisive.

An example of such a decision is one that we made very recently. Following a protracted, four-month **negotiation process**, we had secured three beautiful office buildings, originally built in the 1800’s so were full of Georgian character and charm.

We had agreed to purchase these offices and sensitively convert them into luxurious apartments.

Throughout the process, we have undertaken extensive **due diligence** of all aspects of the deal and negotiated the building purchase price to exactly where we wanted it. We worked with our construction team to accurately calculate the conversion cost and we undertook extensive competitive **market research** to know exactly what we could sell the apartments for and how long this process would take.

The financing was in place and our Investors excited about being part of the project, not only because of the nature of the buildings, but also for the returns they would receive.

However, just a matter of days before we exchanged contracts to purchase the building, we heard that another company had acquired a large development nearby and was soon to release 60 new apartments to the market within close proximity to our development. This was a huge set-back.

We knew we would still be able to sell our apartments, however now, instead of a short-term project, this would have turned out to be a **long process** that would not have yielded the returns we wanted for our Investors.

Whilst the decision to back out of the

deal was quick, it wasn’t a pleasant one. We had spent months constructing the deal and, to have to walk away, **really hurt**. However, in reality, the only thing that would be hurt was our egos, whereas staying in the deal could hurt our Investors. The answer therefore was simple; we walk away.



Closing deals is very glamorous, walking away from them isn’t.

However, imagine what would have happened if we hadn’t reacted fast and walked away. We could have disappointed our Investors and our reputation could have been compromised, and all because we weren’t agile and able to react fast to the change in the market. Instead, we were able to offer our Investors an **alternative investment**; they remained happy and we protected their capital.

As an entrepreneur and a leader, it is your duty, not only to become an

agile leader yourself, but also to make sure your entire organisation is agile and able to react fast to any market change. Research conducted found that agile companies **grow revenue 37% faster** and generate **30% higher profits** than their non-agile competitors.

Agility means that you are willing and prepared to change direction when things don’t work out. It helps your business **out-pace the competition** and, whilst your competitors stay behind, unable to adjust, your business continues to be nimble and move forward to match the market needs.

Being an agile business also means that you’re able and **willing to diversify** instead of putting all your ‘eggs in one basket’. When the market changes in one area, the business diversification can be a shield, allowing your business to weather a storm.

Agility in business, not only serves your Investors or Clients, it also energises the leadership team, the managers and the employees. It forces them to be creative, innovative and deploy a methodology of **anticipating** and dealing with situations as they arise, rather than waiting for someone to solve the problem for them. ↗



Wealth Equity Partners is a leading UK property investment business, where their sole focus is to provide their Investors with the highest returns first. They uphold this as their core value and will do everything to protect their Investor returns, which they achieve through their agile approach to business.

The Senior Managing Partners, **Richard Peutherer** and **Tomer Sapir Spitkowski** are experienced international property Investors, both independently owning multi-million Pound property portfolios. They formed Wealth Equity Partners to provide an exceptional service for Investors who want to benefit from the significant returns available within the UK property market.

To get to know them or find out more about their agile investment opportunities, please visit their website www.wealthequitypartners.com

WHAT IS AN

ANGEL INVESTOR?

Save it, spend it, or invest it?

By Kirstie Shapiro

Angel Investing is nothing new, in fact Angel Investing began back in the day with what was termed the “Theatre Angels” who were wealthy benefactors of Broadway who contributed much needed capital to get new theatre productions up and running and onto the stage. In exchange, these champions or “Angels” received a share of the production’s profits.

What exactly is Angel Investing and who can become an Angel Investor? How does “Angel-ing” work as an investment strategy?

An Angel Investor tends to be an affluent individual who provides capital for a business, in exchange for a relatively decent interest rate or ownership equity.

Angel Investors are very often entrepreneurs, retired entrepreneurs, executives and or professionals such as doctors and lawyers, who become involved in Angel Investing for reasons that go well beyond pure financial accrual. Reasons for becoming an Angel Investor may often include: to keep abreast of advancements in a particular business sector, developing a broad and varied investment portfolio, mentoring a new generation of entrepreneurs, or simply using their experience, expertise, networks and know-how on a less time intensive basis. Angels typically invest their own money, which needs to be differentiated from venture capitalists.

Venture Capital, which is a type of private equity, and can be described as a form of financing where money from firms and funds are pooled together and managed professionally, by a Venture Capital manager, to

invest in small early-stage firms that are emerging and deemed to have very high growth potential, in exchange for equity or an ownership stake. Due to the high costs of the required administrative work involved and the need to be extremely discerning to guarantee a return on the funds, Venture Capital funds are more risk averse and consequently make very few small investments in start-up and seed stage companies or businesses.

“Business Angel Investors are becoming more and more important in funding fledgling and smaller venture businesses, by providing smaller pots of cash to companies that cannot be funded by established venture capital markets.”

Venture Capital as you can see, is a very different animal to Angel Investing which is usually determined by the individual’s personal investment judgement. The vehicle of the Angel Investment may be that of a trust, a business, a limited liability company, an investment fund or other financial entity. There is no pre-determined amount set for an

Angel Investor, the range is determined rather, by demand of the investment itself. Angel Investor funding can range from a few thousand pounds to a few million pounds. A Harvard report written by William R. Kerr, Josh Lerner and Antoinette Schoar (2010), indicates that Angel-funded projects are much more likely to succeed, they state that: “Overall, the results suggest that the bundle of inputs that angel investors provide have a large and significant impact on the success and survival of start-up ventures.” Angel Investing is regularly regarded as “patient capital” as Angels are less perturbed about fast returns and exit strategies and are more prepared to assist and back-up the business along its journey to growth and tend to exit over a much longer timescale.

A Few Pros and Cons of Angel Investing

Pros

1. As an Angel Investor you get to decide on how to use your money, when, where and with whom.
2. Investments are relatively small amounts of money, anything from a few thousand pounds to a few million

pounds.

3. Investment duration tends to be relatively long term, from between 3 to 8 years plus.
4. As an Angel Investor you get to meet and engage with the entrepreneurs you choose to invest with.
5. Angels are involved directly with the required due diligence and investment process, and are required signatories on all legal investment documentations.
6. You get to choose whether to act alone or within a syndicate of Angel Investors.
7. You get to be as active or passive as you wish to be within the business and or deal.
8. Returns on Angel investments always beat the banks.

Cons

1. It is not only a financial investment, it’s a time investment too.
2. It can be risky, you need to have several exit strategies discussed and put in place in advance.
3. You need to do your due diligence on entrepreneurs involved and the business model.
4. It can be an emotional rollercoaster due to the nature of Angel Investing, where projects could be passion led, rather than business led.
5. Angel Investors should be self-certified as a high net worth or sophisticated investor (as defined by the FCA under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA)).

What to Look For in a Business as an Angel Investor

Two questions to ask yourself off the top are:

- 1) What are the entrepreneurs like as people and 2) what are their support teams like?

The people involved in a business, whether large or small, are possibly the most important aspect for any Angel Investor to look at. Of particular importance are the level of experience and skill set, drive, motivation and how they occur in the world and to the world. Then, the next step is to look at the actual business itself, its core plan and the sustainability and longevity of the business or project.



Further considerations for an Angel Investor could be to look at whether a business solves or addresses a real problem or challenge within the market place or within society as a whole. Ask yourself: “What is the pain you are solving?”.

“Look at whether or not the business or project is disrupting the norm, or is it creating its very own new niche in the market. Address just how the business is impacting the marketplace.”

Then you need to ascertain if the company or business is protected and whether or not ownership of the business can be confirmed. Further to this, you need to find out who the competition is and what are they doing well and also what they are not doing that negatively impacts their market retention.

Ascertain what the company you intend investing in, is doing that is different to everyone else, in other words what is the USP (unique selling proposition), why should people buy/rent/use them? Or perhaps the company is a first mover, in which case how will they motivate the use of their product or service in order to be profitable, a.k.a how does the business make money? Where are the revenue streams? What are the gross and net growth margins?

It is also important to confirm that the business has the capability to grow, and what the margins for scalability are within the proposed business model. In other words, is the business model a proven model, is there validation for the product or service and are there test results that can confirm demand for the product or service. It would also be prudent to enquire into market size and the potential for market share within their business arena. Different types of businesses may allow for a variety of tax relief opportunities to, therefore enquiry into this is always wise. As an Angel Investor you need to know

and nail down the exit strategies before handing over any kind of dosh, and finally, know beforehand whether or not you are willing to include any more Angel Investors into the business.

There are many types of business that Angel Investors can invest their time, expertise and capital into, the one area of interest in this article is Property Angel Investment.

Angel Investing in Property

Finding Angel Investors for property deals, be it commercial or residential, is not the easiest task, however, thanks to modern technological advancements like Internet portals such as Venture Giants it has become much easier to pitch deals to the right kind of person. The great thing about finding a network of real estate Angel Investors, is that they tend to be as interested in finding you and your deal, as you are in finding them. Every Angel Investing relationship has to be cultivated from the very beginning with a win/win ethos.

Kirstie Shapiro is Senior Managing Partner at Creative Property Partners, she helps Angel Investors to find the ideal properties within the UK Property Market to get the best returns on their financial investment.

Before starting her property partnership company, Kirstie worked for 8 years as a Private Personal Assistant to an eminent Cardiologist at the Royal Papworth Hospital in Cambridge UK and as an Actress and Model in her spare time.

After successfully enjoying property investment with her family, and encouraging others to develop their own property portfolios, Kirstie now advises people who have money that is sitting in the bank not earning decent interest rates, to partner with her as Angel Investors, investing in high return properties throughout the UK in major key cities.

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“The rules of the game of investing are the same in all sectors, be it property or anything else. As an Angel Investor you need to know the business plan and the strategy of implementation.

Qualities you may want to look for in the property partners is honesty, loyalty, flexibility and perseverance.

You need to know where your money is going and what it will be used for within the deal. “

You also need to understand the exit strategies, how much you can expect as a return of funds on the re-mortgage, and how much money will be left in the deal.

You may also want to negotiate a good interest rate on your Angel Investment (usually between 6-10%), that suits you and also works within the deal. There is no space for greed in property investment from either party.

The Angel Investor - Property Partner relationship is the key to a fruitful business. Both parties need to be able and willing to create a space for clear and honest communication, warm and forthcoming, dealing with life and the deal as it really is, keeping it real!

As an Angel Investor you are not always just there to contribute finance to the venture, you are also there to guide and support your partners, sharing your experience, expertise and know-how. ↗



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HEALTHY WORK

By Marina Kotze

To what extent do you think a healthy work environment can contribute to the success of your business? The importance of creating and having healthy work environments for businesses, companies and all kinds of organizations in today's day and age, cannot be emphasised enough. A lot is these days said about toxic work places, therefore I believe that even more has to be said about healthy work environments.

It is, however, necessary for us to take a step back and have a look at what exactly makes a work environment, toxic. It is also no secret to know that toxic work environments are created by toxic leaders and managers. Yes, the root cause of toxic work environments is seated in toxic leadership, namely, toxic people in those key positions. As the focus of this article is not on toxic people, but rather on the work environments they create, I would like to share some signs and symptoms of such with you.

Such workplaces are defined by three primary characteristics:

1. Chaos that results from poor decision-making,
2. High levels of stress (dis-ease) and dissatisfaction, and
3. Lack of support.

Furthermore, the following are signs of a toxic workplace: Chronic high stress, low morale, lack of work/life balance, increased physical and emotional illness; unrealistic expectations, lack of loyalty, immature leadership, pervasive poor communication, scapegoating, dysfunctional relationships, office bullying, and constructive dismissal ("An employee terminated a contract of employment with or without notice because the employer made continued

employment intolerable for the employee"; "employees resign or otherwise repudiate their contracts of employment because they are left with no option but to do so by the employer's conduct"). I am sure you are able to recall some instances where you have encountered at least one of these toxic signs. Unfortunately, it is experiences that are hard to forget and leave an employee with a rather bad taste in the mouth!

In short, toxic workplaces are harmful, destructive, or even deadly to employees, their families and societies. The seriousness of these work environments is often disregarded, hence the lack of awareness in creating healthy spaces to earn one's bread and butter.

So then, what is at the core of **creating healthy work environments**? The answer is simply in *relationships*.

Nurturing healthy work relationships is essential to the overall health of a business and organization. When work relationships are not nurtured by especially a sense of appreciation, the following tend to happen: Team members experience a lack of connectedness with others, employees become discouraged, often employees begin to complain about their work,

their colleagues, and their supervisor. Eventually, team members start to think seriously about leaving the organization and they begin to search for other employment. Yes, employees are more likely to burn out when they do not feel appreciated or emotionally supported by their supervisors. This is something that can quickly change once truthful regard and appreciation is shown for a job well done and efforts put into work tasks.

"An employee who feels appreciated and supported will have no problem with gladly walking the extra mile on a consistent basis."

In addition to investing in healthy work relationships, a healthy work environment is greatly enhanced by the level of job satisfaction experienced by employees of a company or organization. The number one factor in job satisfaction is not the amount of pay, but whether or not the individual feels appreciated and valued for the work they do.

Most people leave their jobs because they don't feel appreciated. This is true for employees across the board, on all levels of employment. Something deep within the human psyche cries out for appreciation. There is a direct correlation between

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meeting an employee's need for appreciation in the work place, and their job satisfaction. It is vital for a person to feel appreciated in the workplace, because each one of us wants to know that what we are doing every day, matters. Without having a sense of being valued by managers and colleagues, people start to feel like a machine or a commodity. If no one notices a person's commitment to doing the job well, motivation tends to diminish over time.

"Next to physical survival, the greatest need of a human being is psychological survival – to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, and to be appreciated." – Steven Covey

It is of crucial importance for employees to feel appreciation in order for them to enjoy their job, do their best work, and continue working over the long haul. Appreciation is the key that unlocks the door to happy staff!

With appreciation being the foundation, I suggest the following to create a healthy, vibrant work environment in a business setting

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1. Communicate effectively:

Be open and honest with messages you want to convey with the people around you in the work place. There should be no room for miscommunication and misunderstandings. Employees should be made aware of decision making processes and not find out about decisions only after they have been implemented. Messages should be directly communicated to people

(and not sent through others) and information shared openly, as opposed to withholding it.

2. Consistency in following policies and procedures:

A company's policies should be written down. Then, employees will be able to have sound knowledge of those policies and can refer to it on a regular basis. Following a company's policies and procedures correctly results in order, structure, consistency, and good quality work and service delivery.

3. Invest in building strong interpersonal relationships with co-workers and employees:

Employees of a business and company are in essence the "face" of that organization – they are the people who represent the business to the client, customer and public. Often times whatever they project to them, is how they are being treated by colleagues and managers. When emphasis is placed on developing and nurturing healthy and strong work relationships, interaction and relationships with clients will also be a natural benefit.

4. Increase job satisfaction:

Research suggests that job satisfaction has the strongest association with lower turnover intention. This implies that efforts to increase job satisfaction through enhancing recognition and prestige, and supporting improved work-life balance, would be worthwhile and may support the retention of employees in the work place. More effective recognition of both achievements and contributions of individual employees may prove a



useful intervention to enhance job satisfaction. Support and involvement of employees are components of "high leader-member exchange" forms of leaderships, which have been associated with higher job satisfaction.

In conclusion, employees' overall well-being and health is affected by their work environment. The health of an organization's day to day functioning mostly rests on the employees' shoulders, and employees who experience job satisfaction greatly contribute to a healthy work environment. Employees of a business or company should be treated and regarded as clients and customers of that business – they will then feel appreciated and valued, reinforcing their sense of purpose in the work place, resulting in a healthy and vibrant work environment. With healthy, happy employees who feel appreciated, respected and valued and who put in their effort and time, any business is well on its way to achieve great success! ✨