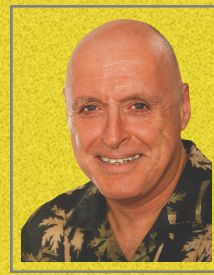


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1496 Starting a Small Business: Are You Sure? – Part 3

The last two days, we've talked about the things that can lead to failure in a small business. The next two days we'll focus on what you can do to be successful, to be one of those in the minority — the people who start a business and see it survive over time. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's coming next on The Extra Point.

Making it in a small business requires hard work and sacrifice. Even if you do manage to make it, you'll earn your success. Sooner or later, everybody does.

If you missed the previous two installments of this series that discussed ways people fail, you can download the transcripts at guamtraining.com, numbers 1494 and 1495.

Somebody might ask the question, "Can you succeed simply by doing the reverse of the actions (or inactions) that lead to failure? To an extent, yes. We'll cover some of that today and tomorrow. However, there's more to it.

I'll give a somewhat different take from Tuesday and Wednesday, starting with...

1. Understand what you're getting yourself into, and write out your expectations. This would include your expectations on how much money you'll make, and what the impact will be on your time.

When you're done, show it to people whose opinion you respect. Does it make sense to them? If you have a family, are they on board with your idea? Do they understand how this decision will impact them?

2. If you don't have experience in operating a business, get in touch with the Small Business Development Center — SBDC. There are programs, either free or at little cost, that can help you. Ask them what they think of your plan. Given their criteria for establishing a solid base to run with, does it make sense?

The SBDC has training programs that will

help with managing a business, and how money works in the business. If you're not strong in these areas, don't overlook the need.

3. If it still looks good after you've picked up the opinion of the people you've asked, now ask yourself whether you have to do the business full time to start, or can you kick things off as a side hustle? If you can, your expenses will likely be lower and you won't be giving up your regular income.

Side hustles on top of a regular job aren't easy. That being said, you can establish a customer base doing it part-time, which will make your decision to go full-time much less stressful.

Let's quickly cover some ground from the last two days. Don't worry if it seems like a lot, you can download this transcript, too. Just listen for now.

4. You need to know there is a market for the business before you launch headlong into it. This is another reason for starting part-time.

5. You must have the competitive advantage we stressed the past two days. More than that, I believe you'll do well to become a specialist in at least one aspect of what you do, if that makes any sense in your situation.

The analogy is that many hundreds, if not thousands of people in Guam know how to do a decent barbecue. However, some people are incredible with a certain kind of food. If you want that kind of food, this is the person whose face pops into your mind.

Can your face pop into your customer's mind for an aspect of your business? In other words, what segment or niche of the business you are choosing could you own so far as the people who pay for your type of products or services are concerned? Think about it.

6. Learn how to sell, and decide that you will also learn to love to sell. You can do it if you really want to. (Con't.)

Here's the last one for today, and I want to throw this in because very few people teach it. I think it could prove to be a big advantage at some point.

Introduce yourself to the managers at the bank you do business with. Maybe you've only talked to tellers when conducting business and you have no idea who the managers are. That's okay.

Even if you're not coming to them to borrow money, introduce yourself. Tell them that you're not after a loan now, but someday you might when the business is bigger.

Then, stay in touch with the manager, and get acquainted with more people there. It wouldn't hurt to open an account at a second bank and do the same thing. Keep them up to date on your progress.

One day, when the time and circumstances are right, you'll come to them with a proposal and you won't be a stranger. Plant seeds today, even if the potential harvest could be far into the future.

I've got seven more strategies tomorrow on how to succeed in your small business, including two or three that might surprise you.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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