Growing a business can be extremely challenging, and also very rewarding. The key is to strike a balance in all key areas of business that feed the foundations and support growth.

I thought as we creep towards another quarter in the year it would be a good time to look at what will help you close some of the gaps in your foundations, create a smoother ride and create more momentum in your business.

For some of you, you may be just starting out on your journey and for others you may have been in business for sometime now. Regardless, these simple principles when implemented may just support you to achieve more consistent results both financial and non financial.

Success and continued success starts with planting seeds. Imagine for a moment your business as a freshly planted apple seed. Like your business when it first started, you took the care to choose the right spot for the seed to be planted, ensuring it’s in the right place with a good balance between sun and shade. Poking a small hole in the mineral rich and dense soil, you placed the seed ever so gently in the hole and then covered it with more fresh soil. Once covered you then gave it the right amount of water every day.

Success Starts with WHY!

Why did you plant the seed? This could also be asked about your business. Why do you do what you do? Why did you get into business in the first place and why do you continue to stay in business? You planted your seed so that over time it would grow and
produce perfectly tasting apples, the fruit you often imagined. The same goes for your business. Every year it’s important to plant new seeds and with the right knowledge, a good balance of attention and action and a bit of work you can produce fruit time and time again. What fruit do you want to produce this year? And what impact do you want it to have? It all starts with knowing your why! Without knowing your why, it’s almost impossible to produce consistent and long-term results. It is also almost near impossible to stay inspired and motivated if you don’t have a strong enough reason why you are doing what you are doing.

Let’s continue with our little apple seed...

As you get up from planting the seed you vividly imagine eating the fruit this plant is going to produce for you and your family as it grows over time. With the right knowledge and a little bit of work, you know you can have an apple tree producing enough fruit for you and your family. Each day you check on your seed, giving it the right amount of water. You wait in anticipation but never lose sight that unless you make the consistent daily effort to feed it and water it, it will never have the opportunity to grow and produce a large amount of fruit. Time passes by and still no sign of any plant let alone fruit. Over time it becomes a young tree and even after a few years it’s still not producing the fruit you had imagined. This is the time that some choose to give up, say it’s not worth the wait and walk away.

A business, like any apple tree can take years to produce a large amount of fruit. Watering it, feeding it and pruning it will help it reach full maturity and will begin to produce more and more fruit, just like your business. Doing the right things in the right order at the right time will help your business start to produce consistent revenues, cashflow and profits. Like some plants, a business may not produce consistent fruit in the first one or two years and some even longer, but over time it will.

What do you need to do in your business to get it on track for producing a good amount of fruit this year? If you are not sure take a quick look back at what you could have done better last year. You already have the answers, just more often than not we are just not willing to look at it. It all seems too hard and then we fall into the trap of blaming the economy or the lack of customers or poor positioning or sometimes even the mother in law. The bottom line is there will always be something that could and will impact your business at some stage. It’s about having clarity about your why, taking consistent action every day towards what it is you want, having access to the right people and support to help you achieve the results you desire, assessing and reviewing to determine if your course of action needs to change and balancing the key areas of business to ensure foundations are supporting the continued growth.

If you are not sure about your why or what you want to achieve, take out a pen and paper and start writing. Sit under a tree, or on a rock overlooking the water or even shut the
"Maximising your potential isn't that hard, it's about doing the right things in the right order at the right time."

door in your office and take the phone off the hook for just a moment and write. Imagine your plant growing. What fruit do you want to produce this year? What does it look like for you? How much fruit will there be? Can you taste it? Is it sweet enough? Allow your imagination and your senses to take over. Connecting with what it is you want will help you set a solid course of action in taking the necessary steps to ensure the plant grows and more importantly that the plant produces enough fruit year after year.

Take Consistent Action to Produce Results

What actions do you need to take over the course of the next year to achieve what it is you want? Starting with the end in mind work backwards to determine what you want to achieve each quarter and then each month. Breaking it down will help you get clear about what needs to be done each and every day to ensure your business is sure to produce the fruit you want.

What resources do you need to help you produce the fruit? Like the apple tree you need a balance between good nutrient rich soil, water and then ongoing pruning and maintenance and food. Your business needs a balance between the right food, the right people, the right actions and, the right amount of pruning. Pruning could be cutting costs or it could be cutting staff that are no longer contributing or it could be pruning and getting rid of the customers that you have hung onto for so long that just don’t support your business. You know the ones I’m talking about. They pay late, or don’t pay at all and are just not a joy to be around.

Attract Your Ideal Client

With this in mind as you are taking time out to get clear about what it is you want to achieve this year, take some time to get clear about who your ideal client is. Who are they? Why do they buy? What do they want? Remembering that people don’t buy what they need, they buy what they want. Once you know who your ideal client is and why they buy your product and service you are then in a much better position to market your services and effectively communicate your message, focusing on the benefits of your product or service and matching the reasons why they buy. Taking a closer look at your ideal customers decision-making process reveals who you really need to be communicating your message to.

When I speak with business owners they oftentimes say but I can’t just work with my ideal client and turn everyone else away. No you can’t. Getting off topic for a moment, think back to when you were a child and you had your favourite toy. You played with your toy all the time; you gave it more attention than your other toys didn’t you? Of course you did. It didn’t mean you didn’t play with your other toys, it just meant you spent more time playing with your favourite one. The same could be said for your ideal client. Spend more time with your ideal client. It’s the 80:20 rule in life. You can still have your other customers but be sure you spend more time with your ideal client as they are the ones that will produce more for you and your business with less effort.

Plant Many Seeds

Just like it’s important to plant many seeds to ensure the right amount of fruit is produced, having multiple lead generation activities working for you and building multiple streams of income is important as the multiple pillars will support you to produce consistent growth year after year. If one seed is slower to grow, the others will support you until it catches up.

Maximising your potential isn’t that hard, it’s about doing the right things in the right order at the right time. Make a decision today to get clear about what you want to achieve through the year and commit to planting the right seeds and taking the right amount of daily action to ensure they produce the fruit you desire.

Tania Allen is the founder of Vision Alliance and author of Franchise Profits. Vision Alliance is a business growth & franchise consulting firm that helps franchisors and franchisees get more out of business and more out of life.

For more information about how Tania and her team can support you contact:

Phone: 1300 76 49 20 or 0419 481 203
Email: tania@vision-alliance.com
Web: www.vision-alliance.com