



ESS AccountantsMinute

Welcome to Accountants Minute. I'm Peter Towers, Managing Director of ESS BIZTOOLS.

Identifying characteristics that will help your clients succeed

As accountants start offering a wider range of commercial services (I surely trust that you are), you will be involved in more meetings and discussions on actual business performance, rather than concentrating on just income tax returns.

Part of this broader role is identifying the characteristics of your successful clients. This is very important to assist other clients who wish to develop outstanding businesses.

We all know that it's not easy to run a business, probably of any type, however at present, it can be quite difficult.

For the business person to be successful, they need to analyse their own personal characteristics, make changes and adapt as required. Otherwise the marketplace, in most instances, will not be forgiving.

The principal characteristics of a successful business person include:

- Personal capacity and development – this refers to drive and energy:
 - Self-confidence
 - Taking advice
 - Seeing the big picture
- Excellent customer knowledge and service:
 - Knowing the target market
 - Empathy with customers
- Excellent product and industry knowledge - this doesn't just relate to the owner but also extends to the entire team:
 - Keeping up to date with the latest developments
- Excellent systems:
 - Monthly management financial accounts
 - Key Performance Indicators
 - Benchmarking against other businesses
 - Budgets and cashflow forecasts
 - Comparison to budgets
- Stock management:
 - Identifying problem stock lines and taking action to clear them
 - Knowing stockturn rates
- Work in progress – making sure jobs are completed on a regular basis:
 - Monitoring the investment in work in progress each month
- Debtors' control – is there a written debtors' management system:
 - Prompt dispatch of accurate invoices
 - Debtors' Aged Analysis – prepared monthly
 - Calculation of Debtors' Days Outstanding
 - Obtaining signed Terms of Trade Agreement and Retention of Title Agreement
 - Determination of customers' potential exposure relative to registration on the Personal Property Securities Register, to protect the business from potential action by liquidators as a preferential payment claim
- Cost control:
 - Management of costs (incidentally, in the CCH survey of small businesses, this was identified as the major problem confronting business operators)

- Wastage control
- Gross Profit Percentages
- Team management:
 - Motivation and communication
 - Team meetings
 - Promotion and growth
 - Leadership
- Marketing:
 - Customers' needs
 - Competitors – knowing who they are
 - Identifying competitors' strengths and weaknesses – where can your clients get an advantage
 - Pricing strategies
 - Social media
 - Using the internet
 - Knowing the business' "unique selling proposition"
- Advisors:
 - Accountants who are offering a virtual CFO service
 - Solicitors who are interested in commercial matters
 - Banker who is proactively available to assist quality control
- Management
 - Regular review of the Business Plan
 - Corporate responsibility chart
 - Regular planning meetings

These are some of the characteristics that will assist your client to become a successful business operator.

ESS BIZTOOLS has a full range of products and services to assist an accounting business to deliver services that will help clients maximise their business' performance. You don't have to develop all of this yourselves.

We invite you to participate in a special webinar we're presenting on Wednesday 27th January 2016, featuring **"Identifying Characteristics that will Help Your Clients Succeed"**. [Click here](#) to register to attend, free of charge.

A complimentary copy of an article we've prepared, **"Characteristics of a Well Run Business"**, is attached with this transcript.

If you have any questions relative to characteristics of successful business operators, or any aspect of the services offered by ESS BIZTOOLS, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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