

Balancing Business and Family Demands

Ask anyone who owns a business, and they'll tell you how quickly the business can take over your life. Running a business takes time, but keeping a family together does, too. Yes, sacrifices are made to make the business a success, but the family does not need to be one of those sacrifices. Outlined below are some tips for keeping the demands of the family business in check.

Check your attitude.

If you believe you are the only one who can do many of the required tasks, you're limiting yourself and your business, while taking away precious family time. Business owners are often disappointed with others to whom they delegate.



The disappointment sometimes stems from the owner's inability to give good, clear instructions.

You know your business, and you know what you have in mind. Your employees don't, so give specific instructions. Give employees context. It will help them perform more effectively so that you don't have to take back what you've delegated.

Check out resources.

Many business owners hesitate to outsource functions because of the cost. Too often, they haven't researched the actual costs before making that decision.

Today, many firms exist to help small businesses with their less specific or non-technical functions. There are printing, mailing, payroll, human resource, and public relations services available, to name only a few.

To start your research, make a list of all the nontechnical duties you perform, and ask yourself the question, "Is there a service that could do this for me?"

By outsourcing some of these functions, you could save yourself valuable time that can be spent with your family or allow you the time to spend on developing your business.

Check your processes.

Make your work as efficient as possible, by checking to see if you are using the best equipment and processes for each job. For example, if you produce paper invoices to

send to vendors, you might save time and money by doing your billing electronically. Talk to advisers and other business owners to share efficiency tips and suggestions. With technology advancing each day, your options for efficiency are endless!

Check your customer list.

Many business owners may say that their most important customer is the one who generates them the most money or who has been a customer for the longest amount of time. In fact, your most important customer is your family.

One business owner took this one step further and actually set up her family in her billing system as her number 1 customer. That decision helped her to manage her mindset.

For example, she would never interrupt one customer to take a call from another one, but she had been willing to interrupt a conversation with her teenager anytime a customer called. Designating the family as a customer helped her to keep that behavior in check.

With the steps outlined above, you will be prepared to manage your time more effectively, run your business more efficiently, and spend more quality time with your family.

Davis & Hodgdon Associates entrepreneurial services include assistance with many of the functions that can help you achieve a well-rounded balance between work and family. Our services are focused squarely on the needs of growing businesses. For more information call 802-878-1963.

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