

Top Business Tips for Success

Jim Penman

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Founder of the Jim's Group, Jim Penman is a household name in Australia and New Zealand where his story is well known. He's the entrepreneur whose \$24 investment led to what is now the largest franchise chain in the Southern Hemisphere. Read on to discover his biggest tips for starting and running a successful business.

SELL BY NOT SELLING

Be exceptionally generous with what you know and have learned. Generosity is attractive to potential buyers and customers! I failed at all selling I tried in the early days of my business until I learned this lesson. I simply don't have a salesman personality. But when I became outrageously generous with what I'd learned, people chose me over competitors. The more helpful you become and the more information you share, the more potential customers will develop loyalty to you and your brand. People who are tightfisted with the knowledge they hold don't attract fans.

BE RELENTLESS ABOUT SERVICE

Be unfailingly committed to perfect customer service! Your number one priority should always be to turn your customers into fans. The reason my company has succeeded is I prioritize those who keep me in business—my franchisees. And the reason they succeed is they prioritize those who keep them in business—their clients. If you put the happiness of your clients and customers at the top of your list, you'll grow so much faster than you would otherwise. Make your customer your number one fan by giving them the best experience possible, regardless of what they're buying or how much they're paying you.

HIRE SELECTIVELY

Be incredibly selective in who you choose to employ. Hiring anyone with a pulse is a sure-fire way to cause disruption in your company. It might even lead to collapse! Our process for signing new franchisees is fairly complex, and we are quick to say no when we feel someone won't fit and slow to say yes until we're positive they'll do well. Be intentional and thorough when interviewing. Make sure the person truly understands your company culture and will contribute. Failing at a job can be incredibly demoralizing to the individual. Don't hire them if you suspect they won't fit the position.

LET THEM GO

Don't hesitate to fire someone who isn't a good fit. Alternatively, if they're a hard worker and a great employee, see if you can find a different position where they might better shine. I've done this several times, and it has helped my company grow so much better. I learned quickly that if I kept someone who was wrong for us, the kindest thing I could do was to let them go, and as soon as I realized they shouldn't stay. Keeping someone who isn't a good fit can demoralize them and your company, and it can cause other employees to resent and mistrust you.

DON'T GOSSIP

Never speak badly about your employees, contractors, or opposition. For quite some time, my biggest competitor was a company called VIP Home Services. When people asked why they should prefer our system to theirs, I never spoke badly about them. Bad mouthing others is a poor business practice that generally backfires and will affect your reputation. Don't do it yourself, and don't allow your employees to do it. Gossips are never trusted.

DON'T NEGLECT YOUR REPUTATION

Don't underestimate the value of reputation. Pay attention to negative reviews and focus on increasing advertising through word-of-mouth referrals—these will be your most valuable sources for new customers. When I hear a client has had a bad experience, I do everything in my power to make sure they're happy. And I'm even more focused on my franchisees, as they're my true clients. What people say about you and your company can permanently change the trajectory of your success.

REMEMBER YOUR GRASSROOTS

Maintain connection with all of your people, whether this be your lowliest employee or lowest-paying customer. Cultivating relationships with them will help you understand their needs, which in turn allows you to shift company policies accordingly. It will also help you stay grounded and keep their opinions of you high. No one likes someone who places themselves on a pedestal. I make sure my franchisees—all 5,000 of them—have my number and email address, and I encourage them to reach out for help regardless of the time or day. I also directly and personally respond to unhappy customers whose concerns were not met the first time they contacted us.

DON'T IGNORE COMPLAINTS

Prioritize company culture with how you handle incoming leads and complaints. Don't allow complaints to get lost in the shuffle. Getting people to contact you—whether a lead or complaint—can be expensive. Spend whatever is necessary so you won't lose either, and train your employees to answer the phone professionally and cheerfully. Remember that the success of your company depends on your ability to calmly and successfully resolve issues.

FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS

Focus on areas of the business where you have strengths, and hire people to handle the things you don't do well. I take very little interest in areas such as marketing or finance where others are doing a much better job than I could. This leaves my time free to focus on areas such as service and being available to franchisees, which I believe no one else can do as well. If you offload tasks you aren't great at to someone who is, it frees you up to do the things you excel at, which leads to growth and success.

PRIORITIZE FAMILY

Don't neglect your spouse and children for occupational success! My passion for this topic extends to my employees as well. I never ask staff to work overtime unless there's an emergency, and I frequently tell them to go be with their families if I see them working late. I cannot justify ignoring their welfare just to increase company profits, and I will not ignore my family for the same. As my favorite quote says, "No other success can compensate for failure in the home." I truly believe this. It doesn't matter how successful I become in my business if I fail where my wife and children are concerned. Because I will have failed at something far more important than professional and monetary success.

THANK YOU FOR READING TOP BUSINESS TIPS FOR SUCCESS

For more information about Jim or his company check out the following:

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Don't forget to [grab your copy](#) of *No Other Success: How a Lawn Mowing Business Transformed Thousands of Lives* - the story of how Jim's \$24 investment became the largest franchise chain in the Southern Hemisphere!