

HOW TO BE
FOCUSED
& TAKE MORE
ACTION

21 simple activities that will dramatically
improve your business results **in 21 days**
...and stop you just surviving!



**BE FOCUSED
BE CONSISTENT
BE EXCEPTIONAL**

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How to use this mini book

Thanks for taking the time to read this mini book.

As I'd like you to get the most benefit, I recommend you read a section and then take the action shared. All of these actions are drawn from real life examples and they have been tried and tested by small business owners just like you.

I've designed this mini book so that you can take 1 action every day.

Get a small notebook and in it write the action you are going to take.

Commit to finishing the mini book, it's only when you get to the conclusion that everything will fall into place for you.

If your business is going to provide your home, your holidays and your lifestyle, doesn't it

deserve you to stay focused long enough to make it the best it can be?

Remember: Thinking is good, talking is better, but action is best.

Pete

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Vision: The starting point

Did you know very few businesses and professional people have a clear vision of what they are going to achieve? It's amazing but true that most people start the week without a clear idea of what they are going to achieve. Having a clear vision enables you to work on your “why power” instead of just your willpower. In order for you to stay focused it is vital you have a clear picture of what your future looks like.

When you go on holiday and you arrive at the airport with your family, how many times do you stand in front of the large flight boards and look to see where you would like to go? Do you stand there and say “well now it's three o'clock, at four o'clock we could go to Spain, at six o'clock we could go to Italy and if we wait until tomorrow morning we can go to Jamaica!” This sounds ridiculous, because it is. Before you start your family holiday you have a plan and a picture of what your ideal holiday would look like.

If you have children and they love swimming then the hotel you choose would obviously have a swimming pool. If you love to have romantic meals by a marina then you wouldn't book to stay somewhere 40 miles inland. But here's the kicker - many of us approach our business in the wrong way; we turn up without a clear picture of what we want our business to look like. Having a clear vision is the starting point.

Action number one

Think about your perfect day in your business. Write down what made it a perfect day by asking yourself:

- What were you doing that day?
- What sort of customers or clients were you spending your time with?
- What value did you receive?
- How much were you charging for your products or services?

Creating a picture of your perfect day in your business is a great way to start clarifying what you want your business to look like.

Action number two

Decide what size of business you would like. You may want to measure your business in terms of total sales turnover. If this appeals to you, what turnover target would you like to achieve that would mean success to you? You may want to measure the total number of clients you have. Here you could decide if you want 20 ideal clients, 100 ideal clients or 1000 ideal clients. You may want to measure net profit. For some people, if their business delivers a certain amount of net profit which enables them to achieve a certain income by only working a certain number of hours, they class that as success. Decide how you would like to measure the size of your business.

Action number three

Once you have completed action number one and action number two, and you have a clear picture of your perfect day and the size of the business you want, you then need to decide what your life will look like.

Here it's important to add a personal element and not be too corporate. Business owners like us who manage small businesses often do not have a clear distinct line between our business lives and our personal lives. Because of this I feel it's vital to get clear on what you want your whole life to look like. Let's say you have achieved the business you want, what will you do with your time? What relationships do you want to form? Who would you want to spend your time with? If you have a family, what would it mean to them? So, by completing action number three means you will know exactly why you want to create the business you want. Remember it is about your "why power" not just your willpower.

By now you should have created a four or five sentence vision that identifies and describes:

- what you're going to do
- how you are going to do it
- who you are doing it for
- what benefits you will receive from your investments
- how your life will look when you have the business you want

Core Objectives: Chunking it down

Establishing your core objectives will enable you to maintain daily focus to achieve the vision you have created by completing actions one, two and three. If like me you have an active mind you may find it difficult to focus on the things that are absolutely central. Many people start a task and then drift off in a different direction chasing bright blue butterflies. With your core objectives you must focus, focus, focus.

Action number four

Establish your first core objective that will contribute to your vision. What is the first thing that absolutely must be in place for your vision to be realised? If you decided to have a sales target as part of your vision could your first core objective be related to a marketing objective? Alternatively could your first core objective be related to a certain product or service that would

drive the sales to achieve your sales target?

Action number five

Many clients decide that their second core objective is related to systems and processes. If your business vision talks about the number of clients or customers you require, what system would you have to develop to make that happen? Would you require a formalised folder that documented all the key processes in your business? A formalised folder system which documents key processes is one of the main reasons McDonald's restaurants have achieved so much success.

Action number six

Here you need to establish your third core objective. One of the great things about achieving fantastic success is the journey that you take to get there. Success has been referred to as something you become, not something you achieve. Thinking about this, your third core

objective may be to do with your own personal development or your team's personal development. What sort of person or team do you have to become to achieve the vision you have created?

By now you should have:

- established three core objectives that are central to the successful completion of your vision
- carried out a check back which means asking yourself "could I have achieved my vision if I hadn't achieved my three core objectives?"

Setting goals: Stepping stones to your core objectives

If you're not getting the results you want or if you're not getting the results you deserve I believe you need to become more specific with your goals. Everyone in business performs better when they have a goal.

Action number seven

You need to create some goals to sit below your core objectives. These goals need to be action orientated so that almost by default when you complete them you automatically achieve your core objectives. To begin with, come up with two simple goals for each one of your three core objectives. Later as you become more comfortable you can add more goals.

Action number eight

After you have set two simple goals for each of your three core objectives you need to decide on some activities that you will focus on daily that will mean you will achieve these goals. If for example one of your goals is to create a blog that is shared with 500 people weekly, what activity do you need to undertake to make that goal reality? You may need to create some great headings for your blogs, you may need to establish a page on your website that will house your blog and you may need to mention your blog on the reverse of your business card so that people learn about it.

Action number nine

Setting a stretch goal is a great way to focus your mind. A stretch goal is something that when you achieve it will demonstrate a quantum shift in business performance. Your stretch goal will only be achieved if you focus and concentrate. I like to set my stretch goals at 90 day intervals.

So thinking now what could you achieve in your business in 90 days if you really concentrated? When you have set your stretch goal carry it around with you on a piece of card or stored in your smart phone to regularly remind yourself of what you are going to achieve in the next 90 days.

By now you will have:

- at least two goals for each of your core objectives
- established some activities so that these goals will be achieved
- set a 90 day stretch goal that will deliver a quantum shift in business performance

Leadership development: Leading yourself better

Even if you are in a micro-sized business and are working by yourself, as an independent professional it is beneficial to develop your leadership skills. How we lead ourselves is very important because poor leadership will result in you not making the most of yourself.

Action number ten

As the leader of your business your thinking needs to be in the future. Having a clear vision is essential, and when you have a clear vision it's great to get some outside support. The action here is to approach three people who could offer guidance and become part of your support network. These people will offer a fresh set of eyes and enable you to reach your vision quicker. When you have identified your three people support network share with them individually your vision, your core objectives and your goals

and ask for their input.

Action number eleven

I bet in the past you've done some excellent things within your business and taken note of action that led to positive results. The action here is to think creatively about some of the things that you have done on occasion but have not completed consistently. For me, direct mail had in the past produced a good result, but to be honest I didn't complete direct mail consistently. I recently worked out how much a sales letter I sent out six months ago had produced for my business, and was surprised at the figure. I now consistently send direct mail. What about your business? What have you done occasionally that produced a good result that you are going to commit to doing consistently?

Action number twelve

Here I want you to think about your comfort zone. What are you doing week in week out

within your business that you feel really comfortable about? All of us have a comfort zone where we operate most of the time. The thing is, major developments in business success come from operating outside of that comfort zone. The action here is to push yourself and within the next seven days do something in your business that is outside your comfort zone but will lead to a successful result. This could be attending a new networking meeting, it could be speaking to a group of prospects or it could be making a telephone call to an ideal prospect.

By now you will:

- understand the importance of leading yourself as well as others
- have added someone to your support network
- have looked at what you have done well in the past
- be thinking about pushing your comfort zone

Personal organisation: Making the most of your 86,400 seconds

Can you believe that every single day we have 86,400 seconds in which to produce a result for our businesses? How is it that some people just produce more? Are you the type of person who constantly says that they don't have enough time? The great thing about time is everyone (and I mean *everyone*) gets the same amount every single day. Wouldn't it be great to get more out of your time?

Action number thirteen

Look at your diary now. You may have an electronic one such as Outlook or you may have a paper one. How far ahead is yours completed? Many unsuccessful people either don't have a diary or at best only plan one day ahead. If you want to get better results in your business you have to commit to planning at least one week in advance. The action here is to look at the

activities you identified in action number eight and plan those in your diary for at least a week in advance. Simply write in what the activity is you're going to focus on and when you are going to do it.

Action number fourteen

How often do you check your e-mail? I used to check mine constantly throughout the day. I'd often see the little red light flashing on my BlackBerry and I would open it up and check my e-mail. This is not productive. Did you know that every athlete who competes in the Olympics has a success routine embedded before they complete their event? There is a very good reason for this; they've worked out the best routine to produce the best result, and we need to do this in business. Your action here is to come up with a success routine for you to start the day and finish the day.

My success routine at the beginning of the day consists of checking my diary to ensure that I

have a full and productive day planned, and at the end of the day it consists of reviewing what I have achieved that day. I use outlook and change every completed task to purple. All I want to see at the end of each day are purple actions completed. I only check my e-mail three times each day.

Action number fifteen

Identifying your main actions is key to making the most of your time available. Each day I set 3 VIT's. These VIT's are my Very Important Tasks. I will judge the success of the day based on the compilation of my three Very Important Tasks. These are tasks that are going to enable me to make progress and achieve my vision. Your action is to set three Very Important Tasks for each day before you open your e-mail or check your social media.

By now you will be:

- planning at least 1 week in advance to achieve more

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- only checking your email three times a day, saving loads of wasted time
- identifying the three Very Important Tasks (VITS) that you need to do each day

Client Relationships: It's always about the relationship

How strong are the relationships between you and your clients or customers? Is there anything else you could do to strengthen and develop those relationships? These are two vital questions which will lead to more loyal customers, better referrals and a developed and improved reputation. Too many businesses focus on the transaction, which is what happens during the sales process. I believe business is about people and it is about interaction. Focus on your client relationships.

Action number sixteen

What are you like with client follow-up? Many businesses focus on follow-up only after they have delivered their product or service. These businesses are missing a huge opportunity and potentially leaving thousands of pounds on the table. I have one client who has a sports tour

company and I helped him to put in place a simple 10 e-mail follow-up strategy for pre-delivery. When an enquiry came in for an inbound tour the prospect was then sent a system of 10 e-mails all done by auto responder. These e-mails coached the prospect to realise that should they choose an inbound tour to the UK, my client's was the company they should select. All of these e-mails were future value to the prospect.

Your action is to identify what simple system can you design to demonstrate your business is the one your prospect should engage with before delivery of your product or service?

Action number seventeen

Adding something extra is a great way to enhance the customer experience. This is something that premium retailers such as John Lewis do very well. The key is to focus not just on the sales order process or the delivery mechanism you choose, but the whole customer

experience. Your action is to come up with one thing you can add extra that will benefit your customer or client. Once you have come up with this one thing you are going to add, you then need to decide how you are going to communicate this “something extra” to your customer or client.

Action number eighteen

Do you know who your ideal client is? Many businesses do not know, and are unclear as to who their ideal client could be. When you understand who your ideal client is, your message to market match is perfect. One way to ensure strong client relationships is to ensure that your business and your clients match each other. Your action here is to come up with a client avatar. If you could find your ideal client what would they be like? What sector would they operate from? What size would they be? What products would they want to buy from you? Answering these questions will identify your ideal client avatar, someone who fits you perfectly.

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By now you will:

- be following up before the delivery of your product or service
- have come up with something extra you can add to enhance your clients overall experience
- have identified your ideal client and will be searching for them

Strength development: Building your key strengths

I'm sure like me you have been told many times that you should work on your weaknesses, but I don't actually agree with that. I believe that if I'm really weak at something and I work really hard at it I may get to become average. Well, that's not going to get me where I want to be. I believe the clever thing is to work on your strengths.

Action number nineteen

Your action here is to come up with your three key strengths. What are the things you do really well? What do you do naturally to a high standard? What do you love to do that makes you feel good and the time flies by? The first stage in developing your strengths is to identify them.

Action number twenty

Once you have identified your three key strengths your next action is to critically appraise yourself and look at how you are utilising those three key strengths in your business today. I bet that you are not utilising them fully. Many people can tell me what their weaknesses are, but I realise that looking at your strengths is something different.

Come up with three ways to utilise your strengths fully in your business. If you love to write do you produce special reports to help your clients? If you love to teach could you develop IT courses to support your clients rather than just provide IT maintenance? Make the most of your strengths.

Action number twenty one

I want you now to spend a little time looking at the things that you are weak at. If there is one weakness that is holding you back, your action is

to find a solution to that weakness. For me it was administration. When I realised that I was spending time on my admin that was not making me feel good I found a way of delegating it to someone who loved to do it, and was good at it. I have now freed up a great deal of time and am able to concentrate on my strengths I identified in action number 20. The purpose of this action is to free up your time so that you are more productive by focusing on your key strengths, plus you feel great as you will be spending less time doing things that you don't love to do.

By now you will have:

- identified your three key strengths and looked at how you're utilising them in your business
- found three ways to make full use of your strengths
- identified your key weakness and delegated this to someone for whom it is a strength

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