

7 Vitalising Virtues

1 - Granular Measurement of the Business

Remember that most people get caught up in the vehicle of their business, rather than the destination.

Measure precisely all of the performance metrics you can, including:

- × Sources of leads, % of leads converted, revenue sources, who buys what
- × Inventories, turnaround time, delivery time
- × Returns, repeat buys, referrals
- × Costs, revenue etc
- × Client journey stages, rates of success
- × Client satisfaction – in detail
- × Staff performance - in detail
- × Business owner performance – what's your primary gift, what are your precise roles?

- Which stage is your business at? Every business is an organism with a life cycle:

On the rise - growth, expansion, diversification

Peak Maturity - secure position, ideal performance, sales and profits growing

Dropping - aging, institutionalisation, lack of adaptation

- Which stages are your industry, your competitors and the economy in?
- Which stage of life are you personally in?
 - × What can you/what do you want to contribute to the business?
 - × Do you want long, mid or short-term involvement in the business?
 - × What do you want from the business (money, interest, status, challenge etc)?
 - × Do you have an exit strategy?

What's next?

- × Growth
- × Sale
- × Diversification etc

Are you currently a business owner or a business operator?

Which do you want to be?

Repeat these assessments every couple of months.

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2 - Constant Strategic Innovation

'If I'd asked my customers what they wanted, they'd have said a faster horse.'

Henry Ford

Question conventional wisdom about what you think your customers want

If you constantly deliver in the same way people will become satiated and crave variety

Strategic is the key word – companies can destroy themselves otherwise

Innovation is just doing something better – can you cross-pollinate from other industries?
Can you give your people some freedom to work on what they want to?

Steps to revitalise a business:

- New voices (experts, employees, consultants, volunteers)
- New questions
- New perspectives (immerse yourself with your customers)
- New passions (fuels creativity)
- New experiments (e.g. if you ran 20 or 30 experiments 1 would be the jackpot)

Ideally be ahead of the trend but not the pioneer
– the first head above the parapet tends to get shot off...

Ensure there are infinite upsides as a possibility of anything you try to innovate

Ideally meet as diverse a collection of high-achieving people as possible
– different systems, processes, strategies etc

The design of something needs to cover the whole process (e.g. you don't just design the label of a water bottle, you think about how the bottle looks on a shop shelf, how you hold and unscrew it, how you dispose of it etc)

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3 - Refreshing Marketing and Sales

CLEAR makes money - cute and clever do not – ‘if you confuse you lose’

People don't buy a product or service - they buy an identity or emotion

Make it personal and clear how your business can help to make their life better

The human brain is designed for surviving and thriving – people only buy for surviving and thriving – if they do not associate your product/service with this they won't buy

To get attention you need short simple messages associating customer survival with your product/service repeated over and over again

We don't buy the best thing possible, we buy what we understand the quickest – the customer needs to understand in a few seconds the problem you will solve for them

The brain is always trying to save energy so it automates, batches and filters information

Every buyer has 3 needs:

- Clarity – clearly define their problem and your solution
- Certainty – that you can solve their problem and that you have done it before
- Collaboration – they need to be able to clearly and with certainty explain your solution to their collaborative team of decision-makers

What happens when you are not in front of your potential client is where you lose sales – being great in person isn't enough - 73% of decision makers do business research in the evenings, this is the 'invisible time' in the sales process

If it was just an in person meeting with you they can't easily convey this content to fellow decision-makers – make sure you follow up with clear, concise, shareable information

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4 - People Power

'The power of the people is much stronger than the people in power.'

Variety, entertainment, rawness and energy keep people engaged with you

People hear your emotion and sincerity more than your words
– people don't remember what you say, but they remember how you make them feel

Hire someone different to yourself – someone who goes beyond your skills

Proximity on a regular basis to the right people is more powerful than anything else
– you are accountable to them, model from them, get contacts from them

Proximity where you feel you don't fit in is best because it forces you to keep up
– always try to be in proximity to people playing higher than you

When you approach someone you need to influence:

- Sincerely compliment them – make it personal and specific
- Pre-empt what they are objecting to
- Tell the truth – even if it is harsh, but do it respectfully
- Give proof of what you have previously achieved for others
- Question them out of their beliefs of impossibility
- State the personal outcomes and the benefits of what you are proposing

Most people are not risk-takers, therefore they won't proceed unless they have certainty and simplicity:

- if your plan is not simple and certain people won't execute it
- you need to show clear measurables they can base it on

Company culture will emerge by itself into something unless you specifically design it

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5 - Anticipation Through Analysis

Most people don't understand accountancy basics
- can you regularly easily and closely evaluate all of your financials?

If you always know your position precisely you can take advantage of unexpected opportunities as well as mitigate and prevent problems in the pipeline.

Are you structured in the most tax efficient and low-risk way?

Ensure any innovations and assets are properly protected

Are your contracts watertight, is every deal vetted for legality and optimal structure

Keep an eagle eye on cashflow – over 80% of business failures are caused by this

Every dollar you lose could be re-invested in growth – thus the true cost is exponentially more

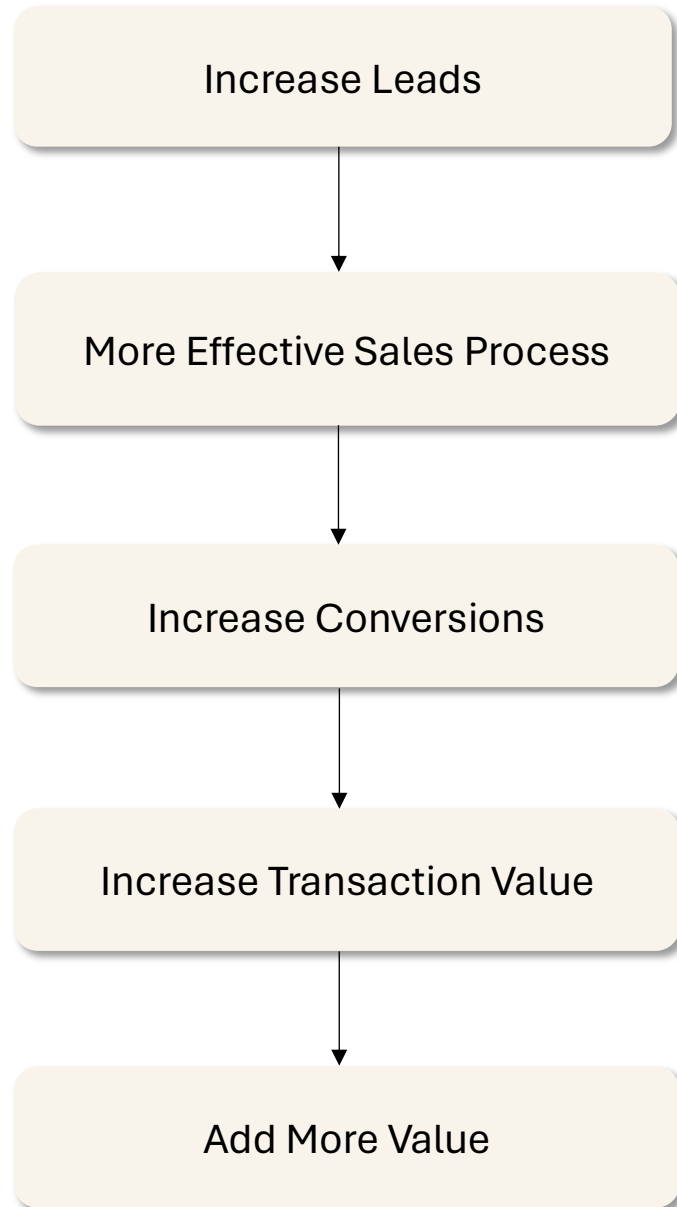
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6 - Constant Optimisation and Maximisation

Constant incremental improvements in all areas compounds to large returns over the long term.

Model the person who is most successful at each stage.



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7 - The Holy Grail of Raving Fan Customers

The X-factor in business is to add intangible value, something beyond that which can be measured and is therefore subjective and potentially priceless – something which improves the quality of life or quality of experience of the customer.

The most expensive thing you can do is acquire a new customer – it's the hardest thing to do and takes the most time, energy and money

The biggest mistake most businesses make is that they fall in love with their products/service and not with their clients

You must understand, anticipate and consistently fulfil the deepest needs of your customers at the highest level

Depth of relationship is what is missing nowadays – most communication is superficial

You need a strategic philosophy where you are not looking to make a sale, but are looking to create a long-term relationship where you are looking out for your client's best interests at all times – this will transform your business

The business that has extremely high customer loyalty dwarfs the others

Create unexpected surprises and bonuses
– also always reward your best clients

We wish you all the best with your businesses and ventures.