

Hi

## **My view on the key driver of business success**

***"If you work just for money, you'll never make it, but if you love what you're doing and you always put the customer first, success will be yours."***

*Ray Kroc - founder, McDonalds (International)*

There are plenty of poor geniuses out there! That tells us that "smarts" isn't the only requirement for financial and business success.

There are plenty of poor gamblers out there! That tells us that just because you take a risk, it doesn't mean to say it's going to pay off with a big win.

And there are plenty of well educated, trained, commercially minded people who couldn't create and grow their own business even if it was their own money on the line! (Trust me, I've met plenty.)

So what does all this tell one about the world of business success – that you don't have to be super smart, you don't always have to take huge (uncalculated) risks and you don't necessarily have to have the best education in the world.

The most critical success factor (in my view) of business success is **discipline**.

Nothing mind blowing and not the proverbial rocket science assertion that one might expect – but also rarely put forward in any of the self-help, motivational literature (or many scholarly business books for that matter); maybe it's a dirty word, because it doesn't provide that magical hope? (Telling someone they need discipline in their lives and business isn't going to sell books is it?)

But it's a reality statement - gone are the days of people barging their way through the doors of businesses to buy your products and services. Competition is fierce, margins are being cut, channels to market expanded (globally) and legislative compliance issues are encroaching on any remaining time to allow one to develop really thoughtful business strategies.

***"The successful person makes a habit of doing what the failing person doesn't like to do."***

*Thomas Edison – founder, General Electric*

A disciplined, strategic path in all facets of a business has (and proven) to yield favourable, positive results. Fact. The only question is how disciplined are you? Your staff? The business in general? The starting point is to take a good hard look at your own levels of self discipline – a fundamental of great leadership is to lead by example and if you aren't disciplined to fulfil your own role, why should anyone else want to fulfil theirs?

***"If you want to be successful in a particular field of endeavour, I think perseverance is one of the key qualities. It's very important that you find something that you care about, that you have a deep passion for, because you're going to have to devote a lot of your life to it."***

*George Lucas – Film producer, Star Wars franchise*

Why is it that nearly 90% of SME businesses do not have a business and/or marketing plan in place? Because it requires discipline to create the time to sit down and think about (and document) the business and create a clear, defined, articulate path of development (and probably uncover significant opportunities or areas of cost reduction). It takes discipline to follow up the last 3 sales calls (and probably close another sale), it takes discipline to finish writing new company procedures (to save your time on training and continuously explaining the same procedure all the time), it takes discipline to conduct regular, informative and effective meetings (ensuring everyone is clear and up to speed with all areas of the business).

But you know, the discipline pays off. It has a positive yield – guaranteed. The variability of result though is the level of discipline used and the effectiveness of the task being regularly conducted. If one wants to achieve a 17% increase in sales revenue for the next two quarters, great. How many calls or sales do you have to make to achieve that? Once that is known it's purely a matter of discipline (and an appropriate effective strategy) to achieve it.

***"The only question to ask yourself is, how much are you willing to sacrifice to achieve this success?"***

*Larry Flynt – founder, Hustler Magazine*

My sign off has never been more truer than now –

Your level of success is only limited by yourself.

Best wishes

Vaughan

