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**Rock Savvy Business Support**

ACCOUNTING - GROWTH - MENTORING

**9 Tips To Future Proof  
Your Business**

# 9 Tips To Future Proof Your Business

Firstly, I'd like to say many thanks to you for requesting a copy of this Tips guide.

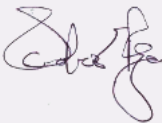
One thing about certainty is that it is uncertain. Many of us in business think the same when we look at our future. Will we survive and thrive? Are we destined to hit the rocks of business and financial calamity? Can we make money from our businesses?

The truth is that in the world of business, as in life there are no cast iron guarantees, no 100% certainties. Although death and taxes are the exception.

However, future-proofing your business is a great way to strengthen your business. It energises your ability to navigate through turbulent times, as well as times of calm and prosperity. Most importantly, it makes you money! Let me share my 9 Tips for future-proofing your business.

The list isn't an exhaustive one, but it's a good starter for ten, or should I say nine!

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mahmood Reza', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mahmood Reza

## Your Numbers Matter

"When you have mastered numbers, you will in fact no longer be reading numbers, any more than you read words when reading books. You will be reading meanings." *W.E.B. Dubois*

For some, watching paint dry, taking a cold call, or a poke in the eye is better than dealing with their numbers. Do numbers fall to the bottom of your in-tray?

That's a shame because ignoring your numbers is a bad idea. Numbers make you accountable, showing you the financial impact of your successes and fu\*\* ups. They give you energy, a superpower. Above all, learning to love & use your numbers means you have a better chance of making money. What is not to love?

Numbers are your friend; they will not lie to you. You can call upon and rely on them in times of turbulence, calm, and prosperity. They help you navigate your business, avoiding the financial rocks of doom.



# 2

## Mindset, Attitude & Well Being

*"Nothing diminishes anxiety faster than action."  
Walter Anderson*

This may sound a bit "Hippy Chic" to some, but remember you are the most important asset in your business. Your attitude to your business future, your physical and mental well-being are non-negotiable.

If your approach to the future is to hide under your duvet, it is understandable, but also daft. Calm, purpose, and your well-being help you make the right decisions about what to do next.

When a business calamity seems to be bearing down on us, panic and checking out the nearest toilet can dominate your actions. It's understandable, but that's not going to help you navigate your business through a financial hurricane to calmer waters. Calm, tranquillity, with a smidgen of *FFS!* is what you need. Cooler heads prevail. Make your business decisions with a degree of inner calm, tranquillity, and focus.

# Keep an eye on the Cash

CASH FLOW is what you need when in the eye of a financial storm. It's what you need if your business is going to survive and thrive.

Nobody knows with 100% certainty what your business future looks like. However, not taking a financial peek beyond the here & now is understandable, but not a good business model.

## Three Key Cash Numbers to build into a cash forecast.

- ✔ CASH IN
- ✔ CASH OUT
- ✔ WHAT'S LEFT

Putting together your three CASH numbers gives you so much. You have options, you make better and stronger decisions for your business.

## Building your future cash story is based on

- What we know
- What we think we know
- What we don't know

When you have built your cash forecast, take a step back and check out what it's saying. Once you see what your Cash Numbers are saying then you can make many meaningful business decisions. If some months (or weeks) look tough, then you have options; if things look positive, you have options. Your cashflow forecast, will help you decide when it's time to step up.

The no Cash = Business Stops, applies whatever your business size, shape or form, private, social enterprise, or charity.



# 4

## Profits

*Where profit is, loss is hidden nearby,  
Japanese Proverb.*

Your business journey map should have profit as a destination point. If your destination is set for sales alone, then change your route or abandon your journey, it'll end in tears otherwise.

Who doesn't love making a sale? I certainly do. It's like a legal dopamine rush, that elation and feeling of happiness. Be very aware though. If you are not making profits, then that feeling of happiness can quickly disappear and make you feel like you want to pull the head off a teddy bear, or punch Bambi. If that trend continues then all those dreams of yours will stay unrealised, unfulfilled and in the distant horizon. Cash is pretty important as well, sales though, well it's like 'all fur coat and no knickers'

# Planning

Everyone has a plan 'till they get punched in the mouth." *Mike Tyson*

Purpose, proper prior planning, passion, patience, persistence, and perseverance prevent piss poor performance.

Your business plan is a smart way to map out your future story. Loads of businesses do not bother writing one, then again loads of businesses do not survive and thrive. You hear business plan, and think it's only needed when you're after funding.

You hear business plan and think a waste of your time and energy. You hear business plan and think what do I need one for? I know what I am doing, if that is what you think or have been told, think again.

A Business Plan is more than just a document, it's a route map to your goals and objectives. It's a living, breathing document, that is much about your mindset, and planning attitude. However, a Business Plan with no numbers and detail is like going to a restaurant that doesn't serve food, it's pointless.

## **A Business Plan should include;**

- Your Summary, your calling card, your Elevator Pitch
- Time lines and Milestones
- Markets and competitors
- Financial Results



# Costs

Knowing and understanding your business costs is information gold. A great product, customer focus, working hard, marketing, are all important.

**Knowing your costs helps you with a lot more, including:**

- Calculating your profit, current and future
- What prices to charge
- Your break-even
- Putting together your budget
- Controlling what you spend
- Which customers lose you money

When you understand your costs more, you can challenge them. Are the costs necessary to support your business now, and in the future? Do they add any value to what you do, or to your customers experience? It's not case of slash and burn, money spent on marketing and training now, may not produce results until several months later.

Knowing and understanding your costs will inject *oomph* into your business continuity, money making, and growth.





# Getting Paid on Time

"Don't mistake my kindness for weakness. I am kind to everyone, but when someone is unkind to me, weak is not what you are going to remember about me." *Al Capone*

You work hard, give your customer what they want and then wait for your customer to do the right thing, i.e. pay you on time. Most of your customers get it, don't take advantage and pay on time. Granted, there are times when we all cut some slack, and give them time to pay. Some customers behaving like rotting and festering cucumbers, and you wish you could be more Capone like.

Getting Paid on Time and keeping business cash flowing is the most important thing to keep your business wheels rolling. It's the lifeblood of any business and you need it to survive, sustain, and grow. You need cash for a whole variety of things, from paying staff, bills, buying materials, and paying your taxes, and yourself.

Firstly, make sure your Credit Control policy is clear and concise. Include what your credit terms are e.g. 7 days. Look at how you will deal with late payments and if you would be prepared to offer a Payment Plan. Your terms and conditions must be clear and unambiguous. Tell customers and clients as soon as you start business with them what your terms are. Keep a track of who owes you money, when it should be paid by, and respond immediately to late payments.

# Cloud Accounting

"Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change." *Wayne W. Dyer*

Nothing stops you using parchment, paper or spreadsheets to record what's going on. Numbers & spreadsheets go together like Gin and Tonic, Greggs and Vegan Roll. This is low cost, OK for simple records, and you don't need to make any decisions of value.

In the Business Number world Cloud Accounting is the new kid on the block. Born into the NetSuite family back in 1998, its only friends were large & rich business types. Smaller businesses just pressed their noses against the Cloud Window & looked enviously in.

The cosy club of Cloud Accounting has opened its doors, and adolescent businesses rub shoulders with businesses that are older and bigger. Think of Cloud accounting as Turbo charged spreadsheets on steroids

## Cloud headlines

- Cuts down on your bookkeeping heavy lifting
- Helps keep the cash rolling
- Adds to your business productivity and efficiency
- Improves the decisions that you make
- Your phone doubles as a computer and paper becomes a thing of yesterday
- Lets you easily connect to your numbers



# Risk

"You live in a grim universe."

"That's risk management for you."

*Max Gladstone, Two Serpents Rise*

Starting your own business is one of the biggest risks that you take in life, it was for me. That is only the beginning, running your business throws up risks on a regular basis, it can feel never ending.

## **Internal Risks include:**

- Sales fluctuations
- Products and services at the end of their life cycle
- Reliance on a major customer, and/or supplier
- Poor cost management

## **External Business Risks are outside of your control, and include:**

- Meteors and comets
- Growth or slump in the economy
- Demographic changes
- Regulation, government policies

Once you have figured out your business risk, assess their potential impact and likelihood of them occurring. For example, a meteor crashing to earth will have a major impact but a small likelihood, so rest easy.

Understanding your risks gives you options, opportunities, and strength. Diversification, business pivoting improving efficiency may be ways Forward. On the money side, build a buffer, a reserve that will help you through those tricky times.

This is your emergency fund, this will get you through those colder business winters. Aim for at least three months' break-even in the bank for comfort.





# ProActive Resolutions

**Numbers will always be  
your best business friend;  
they will not lie to you.**

You need your friends in bad times,  
as well as the good.

We hope you found  
these TIPS useful.  
If you want to be part  
of our Numbers family,  
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