

Published TMG Articles

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BUILD FOR SUCCESS: HIRE TO YOUR WEAKNESS

“As you reach a certain point, you have to empower other people and build on their strengths to make your own weakness irrelevant.”

-Stephen Covey

Entrepreneurs and small business owners tend to share several common traits: a high commitment level, a strong work ethic, a bit of being a dreamer and being aggressive, and having a track record of making mistakes. It is the mistakes they have made that have taught them how to do things the right way. The preferred method of learning seems to be that of “trial and error” (emphasis on error).

Most successful business people quickly recover from their mistakes - they are survivors! They “grab life by the horns” and plow through each challenge with enthusiasm. Because of these qualities, many of them miss the opportunity to improve their results both significantly and more quickly. Sometimes, these strong minded leaders surround themselves with others who are just like them! This is certainly natural, and, to some degree, even to be expected; but, it is not always the surest way to achieve that desired and attractive bottom line.

Read the Stephen Covey quote again. As a successful leader, you must find a way to “make your own weakness irrelevant.”

I have recently completed a project with Mike and Claudia Nix, owners of Liberty Bikes in Asheville. They are acutely aware of their own strengths and weaknesses.

Mike is an educator, and Claudia is primarily a social worker. Early on, they identified the challenges of running their business that required strengths neither of them possessed. Guess what? They hired and developed a team (20 strong) of co-workers having a wide variety of business skills. Together, they make a “complete package” for a successful, retail bicycle store. Last year, the National Bike Dealers Association named them as the “National Retailer of the Year”.

Too many leaders of small companies haven’t yet made necessary key observations about themselves. What are my weak areas? And next, who can help me make these weaknesses irrelevant?

It’s difficult for a focused, hard-working, business leader to admit having any weakness in the first place. In fact, in her book, “How To Think Like a CEO”, D.A.Benton suggests that a successful leader is willing to make mistakes - yet remains unapologetic! She goes on to say, that these leaders see that “mistakes are further opportunities to learn and develop”. No one would question that this is an optimistic, even a powerful point of view. However, what if avoiding them before they happen could significantly reduce the number of such mistakes! What if your team were made up of people having diverse perspectives and multiple strengths? Your business would operate more efficiently, more confidently, and would produce significantly better results.

By leading a diverse team, the team's multiple strengths give you the opportunity to examine your business from many points of view. Your team becomes stronger and more powerful as you begin to rely on their innate talents. You no longer have to do everything yourself! You are now the leader of a succeeding team! This all begins when you, the entrepreneur, learn to "*empower other people and build on their strengths to make your own weakness irrelevant.*"