

Working 'In' Your Business vs. 'On' Your Business

It's really easy, regardless of the endeavor, to get caught up in the minutia - and when it comes to the bigger and more important projects (such as your personal training business) it's even easier since there is usually so much to do and we get so concerned about succeeding that we are afraid to take our eyes off of the ball, even for a second. This drive to succeed has its value and is a critical factor in developing a fitness business, but the huge down side is that we tend to neglect the bigger picture and lose site of what needs to be done to grow our business. In other words, we spend so much time working *in* our business that we forget to work *on* our business. For many of us, we literally forget to step aside from the day-to-day and in order to plan for our success.

Planning for success usually starts out with a business plan. Most of us know the saying; *Plan to fail, fail to plan...* This concept seems to particularly apply to business development since there are so many things involved such as: resources, people, money, activities, schedules, etc... A business plan is a living document that outlines the intention of the PT business owner and the road map to accomplish or manifest that intention. A business plan is designed to keep the business organized and the principals accountable and it doesn't need to be overly sophisticated (unless it is used to seek investors). It could simply outline the duties and responsibilities of each owner as well as the goals of the business and the action steps designed to accomplish those goals. Creating a business plan on your own (even if it is simple) can be a daunting task for someone just getting started, and there are resources such as the Small Business Administration (www.sba.gov) that can help.

Once you have a business plan it is very important to remember (as was mentioned earlier) that it is a living document. This means that it needs to evolve and change with your fitness business. Make the time to update the business plan on at least a monthly basis with revisions to your goals and action items based on what is happening with your business. This is a big part of working *on* your business. An ideal goal to establish would be to set aside at least one hour per day to work *on* your business - or to work on those projects and activities designed to grow your business. Here are some other ideas around working *on* your business:

- Marketing is one of the major functions that is designed to build your business. Create a specific marketing plan section in your business plan and come up with specific marketing goals. Ideally you would have three marketing tactics that you are using at any one time. Mikel Bruce with WebFlexor PT Websites (www.websitesforpt.com) suggests using at least 1-2 web marketing tactics such as Email Marketing or Pay-Per-Click advertising.
- Get an accountability buddy or hire a business coach. Find someone to keep you accountable to your projects. The best case scenario is to speak with them on a weekly basis and have them keep track of and check in on your weekly projects. You could provide the same service to them and you can help each other out.
- Keep a daily, weekly, and monthly to-do list. Update this list regularly and keep it posted in a place where you can easily see it and refer to it.



- Schedule the time in your planner that you will be working *on* your business. Ideally it will be the same time every day and it works best if you consider it to be a firm appointment with yourself.

Your success is up to you and very few PT businesses fail because the owner wasn't working hard enough. Ironically enough, many have failed because they were working too hard *in* the business or "busy-ness". Taking the time to work *on* your business not only allows you to focus on those projects that build your business but also takes you away from the "busy-ness" and the grind of the day-to-day. This will give you a fresh perspective, a change in scenery, and will allow you to tap into your creativity.

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