

INTRODUCTION

MOST SMALL businesses begin with one person's desire to do better in life. He (pardon the use of "he"; it's not sexism, it's just easier) has a skill, a product, or an idea, and throws himself into it. He grows his business to a comfortable level, and that is as far as two out of three small business owners take it.

The other third have a bigger dream, and look for more than comfort. Usually, they are soon joined by others with the same desire. Growth occurs by reason of long hours and the enthusiasm of the owner(s), until more help is needed, and hiring begins. The rocket ride turns into a treadmill. What had been clean and simple and exciting begins to be complex and often dismaying. Who knew there were so many obstacles to growing a small business? But these ambitious few persist.

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This book is for two groups: the independents who want to hold at their present size, but wouldn't mind increasing their income if it didn't mean working a lot harder; but especially, those dreamers who want to grow their businesses to where they can live the lives to which they would like to become accustomed, and fulfill their particular dreams.

Running a business will never be "easy," but it doesn't have to be as hard as most people find it. Hundreds of books will tell you how to make it easier, faster, more profitable, and on and on. Read them all, if you want. But before you do, think about this:

There is one basic principle which virtually no business owners follow to nearly the degree it deserves. One principle which, if understood and applied, almost ensures success, both short-term and long-term.

This principle is very real to me: been there, done that. Starting with \$50, I built a typesetting business to \$600,000 in annual sales (over a million in 2009 dollars) by applying this one essential principle. All the obstacles were there, and I made a lot of mistakes, but the strength of this one principle kept us growing.

This book is all about that principle, which I have spent years in analyzing and refining. As with all basic principles, it seems obvious to the point of absurdity when it is pointed out. The usual response is, “Yeah, everyone knows that.” Yet just as obviously, everyone doesn’t. In fact, the overwhelming evidence is that most people not only don’t put it into practice, but actively disagree with putting it into practice, all the while saying they already do!

The principle is Quality.

Make a note of your instant reaction on reading that line. A few chapters from now, your response will be entirely different, and I will ask you to recall this moment.

Small Business Magic will accomplish the following:

- Explain exactly what quality is, as opposed to the cloudy concept of “really good.”
- Discuss the consequences of quality.
- Demonstrate how to achieve quality.
- Provide specific actions that lead to quality.
- Show how to extend quality throughout a business.

Give this book a chance. Give yourself and your business a chance. The rewards are huge.