

LEADERSHIP AND LETTING GO

A small business will only grow when you let go, says business coach Jerome Jacobs.

The X-Factor behind every great business is a combination of great leadership and great people, and neither can exist in isolation to the other.

Most small businesses never get off the ground because their owners don't know how to let go. We can read all the books and know the theory of building a fantastic business, but the physical act of leadership and the physical act of letting go are actually inherently emotional, and that is a very difficult barrier to overcome.

“ LEADERSHIP IS FIRSTLY AN ACT OF TRUST ”

Leadership is firstly an act of trust, like closing your eyes and throwing yourself backwards off a table and trusting the people behind you to catch you – that's what it feels like. Small business owners are by nature control freaks because they fear that if they let go they will lose something, if not everything.

If you do not learn to lead first, you can never recruit a great team. Great leaders know that they should employ ambitious people and that those people will leave at some point. Nevertheless they go for it anyway because they are interested in win/win – they know it's not worthwhile employing people who are not ambitious.

Too many small business owners won't employ dynamic people because they fear their leaving, so they never get the benefit that good people bring. Again, in both leadership and building a great team, we see the value of letting go.

If you hire the right people and act without fear – if you shed your poverty mind-set – then those good people will help you build a more substantial business that can afford to retain good people.

People are more than a resource to be hired and fired. They are the life and blood of a great business, but only fearless leadership will unlock that potential.

In addition to leadership and good people is investing in developing those people through training. Don't worry about investing in people who will leave, because development and continuous learning are firstly an investment in the culture of an organisation.

Aristotle said it best: "Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."

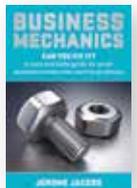
Personal development and continuous skills training is also an acknowledgement that there are things that can be improved upon, and that's a healthy place for any company. ■



About the author: Jerome Jacobs is an author, business owner, trainer and award-winning business coach who built and sold his own mobile mechanics business before going on to guide and mentor hundreds of small business owners. Contact Jacob at Rise Advisory on 021 769 016; email jeromej@riseadvisory.co.nz.

THE MECHANICS OF BUSINESS

In his book *Business Mechanics*, Jerome Jacobs provides a nuts and bolts guide for small business owners. It's about putting the business owner back in control of their business, so they can move towards achieving their goals. Key areas covered include financials, processes, sales, marketing, recruitment and service crew. www.risadvisory.co.nz/business-mechanics-book



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