The Joy of Business

Brilliant Advice To Avoid The Most Dangerous Mistakes In Your Business

***"It's good to learn from your mistakes. It's better to learn from other people's mistakes."* Warren Buffet**

In the last 20 odd years of running companies and supporting hundreds of other business owners running their companies, I've seen pretty much every business mistake made, even by smart people, and the effect these mistakes cause down the line. I've spent hours talking to other business people and documenting the mistakes they wished they hadn't made. Of course, I've also made quite a few myself along the way. Everyone makes mistakes.

You can use this article to help you recognise potential pitfalls and change what you do next to avoid them. You may recognise mistakes you've already experienced and ones you've seen other people make (five points for a "yes, that's what Mary did, and she had a nightmare"), alongside the ones you're now, having read this, able to avoid.

For each one, jot down whether you'd be likely to make that mistake in your business, including which version you might be led towards. Making some notes now about how you'll guard against this will reinforce your thinking so that you will recognise that situation when it comes up.

Meaning of life mistakes

Let’s start with the basics. Why are you doing this?

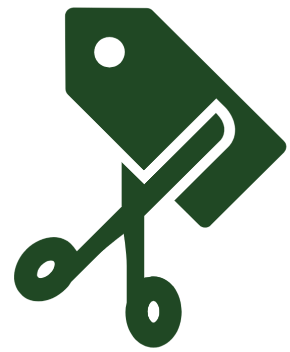
Some business owners have no purpose beyond making money. Big mistake. Then there’s little beyond the need to pay the bills to get out of bed in the morning. Once you can pay the bills, life loses its spice and meaning. Work (and life) becomes boring. All you can do is to find new ways to spend your cash. And then you have to earn even more money leading to a treadmill where you never feel satisfied.

The saddest version of this is the person who spends all their time working and then suddenly realises they missed the opportunity to play with their kids when they were toddlers or to climb a mountain before they got too old. Even sadder if they didn’t even earn that much money.

The opposite is also a mistake. You can fail to make money because you were concentrating too much on your “why”. I work with people all the time who set out to run a business with a social purpose and ended up either broke or freelancing on the side to pay the bills. Don’t even get me started on the people who tell you to follow your passion They’re worse than the people who insist that you should just follow the money.

But you can avoid both mistakes.

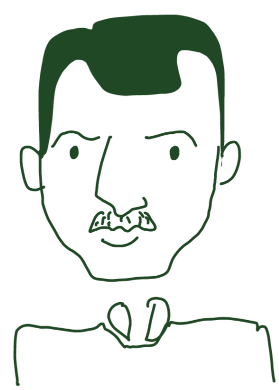
The mistake of working with crappy cheapskates



The most soul-destroying mistake you can make with customers is to carry on working for the crappy cheapskates. You know who they are: the ones who never want to pay full price. It’s funny how they take up all of your time and then pay late, too.

You probably set up your company to get away from idiot bosses, and to be able to do quality work on your own terms. Don’t feel that you have to work for people who don’t respect and appreciate what you do. If you worry that you need their cash, and you can’t walk away just now, that’s fine. Just set a deadline and do some extra marketing so you can replace them with better customers in a few months.

The mistake of getting into bed with the wrong customers



When you’re starting out, a common mistake is to become dependent on just one customer. Maybe it’s your old employer that you now freelance for, or the one gig that’s big enough to fill your diary – until they don’t need you anymore. This isn’t just a mistake made by early-stage freelancers: I met with a man yesterday who has one customer worth 500k a year, which is great. Until you realise that it’s 60% of his turnover. If this customer goes, so does his whole business.

The opposite problem is where you work with lots of different people, giving the same amount of love and attention to all of them. Except that not all customers were created equal: some customers, and some types of customer, are more profitable than others.

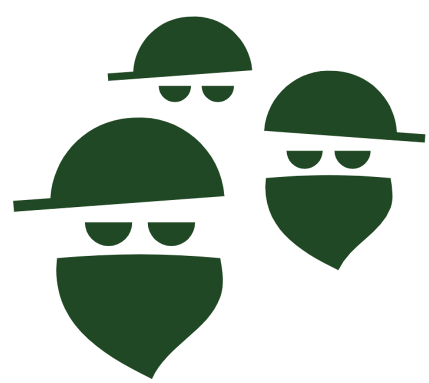
The 80/20 principle comes in handy here.

In this case, the 80/20 principle for customers. Here are two applications of it:

- No single customer should ever be more than 20% of your turnover. It’s great if someone starts to spend a lot with you but make sure you invest some of the profit from this customer in marketing: get some lovely new customers to balance any over-dependence.
- It’s well worth having a look at your least profitable 20% of customers to see if they can be made more profitable – or sacked as time-wasters.

Spending an hour going over your top customers by lifetime value, and your top products by highest total gross profit, can help you get to grips with this. If those terms mean nothing to you, or if the thought of exporting a spreadsheet from your accounts package fills you with dread, get your accountant to do it for you and to make some recommendations (but see more about accountants, below). If your accountant can’t help you, book a strategy session with me and I’ll happily colour code your spreadsheet and talk you through what you need to do next.

The mistake of hanging out with the wrong crowd



You know how the kids who go to public school, and whose godparents are minor royalty, do well in life? It’s not because they got a fantastic education, or even because they have a trust fund. It’s because they hang out with people who can give them inspiration, advice and, especially, introductions.

I'm not suggesting that a common mistake in business is to be born poor. You can't change your start in life. But you can make your own introductions and get great connections in business, just by being open to hanging out with the right people and by putting yourself forward to join the right groups.

I come from a working-class background and I'd have lots of excuses for feeling excluded from privilege. But through running a business and signing up for courses, networking groups and events, I've been able to join a very different world to the one I grew up in.

That's because someone suggested to me years ago that I should surround myself with people who earn more than me and are more established in business. I found this advice difficult to swallow when I first heard it, but it's turned out to be true. Business networking isn't just for meeting your next new client; it's also a fantastic source of support, ideas and referrals to your next new client or a potential collaborator.

Make sure that you're hanging out with people who are on a similar path in business as you. Preferably the people who are further ahead, so you can hear from their mistakes, and avoid them in your journey.

Your business needs to be connected to other people to create the maximum number of opportunities. But…

The mistake of listening to others

"Can I just give you some feedback?" is a hellishly scary phrase. Australian stand-up Hannah Gadsby talks about receiving unsolicited feedback when she's just come off stage, and about the difficulty of getting people who "just want to give you some feedback" to shut up.

The problem with most feedback is that it doesn't give us the information we need. Instead, it can move us backwards because it erodes our confidence. I think this is because of our human tendency to hear only the negative comments. If you're wearing a new jacket and your partner makes four comments on it, you'll only catch the one about whether you should have got a bigger size.

But don't let that put you off seeking feedback. It's invaluable. Just avoid a couple of mistakes I've seen clients making when they ask for feedback.

Not asking very specific questions.

Most of us are too terrified to survey our customers, despite knowing how rich a source of knowledge this could be. My top tip here is to design the questions so that the answers will give you actionable information. For example, asking people "how was it for you?" doesn't get you the information you need to improve. Unless they hated what you gave them, most people will give you a weak (and uninformative) "it was great".

Instead, think about:

- What results you most want your customers to get from what you do.

Find questions that not only ask if they got those results but verifies their answer. For example, for clients who do my Remarkable Business programme I ask if the sessions we did on pricing helped them to improve their prices. Then I ask them to tot up how much more money they made as a result. My record so far is 35k in the first 3 months.

- Very specific questions to analyse your weakest areas.

Maybe you know you're consistently late in delivering a particular item but you don't know if your customers notice. You might ask, “Did you get your earrings before or after you expected them?” This question for an e-commerce business tells you whether you should focus on delivery time to satisfy customer expectations or if you should put your energies somewhere else.

Listening to FFFs

FFFs are **Friends, Family and Fools.** Some people may be one of these, some all three, and you still love them – but ignore them when it comes to your business.

You will – I guarantee – get feedback, advice, suggestions and comments from your FFFs. **Do not listen to them.**

Your mum is not your target customer.
Your best friends are not your customers.

FFFs are likely to offer the following kinds of unhelpful advice:

- Do you think people will pay that much?
- Why don’t you do one in pink? (Their favourite colour.)
- Why do you have so many buttons on your website?
- I think you’re working too hard.
- Are you sure that you should do that course to get better at your work? It’s a lot of money to spend.
- I don’t think it’s realistic for you to have a 100k-a-year business.
- Oh, well, you can always go back to that job if this doesn’t work out.

There are a couple of reasons for this FFFs nonsense. The first is that your friends, family and fools think that either you’re selling to people like them or you are the same as them. But unless your sister is the HR director of a large company (or whoever your customer avatar is) and you are selling HR-oriented services, you’re unlikely to be selling to people like your sister. Even if this is the case, still don’t listen to her advice. She’ll always see you as her sister/brother rather than a potential supplier.

Your FFs love you just the way you are.

Your friends and family love you as you are. Or the way they remember you or the picture of you in their mind. Which is great, but as you grow and develop this creative endeavour of your business, you are also growing and developing yourself.

All this growing, developing and changing can be very challenging for the people around you. They can sometimes give you feedback and “helpful advice” which their subconscious has designed to try to limit you somehow. I had this situation when I ran a tech company which was growing fast and had been given a valuation of millions. I was happy when we got the report that said we could be worth 48m, not so much because I thought I’d be rich, but because I felt my hard work was paying off. But friends who had known me for years kept advising me to be careful and not get carried away. At the time, I couldn’t understand why they weren’t happy for me, but now I can see that they just weren’t comfortable with this different side of me.

Listen to the experts

Investing in some proper business advice from someone who’s been there and done it, and knows what they’re talking about, would be a good idea. Here’s my guide to finding the business coach who is right for you.

Good, knowledgeable, evidence-based advice can catapult your business forward dramatically, as well as helping you to avoid mistakes, whether they’re on this list or unique to your situation.

But listen to the right experts

I meet a lot of people who have already experienced some kind of business coaching. They describe the mistake they made in choosing the previous coach in two ways. It’s always either

- “She was lovely, but she seemed to ask me over and over again what I wanted to do, rather than helping me work out a concrete plan of action.”
or
- “He was great to talk to, but his experience of business seemed a bit out of date, and I think that’s held me back.”

The other mistake people make when choosing a coach is to go for someone cheap. If you don’t have a lot of cash to invest in coaching at the moment, you don’t have to settle for second best. You can get great advice and support from a group programme or a mastermind, if you can’t justify the investment of one to one coaching just yet. But do get the right group for you.

The mistake of being too busy to learn new tricks

When you’re running your own business, you’re always busy. Whatever stage of business you’re at, your to-do list is always full. And guess what? You’re never going to complete it: as quickly as you tick things off, you’ll add new things. Sorry.

But, one of the major errors I see among business owners is letting immediate, urgent actions push aside the much-needed activity of learning new tricks, techniques and skills. We want to learn and improve, but it becomes secondary to rushing around making sure clients are happy. Or our accountant is happy. Or staff are looked after.

The problem with this mistake is that it keeps your business the same as it is now. Which would be fine if you could ever stay the same. However, the world around you doesn’t stay the same: it’s always changing and what works now might not be so effective in six months or five years. Every so often I have a coffee and cake with someone whose business – or some part of their business –

has become obsolete in some way. The marketing they were doing before isn't bringing in the clients anymore, the product they're selling isn't as good as their competitor's newer product, or someone else can do the same as them but faster and cheaper. You don't want to be out of date.

And you don't want to fall out of love with your business. I also regularly talk to business owners who might have a perfectly fine business, but they're bored and trapped by what they do. Usually, that's because they were too busy to allow themselves the time to learn new skills, and doing the same old stuff just isn't fun any more.

That's why I applaud you if you commit to learning, whether you're reading advanced marketing books in the evening, doing group development like my Remarkable Business programme or learning Italian just to keep your skills sharp.

The opposite problem is too much learning – as procrastination.

Let's apply the 80/20 principle again. 80% of business owners make the mistake of not spending enough time learning new skills … but 20% of people I talk to spend too much time. They're always doing a new course, reading a new book or going on an expensive entrepreneur's retreat in the mountains. They use learning as a way of putting off real action.

If you're wondering if this is you, check how many of these you own up to:

- Always signing up to online courses
- Rarely finishing them
- Not getting around to applying the learning in your business
- Spending all your profits on professional development courses in specialist areas
- Having too many specialisms, so you're not truly a specialist in any particular area

- Reading inspiring business books … but instead of being inspired, you feel guilty that you're not as successful as the people in the books
- Hiding away in courses and books, instead of getting out there and meeting potential customers
- Being afraid you'll never be good enough

The mistake of wanting results right away

We all want the satisfaction of instant results. When we do a marketing campaign, go to a networking event or build a new website, we want them to work NOW. We want immediate new customers, a big jump in our subscriber list or the phone to instantly ring with lovely people who want our services. Of course we do: we're human.

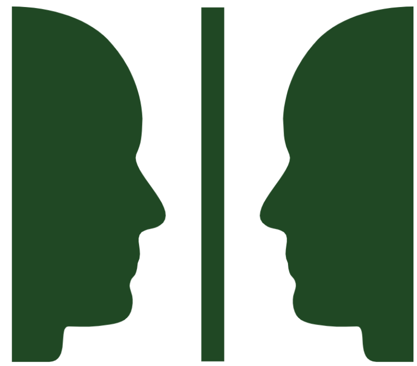
But chasing instant wins can be a big mistake when you're trying to build a successful company.

Our culture celebrates the overnight success, the first-time winner, the number one hit that comes out of nowhere. But there's no such thing. Sorry again. Whether you're looking at viral videos on YouTube, hit records or companies that make a hell of a lot of money, they'll have taken one of two routes to 'instant' success.

1. Major investment and the backing of a skilled marketing team who apply a winning formula. This is what's behind blockbuster movies, the rise of mega tech companies like Facebook, or the latest rap star.
2. Years of building up assets and skills, in the form of knowledge, connections and networks, loyal customers, processes and learning from failures and small successes.

The business owners I work with don't have access to the first one, so I concentrate on supporting people through the hard work of the second. And it works. But you have to spend a lot of time building it up.

The mistake of comparing yourself with other people



One day I had a meeting with someone who ran a business that I believed was a huge success. They'd won awards; everyone knew their name, they'd taken on lots of staff, had fancy offices.

Their whole vibe was that they were fast-growing, very successful and universally loved. I nearly didn't take the meeting, thinking that they were too big for me and wondering why they would want my help – I was a little bit in awe of them.

Yes, you guessed it. They were near bankruptcy. The owners had never been able to pay themselves and they were worried sick about what was going to happen next. When I went home, I was glad of my unglamorous business that was doing okay.

That taught me a valuable lesson. The people we compare ourselves to might not be doing as well as they're making out. There's no point comparing ourselves to them because we don't know what's going on.

Yet I still do it. Yesterday I went to a networking lunch and had to leave early to run a Remarkable Business workshop. I wondered why all the other people were able to take Friday afternoon off while I was still working hard. What was I doing wrong? And then I stopped myself, realising that I had no idea if any of these people were making any profit, if they'd been up all night slaving away or if it even mattered.

Instead of comparing yourself with others, compare today's you with the you of six months ago and look at your progress. Work out the big things that affect your business success. What advances are you making? Are you charging more money, getting more clients, increasing your gross margin, doing your work faster, getting better results for your clients? Whatever indicators mean success for you, benchmark your performance against them.

The mistake of keeping a stiff upper lip

Running a business is hard. It’s probably one of the most difficult things you’ll ever do. Not only are there complicated daily decisions that make your brain hurt, shitty things happen when you run your own business. Customers disappear, competitors pop up out of nowhere and your laptop breaks when you have to do that big presentation. You have to be able to take the hits, big and small.

And sometimes these things hurt. Plus, you’re a human being with a life outside the business, where other shitty things can happen.

The mistake I see over and over again with this (and yes, I’ve done it myself) is just to carry on regardless and pretend you’re coping. Most of all, pretending to yourself that you’re coping when you’re not can be very damaging in the long run.

Avoid this mistake at all costs. Give yourself time to get over the hard knocks, look after yourself and seek support from other people. Invest in getting your bounce back in the same way as you would invest in your marketing.

The big mistake of getting the price wrong

Pricing – specifically undercharging – is the biggest and most common mistake in business, even among smart people.

It is also the most dangerous mistake for your business.

Over the years, I've talked in-depth to hundreds of business owners and asked all kinds of nosy questions. My favourite one is "how much do you charge?" And, out of all the times I've asked that question, in 20 odd years, I felt that only about five people were overcharging. That's a ridiculously small percentage. Note that I only work with smaller businesses, so I'm not talking about the rip-off mega-corps here.

Some people have got it about right. When I find them, we move on and work out other ways to increase their profits.

But I'd say that more than 90% of the people I talk to are undercharging. Sometimes, when I realise what they're charging, I want to groan, cry and swear all at the same time. They're doing excellent work and don't realise just how unique their thing is. To them, it's not rocket science because they know how to do it. So they give it away at a silly price, not recognising how hugely valuable it is to their customers. Trouble is, their customers don't recognise the value either because they got it for such a low price.

If you have even the slightest feeling that you might be charging less than you could, and you want some help to work out what the right price is (and how to get customers to pay that price), you should get a copy of my *Sweetspot Pricing* book right away. And read it.

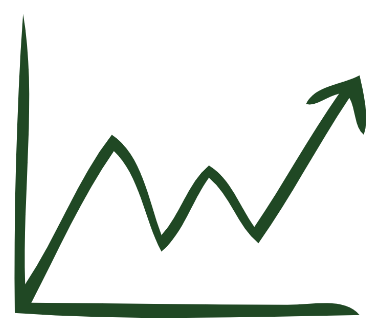
And the funny thing here is – the book only costs £13. In my crusade to help people build their businesses, I'm pretty much giving away my secret weapon. You can work out if this is a mistake on my part or not.

The mistake of over-servicing

The cousin of the under-pricing mistake in business is over-servicing. That's when you give your clients more than they're paying for, maybe because you can't bear to do merely an okay job or because you feel your work isn't good enough. Or maybe (this is my version of it) because you enjoy doing the work and helping people so much, you get into it and then realise that, because it was so interesting, you've done way more than you asked the client to pay for. Oops.

There's a special version of this mistake for people creating an online product, such as a course or a book. Ironically, if you cram too much material into a product because you want to make it extra valuable, you risk making it less useful for your customers. All that extra content gives them massive overwhelm and they can't possibly take in what you've offered them. Which then means that they don't finish your course and they never buy another one.

The mistake of aiming for the wrong level of profit



One of the first things I get people to do – in my one-to-one business coaching or in the Remarkable Business programme – is to work out in detail what they want to earn. Here's the short way to work out your target income. It is from this target income figure that we work out what your net profit needs to be, to provide that income.

Before I get super-specific with people about what they want or need to earn, they tell me all kinds of rough figures. Which one would you tick from this list?

- I'd love to have 20k a year so I can get off benefits
- I want 100k a year (cos that sounds like an ambitious number)
- I used to earn 60k in my corporate job, so it would be great to match that
- I'd love to be able to buy a house
- If I could pay off my mortgage, that would be great.

But these are not smart goals. Remember learning about SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)?

The mistake here is that these goals are not nearly specific enough.

When I work through this with clients, we dive into those more nebulous desires and turn them into SMART goals and targets for your business.

I feel so strongly about helping people to avoid this mistake that I spent three years writing my *Sweetspot Pricing* book and putting together what Sara Hammond called "life changing spreadsheets" to work out these figures for you. You can get ahead of 99.999% of businesses by spending a couple of hours with my *Sweetspot Pricing Big Resource Pack*.

The mistake of relying on your accountant

Many business owners assume that their accountant will handle all the money stuff and be able to advise them on things like pricing. Wrong. I've never seen an accountant do this. Your accountant's job is to do the accounting, to make sure that you have all the right documents filled in at the right time and sent to the tax people. Protecting you from the tax authorities is important and necessary but don’t make the classic mistake of thinking that your accountant will do anything more than this.

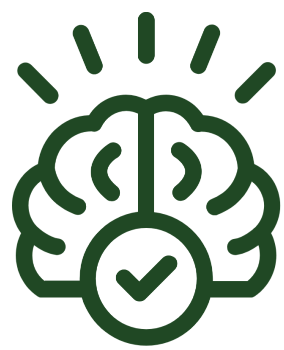
Here are a couple of accountant mistakes to avoid

- Some accountants are great. They help you set up systems to keep track of your money and gently nag you to hand over your books well before the deadlines. Others… not so much. Accountants are not all the same and if yours doesn’t make sure you know exactly how much tax you have to pay and when, well in advance, sack them and find another one.
- Don’t forget that it’s you who’s responsible for doing the accounts; your accountant is just there to help with the forms and the adding up. And you’re responsible for making sure you have the money in the bank when you have to pay the tax.

Don’t be like pop star Sting. He somehow forgot this and thought that his accountant was taking care of everything. Meanwhile, his accountant was busy stealing three million pounds from him and running off when the tax authorities found out.

True story – don’t make the same mistake as Sting!

The mistake of not developing an investment mentality



“You have to speculate to accumulate”

The experience of running a small business is often tinged with fear. We worry about getting the next client. We worry that the whole business will fall apart and we’ll lose what we’ve built up. We’ll do anything to keep things as they are. And this leads to a big mistake in business – putting off investing in the business.

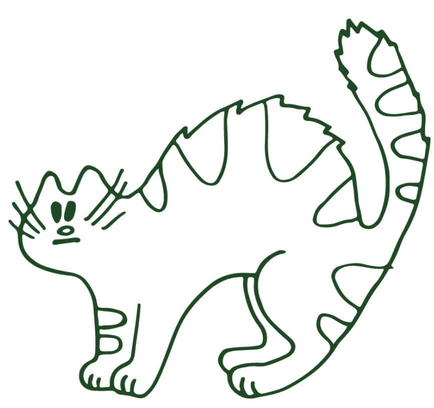
This isn’t just a resistance to investing money in the business. I also notice massive resistance from business owners to investing time in marketing, skill development and taking on staff to do the work. Not just for freelancers - I see this lack of investment mentality even in cash-rich, profitable companies with ambitious business owners. Big mistake.

If you’re happy to have a lovely little business, without the complication of employing people or worrying about expanding, you still need to get into the mindset of investing in your business. Spending time and money on learning new skills, developing marketing system or going to high quality networking events will all reap dividends. This way, you reach your earnings target or can take Fridays off. Maybe learning new skills would keep things fresh for you, keeping your company a joyful creative endeavour.

And if your ambitions and your earnings targets are a little higher (or ought to be a little higher), you need the ability to invest into your company. Instead of taking out all the profit and putting it in your personal account or (more likely) leaving it as a security blanket in the company account, work out how much you could spend on courses, marketing or someone else to do some of the work for you.

The companies I see who do this as soon as they can are the ones who move faster to their goals. The business owners who don’t reinvest will lose their enthusiasm and are more likely to grind to a halt.

The mistake of being a big scaredy-cat about borrowing



It’s fascinating to see how some people are happy to borrow money for investment in their business, while others see it as incredibly risky and foolish. It doesn't seem to be related to how big the business is, how profitable it is or the owner's ambitions – it seems to come purely from our attitude towards money, and debt in particular. And that appears to come directly from what we were taught about money when we were little kids. We're still hanging on to what we heard mum and dad saying about how to treat money, probably 30 years ago.

Here are three money things to think about:

1. Unless your parents ran their own limited company, their advice about borrowing is probably not that relevant to your situation: the whole point of a limited company is that, when you borrow, the risk to you personally is limited. That's what the limited bit stands for: it means limited liability. So you can borrow and, if it goes amiss, you walk away. Another one not to listen to the advice of Friends, Family and Fools about.

   If that feels wrong to you and gives you a funny feeling in your tummy, well, good. Try reading George Kinder's *Seven Stages of Money Maturity* which guides you through getting in touch with what you've picked up about money from your childhood and shows you how to throw all the irrelevant bits out of the window.

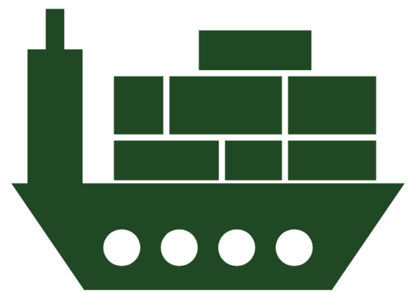
2. Do you have a mortgage? Have you ever had a mortgage? Would you like to have a mortgage? Being able to get a mortgage to buy a house (or a better house) is often a target for the business owners I work with. It seems no one has a problem with borrowing a few hundred thousand for a house to live in. But the same people will run away from borrowing a few thousand to invest in marketing or in new staff – an investment they could pay off very quickly and which would give them five or ten times the return on that investment.

3. Failing to invest in your skills, mindset and ability to run your business, and then expecting to have a healthy

business, is the same as sitting in your armchair, eating chips with a side order of chocolate for every meal and then expecting to keep to a healthy weight.

And if you're getting to grips with the idea of borrowing, to put some more fuel in the tank and get going faster, here's my guide to persuading the banks to lend to you.

The mistake of not "shipping"



Business people like you and me are usually optimistic, glass half full, "let's get this done" kind of people. At least, we are when we set the business up. Over the years, though, we can begin to lose some of our bounce and optimism. We can be ground down by the constant cycle of having a great idea or a new project, trying to get it off the ground and then seeing it take forever to develop. Even worse is the time it takes for some of our efforts to start to make a profit for us.

There are two mistakes in business to avoid here.

Underestimating how long something will take.

"It will always take longer than you think" Julia Chanteray

This is true. This mistake comes when you have a project, such as developing a new product or writing a mega article like this, and you estimate how long it will take, forgetting that you have a million other items on your to-do list.

How many times have you thought "yeah, I can get that done in a couple of weeks…" only to find that it's still only 90% complete three months later?

That’s probably a thought process we inherited when we had a “real” job. Someone else used to take care of all the other bits and pieces, and you could work on your project. When you’re running your own business, there are a million and one things which will pop up as mini-emergencies: the software that fails, the client with a query, the member of staff who wants a quick meeting. Or maybe you have an off-day, and you lose the time you’d scheduled to work on your new thing.

There are a few ways of countering this. Thinking of the thing you want to do as an important project in its own right is a good start. Then you can schedule in protected time to work on it. I use colour codes in my calendar to give me time to write or develop new courses. Clients can’t book in during those coloured-in times: I switch my email off, put some music on and get my head down for a couple of hours.

I often advise clients to treat this protected time in the same way as they would a meeting with me. They’d reschedule it (not cancel) if something urgent or important came up, but otherwise, they’d show up.

You can also think of your project as working in stages. Maybe you can do a beta version of your new product and get it out to just a few clients first. Or you can launch a “good enough” version ahead of the final one. Both of these approaches will shorten the time it takes to get something out there and give you the big advantage of receiving feedback from the people who matter (that’s customers, not your mum), making the final version so much better than if you’d done it in isolation. And this will generate some short term cash flow, which gives you a blip of extra motivation power.

Getting it done mistake two - not finishing

Unless you finish something off, unless you ship a product, there’s nothing there. I’ve worked with so many people who have a brilliant idea and do most of the work on it. But they don’t finish. They don’t have anything to sell. Unfortunately, the hard reality is that pivoting your business to a different offering which will make you double the money, or developing an additional product … all these things are difficult. They make your brain ache and your fingers hurt from typing, and you feel sad when you try to do something the first time and you waste 10 hours learning the wrong software. And then it's just too easy to let it slide. To let the urgent demands of your current clients take over, and you're back where you started but in a more grumpy mood.

Don't let this be you.

How to avoid these mistakes

Now you know the big mistakes I've made and seen dozens of other people smarter than me make as well, you'll be able to avoid them. Right?

Uh huh. Thought so. Us humans are prone to carrying on making the same mistakes over and over again. Even when we know that something is wrong, we carry on doing it. The cognitive biases which make us do this are for another article, but I'm sure your own experience tells you that it's all too easy to be blind about your business and just wander from mistake to mistake.

So what do you do?

Well, obviously I'm going to tell you that we should sit down and have a chat about where your business is. A big part of what I do is reacting to the big red lights that go off in my head when someone tells me that they're going to make one of these mistakes and I can see that this is going to lead them into trouble.

Another part of my work is helping people change their mindset about running a company. Maybe be encouraging you to be more ambitious and specific with your goals, to invest more in developing your skills and assets, or just reassuring you that you’re on the right track when you’re not about to make one of these mistakes.

But we’ve maybe only just met. You probably should get to know me a little more before jumping into one to one coaching or my group programme Remarkable Business. Here’s what I recommend:

Continue your learning from other people’s business journeys by trying out my weekly business stories emails. Every week I share something I’ve learnt in the form of a little story. I share a lot of stories about mistakes and near misses, including my own mistakes. Here’s how that works.

And if the mistakes about what you charge, overservicing and working with dodgy clients resonated for you – you should invest a tiny bit of money in my *Sweetspot Pricing* book and the Resource Pack which will give you a solid framework for tackling this one.

Or let’s have a coffee and cake and talk about the mistakes you’re worried about right now, and what to do about them.