

“Build a nest-egg for retirement”

Client Profile

Category:	Small Business Coaching
Industry:	Retail
Age of business at start:	10+ years
Stage of lifecycle:	Growth → Expansion
Assignment length:	5 years ongoing
Enterprise summary:	20+ employees, 350 sq m of retail, 1 owner family business

The owner of this business approached us to help him build a retirement fund for himself and his wife. They had been in their industry all their lives and were rapidly approaching retirement age. With no assets other than the family home, they were entirely reliant on their business for their financial future.

The business was successful, but was too reliant on the owner. He was working very long hours and was becoming increasingly stressed. He wanted to grow the business but could never find the time to plan for the growth. His daughter worked in the business but wasn't fully utilised, as the owner wanted to keep control of a business he “couldn't afford to lose.”

As so often where business owners perceive they have a lot at stake, this owner was an obstacle to his own growth. He was a bottleneck for activity, insisting on checking everything and signing everything, which was stressing him and annoying his staff.

Our first step was to coach him to realise what he was doing. This involved making the owner do something he really didn't want to do – slow down and step back. Fortunately, he was open to the coaching and was intelligent and perceptive enough to use it. As soon as he stepped back he could see the problem more clearly.

With the owner accepting that he had to let go or stunt the growth of his business, we provided consulting services to help him reallocate resources to make the business less reliant on him, and to better utilise his capable staff, particularly his daughter. With more time to work “on” the business, the owner could do what he was really good at – plan for the growth and sale of the enterprise.

We continued to provide consulting services, particularly on capacity management, product mix and pricing. After two years of us working with the business, the owner took over an additional shop, developing it and selling it for a significant gain.

Two years after this, he increased the size of his existing shop, increasing his revenues proportionately and his profit by more than the % gain in space. During the development process, our consulting services focussed on commercial controls, moving to marketing and business development after the move. After a short time the business was voted number 1 in Australia in its field.

The business was sold successfully two years later, generating sufficient funds for the owner to secure his retirement, and with enough spare to set his daughter up in her own retail venture.

Key Learning: Run your business like a business.

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