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Ask SCORE

SOLOPRENEUR TIPS: WAYS TO GROW A ONE-PERSON BUSINESS

Solopreneurs encounter many of the same challenges that other business owners face — and some unique ones, as well. Tasked with single-handedly managing all aspects of their businesses — sales, marketing, production, office management, accounting, etc. — they can quickly become overworked and overwhelmed. They may also find it difficult to grow their businesses as they deal with competing priorities and not enough hours in the day.

Fortunately, with dedication to working smarter and not harder, solopreneurs can gain the capacity to devote more time and energy to revenue-growth.

If you are starting or running a one-person company, consider the following suggestions:

Tips for Growing a Solo-Business

Here are five ways you can empower yourself to have the time and focus to grow your business.

- Get organized.
- Boost efficiency and productivity.
- Don't sell yourself short.
- Outsource tasks.
- Ask for guidance from a SCORE mentor.

Get organized. Use technology tools to help you keep track of to-dos, deadlines, and important information. For example, block out time on your calendar for all of the projects and tasks you need to accomplish. Also, use platforms like Evernote or Dropbox to save and organize information you'll need to reference later. For keeping projects on track, cloud-based software services like Trello provide collaborative features that streamline communication with project partners and maintain all project information in a central place.

Boost efficiency and productivity. Figure out the times of the day when you are at your peak performance and schedule your work for clients during those timeframes. This will help ensure you are putting your best foot forward on the tasks that matter most. Also, consider using platforms and features

that allow you to automate certain aspects of your business. For example, you can streamline social media efforts by composing and scheduling posts with Hootsuite or Buffer. In addition, if you have clients that you bill the same amount to at regular intervals, you can save time by scheduling recurring invoices in QuickBooks.

Don't sell yourself short. If you bill hourly for your services, use a time-tracking app (like Toggl or Hours) that you can turn on and off easily whenever dedicating time to a client. This will help ensure you are not missing out on billing for five minutes here and ten minutes there — those short increments can add up! Also, review your rates to make sure you are being paid fairly for your services. Often, startup solopreneurs will charge a little less to ramp up their client base. If this is the case with you, you may want to revisit your rate schedule and adjust it upward as demand for your services increases and you build a reputation of dependability and value.

Outsource tasks. Just because you do not want to hire employees does not mean you cannot get help with different aspects of your business. To give yourself more time to work on revenue-generating activities, consider outsourcing tasks that you either...

aren't adept at, or

dislike...

to freelancers and independent contractors. Some activities you might consider outsourcing include bookkeeping, writing blog posts, and researching (competition, industry, etc.).

Ask for guidance from a SCORE mentor. Mentoring is free of charge and SCORE volunteers have expertise in all aspects of starting and growing a small business. They can provide you with guidance on how to scale your one-person operation. Just because you are a "solo"-preneur, doesn't mean you have to go it alone! Contact SCORE to request a mentor and get the insight and feedback you need to grow your business.

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