

Start with the End in Mind...

No doubt when starting out, you will have heard how you should “start with the end in mind”? Coming from experience, it’s really hard to do that without knowing what the “end” can look like. Having said that though, there are a couple of easy steps to consider from TODAY that will get you in the right frame of mind...

Yes, there are sound universal business practices that should be used at start-up and during growth, which would have you in the best shape when the urge to purge takes hold. However, even if you only start getting your ducks in a row now, it will all work out swimmingly come [Exit time](#). Believe me!

In a nutshell, to “start with the end in mind” is a mindset thing really (as much as anything else). Followed closely by the form your business takes in terms of how a buyer will see and value it... and it can all [start today](#).

If you have dreams of exiting your business through a sale, or something similar, then what shape is your business in right now?

What I know for sure is, having just been through selling my 3rd 'Mother of a Business' (where I went from being an unemployed, homeless and pregnant singleton to morphing into the entrepreneurial mother® by building a 7-figure Mother of a Business, all in guilt-free school hours!), it is never too late to give your business the Respect it Deserves, and the Finish you always dreamed of!

So, if you were to put your buyer “goggles” on, how’s your Business looking today?

Needs work doesn’t it? OK, lets get started...

I’m sure you will be familiar with the old “how, what, when, where, why”. Add the “who” and you’ve definitely got the nucleus of your [business plan](#) covered.

The most important place to commence when “starting with the end in mind” is the “Why”...

Why did you go down the path of setting up your business?

For what purpose does it serve?

Why do you now want to move on?

In other words, why should a buyer be interested in taking this off your hands?

With any “why”, there has to be two parts...

- a) why the world is a better place as a result of doing business with you (the external driver of the business)
- b) why you set up your business the way you did (the internal driver)

If your solo reason for setting up your business was so that you had more flexibility over your working hours for example, then that would not be nearly as attractive as say, solving world hunger at the same time (assuming that was the market the buyer is in).

Emphasis on the personal only ie “b)” is interesting in terms of your history but it only forms part of the story. It’s imperative that there is a larger story at play at the same time, so that the attraction to the business from the external continues whether you are part of the mix or not.

For example, my Mother of a Business, aCE talentNET had a two part "why" when I first set it up, and the same path continued for the 15 years it was in my hands. To explain...

Coming from a management consulting background and therefore understanding the pitfalls of the game, I knew that the peaks and troughs of consistently finding project work added much stress at times, especially in the troughs! aCE talentNET was born out of looking to relieve that constant pressure, enabling the consultants to better manage the ebbs and flows. As projects were being introduced to them as opposed to having to go out and find them, this allowed them to do what they loved doing most ie working with the clients and not having to market themselves.

The personal side of the business was that I could structure how I delivered the service in a way that best worked for me, and Daughter.

How both aspects married was that even though the operating hours were during school hours, it did not preclude the business from establishing long-term working relationships with some of the largest organisations in the country! Turning over 7-figures in the process. Gotta be happy with that!!

So I ask again, why are you doing what you're doing? And if wanting to have an asset to sell features in the answer, be sure to have the two considerations loud and clear in your "why".

I'll address the "what" next post...

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