

## Business Tips

### Olympic Tune Up? Address The Most Common Deadly Sins (part 2)

Last month I discussed five deadly sins in your business. This month we'll explore a few more deadly sins so that you can take stock of your club. Do these things sound familiar?

Consider these Deadly Sins essential business basics for ALL clubs. Fail in these and you fail big. Make this Olympic year the time in which you make things right in your business.

- Confusing relegation for delegation. Short version: relegation means handing off tasks; delegation means giving responsibility and the authority and accountability that goes with it. This is a huge difference that many small business people never grasp and it stops business growth in its tracks and tends to create cynicism, then bitterness, then burnout. A business must get this right.
- Not easy and fun to do business with. I'll bet you have had your own personal experience with a business that is not easy to do business with and I bet you have voiced your experience to friends and family. Enough said? Do you get your phone answered so the client can conduct business on their time and terms? Do you have multiple payment methods (credit cards); Do you have friendly employees that know how to jest and laugh with your clients? Do you offer flexibility to clients when situations allow? Reality: the public will choose a business that is easy and fun to do business with over one that is not.
- Having a hub and spoke organizational structure. By this, I mean, the 'wheel' revolves around one person: one thinker, one decison-maker, one doer. The reason this organizational approach is so deadly is because, darn it, it is effective (but only for a while)! Once a GymClub reaches 500/3-500 students and three separate programs-hub and spoke ceases to work. What once worked, no longer does and this really throws most small business people for a loop and they never figure out what changed, why it changed and what to do about it. Then there are also some who figure it out but don't have the courage to do 'it:' to reorganize. Hello burn out.
- Lack of professional presentation. If you appear unprofessional, your clients will treat you as such. Is you facility neat, clean, organized? Does your literature call people in? Do you have clear, organized procedures in place and follow them (no better way to teach the clients that they can ignore your procedures than to ignore one yourself). Do you have credit cards? Do your people look and act with a warm, professional demeanor?
- Failing to have a defined Leadership Strategy. If there is one thing worse than having a 'dictator strategy' it is having a wishy washy, poorly defined strategy. If you don't know what you believe in, you fall for anything. A business which cannot fully articulate its beliefs about what motivation is and where it comes from is going to suffer repeatedly. I firmly believe, a lousy but clearly articulated strategy is better than no strategy at all.
- Focusing on policies rather than procedures. Policies demand of the client, "do it this way because we say so." Procedures inform the client, "we have chosen to do it this way because it makes sense for everyone." Black and white, inflexible, policy-oriented people look at the latter way and cannot for the life of them see that this approach could be anything but a recipe for being walked on. Not so in the real world: a soft-firm, loose-tight approach will outdo a hard-nosed approach any day.

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