

The Best Small Business Management Tips from 30 Top Entrepreneurs

As a small business owner, you have *a lot* of weight on your shoulders.

How you manage your small business is a key determinant of your success. Whether that's managing your employees, your company's finances, your business's roadmap, or simply your daily tasks—your small business management decisions matter.

To get a glimpse into how other entrepreneurs approach small business management, we asked 30 of your fellow small business owners:

“What’s your best small business management tip?”

Here’s what they had to say.

1. EMPOWER YOUR EMPLOYEES

“For companies below a certain size, employees can and should be made to feel directly connected to the success and growth of the business. Even if they’re not equity partners, helping to build a successful business—and being recognized as an integral component—is a point of pride, a valuable résumé item for the future, and does wonders for morale and motivation.”

— Nate Martin, CEO of Puzzle Break



2. FACILITATE EMPLOYEE GROWTH

“It’s important to constantly teach your employees to make them successful at their job and keep them motivated. I break the things I try to teach my employees into two groups. One is the strategy and direction of the business, the other is the set of skills that they need to be successful. I believe that

regular communication and training is really important, because both of these topics are moving targets.”

— Steve Benson, Founder and CEO of Badger Maps



3. SYSTEMIZE YOUR BUSINESS

“When you are looking to grow from a solo-preneur to a business owner who leads, not manages his team, my number one small business management tip is to build systems.

By having systems, you can bring someone in who knows nothing about how your business runs, and they can learn a systemized way to do things the way that you want them to be done. Often this does not occur with the first time you hire an employee. It’s is a bit more of a shotgun approach. However, once you can build these systems, you can duplicate your staff and build a business that can scale based on the systems that you have built.”

— Stephen Twomey, Founder of MasterMindSEO



4. LET GO OF FULL CONTROL

“The best small business management tip I have to give entrepreneurs is to let go. More specifically, let go of control over things you’re not good at. For me, I hate accounting. However, for the first year in business, I viewed getting a bookkeeper as a waste of money, because I could do all of the work myself. Well, I realized really quickly that I really don’t enjoy bookkeeping and my time could be better spent on building the business over playing its accountant. Do what you’re the best at, and lean on others to help you with things you don’t like to do.”

— Jordan Scheltgen, Managing Partner at Cave Social



5. DE-CLUTTER YOUR BUSINESS

“My best small business management tip is to let go of anything that isn’t helping your business be a happier, healthier, and more productive place to be. Whether that’s an employee not pulling their weight while others compensate, a client who is draining more than their fair share of company resources, or files of old papers no one needs anymore, let it go. Removing the unwanted emotional, physical, and mental clutter in your office and in your head space will lead you to become a better and more confident decision-maker in life and business.”

— Alison Kero, CEO of ACK Organizing



6. DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF THE BIGGER PICTURE

“My best small business management tip to other entrepreneurs is that it’s easy to get caught up working *in* the business, so don’t forget to work *on* the business. If you’re not mindful, you can spend all your time being strictly reactive and putting out the fires that come up every day.

Immediate-term problems have to be addressed, but make sure you create opportunities to be proactive as well. Network with other entrepreneurs and business leaders, read up on trends, attend professional development events, and hold workshops with your team to identify and start initiatives

that will take your business to the next level. Doing these things will help you get ahead of the fires in the long term and keep you energized in the meantime.”

— Jacob Dayan, Partner and Co-founder of Community Tax



7. HIRE FOR ATTITUDE

“My small business management tip is this: Hire for attitude and train for skill.

Let’s face it, an employee with a bad attitude is not going to benefit your business at all—regardless of how ‘skilled’ they are. You *rarely* can improve the attitude of an employee. However, an employee with the *right* attitude? You can give them the training they need to be successful in your small business. It really is a win-win for both the employee and business owner.”

— Jason Hessom, Owner of SafetyVideos



8. LEVERAGE COMPANY DATA

“Levering data is one of the fundamental ways to improve business and employee management. From employee productivity to sales and logistical information, working to understand how your company collects and analyzes data is an important project for every entrepreneur.

After collecting this data, it is important to act on the analysis and work to make your processes more efficient. A lot of companies are great at collecting data but do not leverage this data to make operational changes. Finally, whenever collecting data on employee performance, it is important to keep the process transparent and ensure that everyone understands that the purpose is for business development and not to micromanage performance.”

— Evan Harris, Co-founder of SD Equity Partners



9. STICK TO PROCESSES

“My small business management advice to other entrepreneurs would be to document all of their business processes. In a nutshell, this means to create a book of standard operating procedures. Then if they want to go on a vacation or were no longer here, their staff could follow the procedures in the book. This is also very beneficial when they hire and need to train new staff. Documenting my procedures has made me examine everything necessary to run my business in detail and make processes more efficient.”

— Chris Abrams, Owner of MJ Life Insurance



10. PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY

“The best small business management tip I can give other entrepreneurs is to establish a culture of transparency within your organization. Constructive, timely, and candid feedback can boost employee and team performance. Entrepreneurs often hold feedback until formal reviews because they are caught in the day-to-day management of the business. Making transparency part of the day-to-day management of your employees will help them improve their work faster while accelerating results for the company.”

— Christina May, Illumine8



11. STICK TO A BUDGET

“My best tip for small business management is to create and utilize a budget.

This will help in two areas. First, you will know how much you need to sell in order to cover your overheads. Second, it will act as a guide to help your business grow! Many businesses see a budget

as restrictive, but it is the complete opposite. It gives you enough understanding of your finances that you know where you can improve and where you want to be in, say, 12 months' time.”

— Sam Boothroyd, Founder of Rymer Associates



12. FOCUS ON MAKING A BIG IMPACT

“As a small business owner, I know exactly how overwhelming it can be to juggle multiple tasks. The best advice once I got from my mentor was this: If you can’t complete all the tasks, just focus only on those that will make the biggest difference to your product or service. At the end of the day, you will see how few of these tasks are but what a huge impact they can make to the success of your business.”

— Santare Slavinsk, Co-founder and Creative Director of DIZAIND



13. CUT COSTS

“My number one tip for small business management is to be more stringent on costs. A penny saved is more often more than a penny earned, so it is important to save on costs everywhere you can. Take advantage of tax breaks, and if possible, outsource non-core business aspects.”

— AJ Saleem, Director of Suprex Tutors Houston



14. ALWAYS RE-EVALUATE

“The key to good small business management is evaluating your business progress at least every three months. A quarter is the right amount in a time increment to determine what operations are working and what isn’t, in terms of new business relationships or agendas. Some business owners might be too busy attending to details or a specific project and will neglect assessing their business models.

The worst thing you can do for your business is to continue implementing processes that aren’t benefitting you. By enforcing a quarterly evaluation, a business owner or entrepreneur can avoid bad business moves and give themselves the chance to grow in the right direction.”

— David Mitroff, Founder of Piedmont Avenue Consulting



15. KEEP TRACK OF YOUR BOOKS

“Stay on top of your books and budget so you always have a good idea of where your business is at financially, especially with expenses and revenues. Hire a good business accountant, and ask your accountant to hold you accountable for staying engaged with your business finances. A great way to do this is to have your accountant’s office call you for quarterly review meetings in their office. It will cost a little extra for their time but it’s worth the money for the benefit of knowing exactly where your business is at financially. Regular reviews are essential for long-term growth planning, so it’s a good habit to get into early on. Of course, it’s never too late to undertake the habit of regularly reviewing your finances.”

— Ruth van Vierzen, Founder and CEO of REV Squared



16. AUTOMATE TO FREE UP YOUR TIME

“My best small business management tip would be to automate as much as you can to free up your time. As small business owners, we have so many things to do that we often spend all our time in the