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[Time to institute new revolutions for the New Year](#)

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No, that's not a typo in the headline—resolutions are easy as most of us make them at least once a year. A revolution, on the other hand, is something you may not have made since you started your business.

Starting a business is actually quite revolutionary.

When you began yours, there were probably many details of your life that changed.

Some of those changes were intentional, others accidental; some you liked, some you didn't. Other changes you always meant to make—they just never happened.

Is your business everything you meant it to be? Is it giving you all that you wanted?

Are you satisfied, even delighted with the way your life as a business owner is turning out? If not, perhaps it's time to make a revolution.

The purpose in publishing these resolutions is not for you to have something to read on New Year's Eve.

Rather, it is to get you thinking seriously about your business and where it is going.

It is to get you to take action on what you read. It is time to eliminate FTI disease — the Failure to Implement disease that is killing your business.

No lack of ideas, just a lot of FTI! Unfortunately, the only remedy for FTI disease is not available at your local drugstore, it is only cured through action.

Here are some revolutionary ideas you might consider:

Strategic revolution

Radically rethink your business strategy. Are you in the right business?

Are you holding onto something that you should either sell or get out of now?

What more could your business be doing for your customers?

Spend at least a full day off-site, without interruptions, radically rethinking your business.

Do more of the work you like doing and less of what you don't. If you're not enjoying the work you do, there's no one to blame but yourself.

After all, you're the owner of this enterprise. If you can do different work in the same business, start now to make the shift.

Loyal customers will follow you if you're still offering services they need. Life is much too short to do work you don't enjoy, and it doesn't make much sense if you're working for yourself.

Take enough time for yourself and those you love.

The number one reason entrepreneurs name for going into business is time—more to spend with their families, more flexibility in work hours, or simply more control over how their time is spent.

But how many of us actually get this?

Marketing revolution

Build a marketing system that really works. The definition of a system is a selection of related components arranged in a specific order to achieve a common end. Does this describe your marketing?

Or is it more like a hodgepodge of random elements jumbled together without a clear goal?

If you want better customers, more money, more time for yourself, and more enjoyable work, an effective marketing system may be the universal solution.

Don't know how to build one? Make this the year you learn.

Already know how but haven't built it? Get support from a mentor or coach to make it happen.

Have a system but aren't using it? Pull your plan out of the drawer and recommit to doing what it takes to have the business you always dreamed of.

Rethink your product mix. Do you have the right products to meet your customer's needs?

Are there new products that you should have? Are there existing products which you should eliminate?

Customer revolution

Challenge whether or not you have the right customers in your business.

Serve only those customers you care about and enjoy being with.

Begin today to let go of customers you find difficult to work with, and start seeking out those you really had in mind when you started this business.

Have the courage to refuse new customers that don't fit your picture of who you most want your business to serve. Take the time to really know what your customers like and dislike about your business.

Launch a customer focus group to find the answers.

Launch a customer advisory board, where a key set of customers continually provide input into every area of your business.

You must have the right customers with the right attitude for this to work.

Launch a revolutionary customer loyalty program, which actually earns each customer's loyalty without asking by treating them as extra special.

Human resource

revolution

Re-evaluate whether or not you have the right skills, capacities and abilities on your team now. If not, take bold steps to ensure that you do.

Take action to determine what changes could be made to increase team member satisfaction and retention.

Start by conducting a confidential team member satisfaction survey and then act on the results.

Increase the level of empowerment and accountability of team members by seeking out ways for them to do more without your detailed involvement.

Challenge every aspect of your human resources policies and procedures from salary, fringe benefits to other softer factors.

Business process/

Information technology revolution

Identify the most critical processes in your business—the ones that if you do not get right, you will be out of business. Then take time with your team to determine how each business process could be significantly improved.

Determine how information technology could help you grow your business. Hire an outside expert to review your business processes and help you determine where technology solutions could revolutionize your business.

Financial revolution

Create a financial plan that outlines how you will reach your income goals. Unless you are independently wealthy, your business not only needs to support you, it needs to provide for your future. Setting goals for your desired income level is a good first step, but to reach those goals, you need a plan.

Create a financial model for your business. How many customers or contracts will it take to generate the income you want?

How much of your time will be required to do that amount of work and do the marketing required to get it? How much money will it cost you in overhead, marketing costs, and administrative help? Does the model work?

Create key performance indicators that measure and monitor the financial performance of your business. Ensure that these are monitored at least monthly. Re-evaluate margins on all of your product lines with a view to increasing them.

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