

Secrets of Success

Traits and Habits that Lead to Success

When I first started my law practice, I realized that for me to be successful, I'd first have to be true to myself. When you know who you are, you can focus on where you want to go.

That led me to business law and estate planning where I could develop ongoing relationships as a valued legal advisor.

Instead, I focused on entrepreneurs and how I could help them build and grow their business. That was a much better fit for my goals and values.

Based on my experience as a business owner and an advisor to other business owners, here are some key things I've learned about success:

Believe in yourself. Generally, you really have to believe in who you are, first and foremost. That will help you make a decision, stick to your guns and see it through. Have a vision of where you want to go, and believe in your ability to get there.

Value relationships. As a business owner, cultivating long-term relationships is critical. Take good care of your business relationships, and that includes clients, referral partners and suppliers. Don't burn bridges.

Anticipate problems. Many clients first come to me when facing a critical issue, but the truly successful ones consult with me before they get in trouble. They want to talk before making any big decisions and the want me to be part of the process.

They value me as a trusted business advisor and want help to avoid problems before signing a lease, hiring an employee, planning any transition or negotiation, etc.

Clarity/Explain. Any important part of what I do for clients is to take complex problems and make them understandable. The law doesn't have to be so complex if you boil it down to plain English.

Value. Value yourself. If you don't, you'll be undercutting yourself with clients. Con-



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and appreciate you. Make things right for the sake of the relationship, even if you are in the right.

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fidently show them how their objectives will be achieved by working with you. Clients will be willing to pay what price you quote provided you deliver the value they expect.

They need to know what you bring to the table as a trusted business advisor, and a friend. The value is in the relationship.

Make things right. Even when you do the best job for a client, they may be disappointed. You have to manage that. I always try to understand all the issues so I can help give them realistic expectations.

Even when I've done a good job for them, there may be underlying emotional issues that leave them disappointed. Sometimes, to salvage a relationship I value, I've refunded money or offered free hours to resolve the issue.

If you treat clients or customers right, they will remember



This article appeared in New Business Minnesota's September 2017 "Secrets of Success" issue. The publisher reached out to OffCenters for contributions from its executive office and virtual office clients to discuss what they have learned about success as a business owner and what they have learned from observing their successful clients. You can read them all at www.newbizminn.com