3 Ways to Build and Grow a Successful Business in 2020

Shanda Sumpter, founder and CEO of HeartCore Business, outlines lessons to help any entrepreneur find success.

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Shanda Sumpter is the founder and CEO of HeartCore Business, a training company that gives entrepreneurs step-by-step systems to help them build successful businesses. It's all about getting founders out of the daily grind — and into a life they love.

"Going to college, working for a big corporation and climbing the ladder used to be the route to success," Sumpter says. "These days, entrepreneurs are changing the game. Stats show that people don't relate to learning from big names or four-year colleges anymore. They're more interested in a workshop to master email marketing than spending four years in school."

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Sumpter speaks from experience, having transitioned from a corporate career to life as a struggling entrepreneur to, now, the CEO of a thriving, eight-figure company. How'd she do it? In part, by keeping these three invaluable and universal lessons in mind.

1. Be relatable.

"We spend way too much time trying to be perfect — creating

the right content or the right product – but we forget about being relatable," Sumpter told me. "But nobody buys 'perfect.' What they buy is a relatable story. When I make a video, I recall emotions of when I went through a challenging time in my life, personal situations in which I've cried many times. It gets me into the right frame of mind to be relatable. That's why so many of them have over a thousand shares almost immediately! As an entrepreneur, ask yourself this question: How do you make your story more relatable and how do you relate it to your service or product?"

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2. Focus on "warm traffic."

"The truth is, you want buyers, not followers," Sumpter says. "People who are addicted to how many 'likes' and followers they have on social media. We're so consumed with our posts and who commented or liked it, we've moved into wanting to be famous rather than being successful. Build your business by focusing on warm traffic: referred traffic, affiliate traffic and by building something called 'buyers lists,' which you can get from others in your niche. And while I love social media, remember: You're at a huge disadvantage when your focus is on social first. Many entrepreneurs who come to me have these huge platforms, but they're not making serious money. That's why you build your business first. It's better to be successful than famous."

3. Control your business by controlling a sales department.

"Don't outsource sales," Sumpter urges. "Everybody wants to focus on marketing and being popular, and they forgot about the conversion part about being profitable. One of the things we've done right at HeartCore is to build our own call center.

People always ask me where we find such great salespeople, and I tell them: from our clients and our email lists. What better place to find salespeople than from those that already have successful relationships and connections with you? If you can take someone whose life you've changed, and make them an offer where they will make incredible money and have a great experience working for you, it's a win-win. If you control your sales in-house, you won't worry about cash flow. And whenever there's a hiccup in the market, you put yourself in a great position because you control your money."

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