

5 Books Every Small Business Owner Should Read

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While there are many “small business 101” courses online, few capture the nuances and complexity of running a small business from scratch. You might learn the essentials (like how to file for an LLC or how to manage your books) but miss the most critical component: how to master the mindset of a successful business owner.

This is where books make up for where online courses and blogs leave off, diving deep into the psychology of starting a venture of your own, the positioning to attract customers, how to price your services and more.

Here’s some essential reading for any current (or aspiring) small business owner looking to enter entrepreneurship with confidence and focus.

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***The Go-Giver* by Bob Burg**

Bob Burg is the bestselling author of many books on business, sales and leadership, such as *The Art of Persuasion* and *Endless Referrals*. He has a knack for not only explaining the strategies needed to start and run a successful business but also the psychology behind being a confident entrepreneur.

In *The Go-Giver*, Bob Burg tells the story of an ambitious “go-getter” named Joe. Joe works tirelessly but seems to only get farther from his goals. With the guidance of a legendary

consultant named Pindar, Joe is tasked with shadowing several successful entrepreneurs: a restaurant owner, a CEO, a real estate broker and others. These new mentors teach him that the key to success is to shift his focus from getting to giving by putting other people's interests first.

This mindset shift leads to unexpected returns – and many valuable lessons for the reader. Through the Five Laws of Stratospheric Success, Burg teaches readers how to find fulfillment by giving more and taking less. As a small business owner, you'll gain insights on how to provide value to customers, market your services and much more.

***Buy Back Your Time* by Dan Martell**

As a small business owner, time is your most valuable resource. Between promoting your products, hiring a team, managing your finances and creating marketing materials, it's easy to watch the day get away from you. In *Buy Back Your Time*, author Dan Martell helps entrepreneurs regain control of their time, master their calendars and achieve greater productivity.

Martell shares several strategies for “buying back” time by delegating, outsourcing and automating tasks. This includes the “Buyback Principle” of employing help to manage the more menial tasks of your day-to-day so you're better able to focus on revenue-generating activities. *Buy Back Time* also shares practical yet impactful tips for how to avoid burnout, prioritize tasks, generate more sales and scale your business. The result is a better work-life balance, happier employees and a more sustainable business.

Related: I Built a Billion-Dollar Company With the Help of These 19 Business Books

***Chillpreneur* by Denise Duffield-Thomas**

Chillpreneur is the must-read guide for entrepreneurs who want to work smarter, not harder. Author Denise Duffield-Thomas encourages readers to adopt a “chill” approach to business: striving for success without intense effort or stress. She turns “hustle” culture on its head, assuring small business owners that it’s possible to run a financially sustainable business without compromising time (or sanity).

Duffield-Thomas’s take on entrepreneurship is one that’s focused on freedom and abundance rather than restriction and scarcity. As a money mindset coach, she shares an approach for building a business that aligns with your unique personality and skills, as well as financial goals.

In addition to money mindset strategies, the author shares practical tips on how to earn more while working less, master the marketing fundamentals, establish your prices and even overcome awkward money situations. Duffield-Thomas offers a fresh perspective on how to grow a business – not by “grinding” your way to success, but by finding balance and enjoying the journey.

***The E-Myth Revisited* by Michael E. Gerber**

The E-Myth Revisited is the updated version of Michael E. Gerber’s original book, *The E-Myth*, recounting what NOT to do as a small business owner. The book tackles many misconceptions about starting a small business.

One such misconception is that technical expertise alone is enough to run a successful company. Gerber explains that many entrepreneurs mistakenly believe that being good at a specific

skill – whether it's baking, plumbing or graphic design – automatically translates into the ability to run a business. He refers to this as the “Entrepreneurial Myth” or “E-Myth.”

The book explains that successful entrepreneurs need to step into both their roles as technicians and leaders/managers. This includes building systems and processes that ultimately result in a more efficient, financially sound business. Furthermore, Gerber provides practical advice on how to work on the business rather than just in it, empowering small business owners to find more fulfillment and economic success.

This updated edition is a great resource for any entrepreneur looking to grow their business without burning out or overloading themselves with technical tasks.

Related: 7 Books to Help You Build a Better Business

***Measure What Matters* by John Doerr**

When it comes to practical matters, *Measure What Matters* is your guide. This book explores the power of setting tangible goals and establishing your objectives and key results (OKRs) to measure success. In it, author John Doerr provides a step-by-step framework for setting business milestones, measuring results and achieving your financial goals.

Doerr relays how today's most notable companies – like Google, Bono and the Gates Foundation – have achieved success by “measuring what matters.” In other words, they focus on the activities that are most likely to move them toward their business objectives. The lesson is that small businesses can do the same, clearly defining their goals and measuring results so they can stay focused on what truly matters.

Through real-world examples, Doerr shows how OKRs can help small business owners prioritize tasks, stay agile and achieve scalable growth.

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