How to Replace Yourself in Your Business Without Losing Control



There are systems you can use to step back without slipping up.

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If you've been in business long enough, you've probably heard the joke that entrepreneurs are the only people who would trade working 40 hours a week for someone else so they can work 80 hours a week for themselves. That always gets a chuckle, but the truth is unless you can effectively replace yourself as you grow, not only will you be stuck grinding for hours on end, but you'll also limit the potential of your business.

Eventually, every entrepreneur comes face to face with a dilemma; you can't do it all on your own, but you also worry that if you hand off tasks they won't get done the right way. Maybe you even hired people to relieve some of the pressure but struggled to find an efficient way to pass off work. The good news is that by creating systems, you can replace yourself and free up your time for what you're really passionate about.

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What Is a System?

Most people mistakenly think a system is some slick piece of technology or something rigid that only big businesses need. But well-built systems can help any business by making the workflow smoother and giving owners more freedom. In its simplest form, a system is a combination of three key parts. Once you understand how these three parts interrelate, you can create a simple system for almost anything.

Systems = People + Process + Tools

People – Who is responsible for doing the thing?

Process – What are the steps or guidelines they need to follow to get it done?

Tools – What do they need in order to complete the task?

If you're missing any of these pieces or if they are not clearly defined, you're going to end up doing damage control. Let's take a look at a simple example: Managing your calendar.

People – Your assistant.

Process – Outline of when you want certain types of meetings,

when you want your time blocked out for high-value activities, etc.

Tools – Your calendar or scheduling software.

Now, for a slightly more complicated example: Managing customer service.

People – Virtual assistant or customer-service rep.

Process – Clear documentation on what responses to use when. Expectations about response time and how things get escalated and to whom.

Tools – Inbox, task management or helpdesk software.

The key to replacing yourself with systems is to realize that all three of these pieces need to be in place. Many business owners and entrepreneurs sink effort into the people and the tools but fail to strengthen their processes. Without that third piece of the puzzle, their system can't function in the best way.

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Creating Quality Processes

Without a clear process, handing over tasks to someone else is always going to be difficult, no matter how good your people or tools are. Fortunately, there's one simple strategy to make sure your processes are crisp and clear: Record your screen while you are completing tasks. (It's also useful to have a notebook handy to jot down any part of the task that doesn't show on your screen.) Pass the recording off to an assistant and have them document the individual steps. Share the recording and steps with the person responsible for the task. This lets you convey exactly what needs to be done without taking time out of your day. Plus, the recordings can be saved

and shared with anyone, in case you end up bringing more people on board as the business grows.

Putting effort into creating clear processes takes your systems to the next level, saving you time down the line and making sure things don’t collapse when you aren’t around.

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