Why Most Entrepreneurs Ignore Management (and Why That's a Big Mistake)

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In my experience mentoring entrepreneurs and building Coworking Smart, I've noticed something consistent: Many founders love starting things, but very few enjoy managing them. It's easy to get excited about launching a business. It's harder to wake up every day and manage it well.

Management doesn't sound sexy. It doesn't get you likes on social media. But as I share in my book *O Empreendedor Smart*, if you don't master management, you'll always be stuck reacting instead of leading.

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What management really means

Management isn't bureaucracy. It's not just systems, meetings and spreadsheets. Management is decision-making. It's knowing what matters, who's responsible and how to track progress.

Peter Drucker defined it simply: "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." In *The Essential Drucker*, he also reminds us that the job of management is to enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things, as highlighted in this Harvard Business Review article.

To do that, you need clear priorities, numbers you trust and

rituals that sustain performance.

An effective management formula

Entrepreneurs need to simplify how they manage. You don’t need an MBA. You need a rhythm. Here’s the three-part formula I use:

1. Numbers tell the truth

If you’re not looking at the right numbers weekly, you’re guessing.

I always ask:

- What are your three most important metrics?
- Are they visible to the team?
- Are you reviewing them weekly?

For us at Coworking Smart, these numbers were:

Numbers create alignment. They end opinions. They allow for faster, smarter decisions.

A McKinsey report shows that teams with clarity on performance metrics are 3.5 times more likely to outperform their peers. Similarly, a Gartner study emphasizes that companies that align team metrics with strategic goals see a significant boost in employee engagement and overall results.

2. People drive the numbers

The second principle: Metrics are the output. People are the input.

You can’t separate culture from results. If your team doesn’t feel safe, focused and equipped – they won’t deliver.

That’s why we implemented weekly 1:1s, regular feedback loops and team dashboards that show progress visually. These practices create ownership.

As Simon Sinek explains in his book *Leaders Eat Last*, people don’t work hard because you pay them. They work hard because they feel seen and supported.

Culture is the hidden engine of performance. And management is how you build that engine.

In *Drive*, Daniel Pink explains that motivation comes from autonomy, mastery and purpose – and it’s management’s role to cultivate those elements (source).

3. Rhythm beats speed

Speed alone doesn’t scale. Rhythm does.

That’s why management needs cadence. At Coworking Smart, we follow a basic weekly cycle:

- Monday: team sync with KPIs
- Wednesday: deep work/no meeting day
- Friday: short retrospective on what worked and what didn’t

This rhythm helps us avoid firefighting and stay focused on what matters.

You don’t need complex tools. You need consistency. As James Clear wrote in *Atomic Habits*, “You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.”

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Tools to get started without spending more

One of the biggest myths in entrepreneurship is: “I’ll focus on management once I grow.”

No. You grow because you manage. You scale what’s organized. You repeat what’s documented.

You can start with:

- A shared KPI board using Trello, Notion or Google Sheets
- Weekly check-ins with your team
- Monthly reviews of your main business levers

You can even use Slack channels for automated daily updates. What matters isn’t the tool, but the discipline behind it.

According to a study by the Project Management Institute, companies with mature project and management practices waste 28 times less money than those with poor practices.

From chaos to control: Our experience

Early on, we ran Coworking Smart with hustle and instinct. It worked — until it didn’t. Once we opened multiple units, chaos set in.

That’s when we shifted to this simplified management system. The results were immediate:

- Productivity up by 35%
- Team turnover cut in half

- Faster, more confident decision-making

Today, we run eight units across Brazil, in cities like Brasília, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro. We serve thousands of entrepreneurs through a low-cost, highly automated model that wouldn't be possible without operational discipline.

And it's not just about scale. It's about sustainability. When you manage well, you don't burn out. You build.

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Manage with intention, not just reaction

Entrepreneurship will always have uncertainty. That's part of the game. But management is how you create stability inside that uncertainty.

Peter Drucker said, "Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work." That's what management is: the hard work of turning intention into structure.

It's not glamorous. It's not exciting. But it's the reason smart businesses survive and thrive.

As Harvard Business School professor Robert Simons wrote in *Seven Strategy Questions*, great managers don't just execute — they challenge assumptions, clarify priorities and create accountability.

So, if you're overwhelmed, unclear or stuck — it's probably not your idea. It's your management. Fix that, and everything else gets easier.

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