

New contributor to the Newsletter

In this newsletter I'm excited to introduce you to a new contributor, Darryn White

Darryn started his building design business, some 15 years ago, on his own with one other person in the front room of his home. In the first 10 to 11 years of building his business, he did all of the things that he thought he should do, that most other small businesses also do. Just over three years ago, Darryn got in contact with us and with our encouragement began to design the business exactly as he wanted to be in the future. Just over three years later, those goals, reality.

Darryn has created a business that supports his lifestyle and gives him the freedom to do the things he wants with his two young boys.

When speaking to most small businesses this is the sort of outcome that they want for their business, but they struggle, and for many it doesn't become a reality. So what's the difference between them and Darryn? The answer is simple, action!

One of the things that I've noticed about Darryn over the years is he keeps it simple. He asks questions, but more importantly, he put things into action. Small business success is formulaic, or in other words, by following simple strategies, systems and procedures, virtually any business can become successful and give the business owner, the financial and time freedom they only dream about. The thing that complicates the process is the people. Many people have a tendency to get something simple, it has been proven to work and then try and shortcut it or modify it, so it suits their comfort zone. This simply complicates things and reduces the effectiveness of the process.

I believe Darryn has a lot to offer other business owners, and to that end, I asked him if he would mind contributing his knowledge to this newsletter, so the readers can benefit from his approach. The good news is Darryn has agreed and in this issue of 'Hidden Profits Uncovered' you can read Darryn's first contribution.

"A Clean Desk" by Darryn White



It was within a recent MyLyfe workshop (Time Machine) that those attending were introduced to the advantages of a 'Clean and clutter free desk or workspace'.

Why? You may ask. Simply, a clearer desk can lead to a clearer thought process and mind, allowing for less distractions when focusing on a set task. If your desk has piles of papers, notes, reminders, mail and gadgets strewn all over it, can you truly focus on one thing at a time? I suggest not. If the desk is clear of clutter, with only what you immediately need around the task your working on, you can effectively focus much better on that one task, effectively completing it sooner thus allowing you to move to the next task.

One of our team members, Nadine, who attended the workshop with me decided it would be a great idea for our office of around 8 people to all have tidy or at least tidier desks.

We all have 'busy' work stations, me included (possibly the worst), so Nadine produced a simple layout plan of what a work station' or desk should' look like.



The plan looks more like a bulls eye target with items of less importance in the outer rings and the bulls eye or centre with just one item, 'The single thing you are working on.' The philosophy, to minimise the amount of distraction whilst focusing on a set task.

So having this information is all very well, as we know there is a bucket load of information out there. The key is for the team to ACT and this isn't necessarily easy when they haven't had to do it before.

With anything new introduced to an office environment the challenge is to get all the team or staff engaged and involved. The reason for this I feel is habit related and the excuses for retaining a tidy desk can consist of such things as, "I didn't do it before so why should I now", "It takes up my time", "I like the way my desk is now" and so on.



Introducing a level of fun and enjoyment to any activity can have remarkable results. We as humans generally are much happier doing something that has a level of enjoyment about it rather than one of inconvenience or discomfort, regardless of the outcome. We generally look for the easy way out and if it means 'stack where you sit' then "she'll do". In order to break this habit or mind set we all



have the ability to adopt more novel solutions than you have a much better chance of keeping everyone engaged, rather than the "you will, because I said" principle.

We decided to make our new 'tidy desk policy' a light hearted competition where all the team vote weekly on who has the tidiest desk. This is done over the course of the month with the winner for the month receives two tickets to the movies.

Of course, if there is a tie at the end of the month the team get to vote the winner based on general consistency or a method they choose.

This months winner probably has had the tidiest desk consistently before our new policy was introduced anyway however, the bar has been raised for everyone else in the office and everyone is conscious of having a tidier work space.



The feeling within the office since the introduction of this new competition is great and everyone is having a lot of fun with it, one even voting for himself even though not truly wor-

thy. Don't worry, he didn't win. The end result of this simple idea, eight tidier desks, accountability to the team, light hearted fun, more effective days work by everyone and an opportunity to see a flick for free. Excellent!



Another valuable component of this policy, as 'the business owner' or boss is that it wasn't me that came up with the idea.

If more business owners show more faith in their biggest asset, their team, they will be rewarded with a flurry of great ideas that everyone can take ownership of.



I learned a long time ago that I don't have all the answers and this is a true example of TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More).

So, have a think about your work place and what policies you have in place. Think about what is working and what isn't. Why do some work and some don't? Then look for ideas within your team of how more policies can work and what will encourage a positive result, for everyone.

