

Discover How You Can Start Making Your Small Business Dream Come True

- **by Yolanda A. Facio**

As a teenager I worked for my father's small business. At 18 I worked for a small video rental business owned by two partners; there were 4 employees. At 23 I worked for an auto body shop, the owner was from Greece; there were 8 employees. At 25 I became CEO of my family's small business; we have 15 employees. Today, I own a 3-employee automotive repair shop; an online business; a promotional licensing business and I still consult for my family's business.

Today working in large firms with hundreds of employees or even 50 employees is rare. Like most people I grew up around small business and worked in small business. The transition to a business of my own seemed a natural progression. The time has never been better to get your feet wet. Small business is booming.

Consider these facts from the U.S. Bureau of the Census:

- 23 million small businesses in the U.S.; 75% of which have no employees
- Small businesses represent 99.7% of all employer firms
- Small businesses employ half of all private sector employees
- 44.3% of U.S. private payroll is paid by small businesses
- 60%-80% of all new job created annually are by small businesses

Today, small business is the standard.

If you've ever dreamed of owning or starting your own business, clearly the climate has never been better. But making your dream come true takes a few key strategies.

First, before starting any endeavor, do your research, education is the single most important factor to a successful new business. If no one wants your product or if no market exists for your service you will spin your wheels trying to survive.

Know your market, who are they? Does your product or service exist? If so, how can you make it better? What is your competitive edge? What are your competitors doing?

If your service or product doesn't exist, why should it? This is a tough question but if you cannot justify the purpose of your product or service and the need it fills how will you find customers?

The next step is planning. What will you need? How will you get started? What is your first step?

When I'm looking to start a new endeavor, I jot down the goal and then write down each and every task I can think of that will need to be accomplished in order to achieve the goal. Organize all those items into an Action Plan and then get started, one step at a time.

Getting started is probably the most difficult step. We all have fear of the unknown. You need only one ability or skill... courage. Take the step, even if you feel like you're falling from a tall building. I promise once you get started, you'll wonder why you didn't do so before.

Execution is where all the research and planning pay off. You've made your marketing plan; now just take it one step at a time. Keep at it. Even if your first marketing tactic works, keep at each and every one. If you send out 100 fliers and start getting customers, do not stop. Follow through on the next mailer or article. You must continue executing your marketing plan; this tactic will ensure long-term success.

Clearly it has never been a better time to start a small business. There are millions of small businesses out there; you are not alone. Seek out others for support. Start small to get your feet wet and start accumulating accomplishments. With small businesses creating 50% of the gross domestic product you can't go wrong.