

***Don't accept good enough
as good enough.***

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Business Disciplines

Much has been written about what businesses need to do to achieve their profit and growth goals. Topics often include: innovation, productivity, decisiveness, spend management, change management, emotional intelligence, transparency, etc., etc.

These business practices and principles, albeit many, are right-on. But, what we would like to present here are the disciplines that businesses must perform successfully every day. Said another way, the engine must be running on each and every one of these "cylinders" for a company to achieve its goals. Missing the mark on just one of these can have a detrimental effect on profit and growth. For example, a company could be batting a thousand in each of the areas below, but have one safety incident. Or miss one indemnification clause in a contract. Or have one unmotivated employee. And on and on.... Here is our list of disciplines that businesses must hit on to be successful and some quick thoughts on each. Feel free to let us know what you would add to the list.

- Leadership – Must be visionary, visible, motivational, and communicative.
- Strategic Planning and Execution - Rigorous analysis and planning are required but execution is the key to successful strategies. If you lack the discipline to execute, don't bother with the plan.
- Financial Management – An eye for detail is necessary at every level of an organization, from the employee to the CEO.
- Risk Management – Dotting the "I's" and crossing the "T's" in all you do is a must, and can save your butt.
- Marketing – Marketing starts with the customers' demographics, needs, and values. It does not ask, what do we want to sell? It asks, what does the customer want to buy?
- Sales – Requires practice of: building rapport, identifying needs, building value, creating desire, overcoming objections, and closing. Piece of cake..... right?
- Customer Service – Constantly delivering an enhanced customer experience requires the relentless drive of a customer-centric mentality down into the organization until it is ingrained in the business culture. Yes, we said relentless!
- Quality – Every business leader must be a quality champion; not just interested in quality, but on the fringe of demand and pressure and push to make quality happen, much like an ISO approach.
- Product or Service Excellence – It all starts here; if the marketplace does not accept your offering, nothing else much matters. Fold up your tent and go home.
- Employee Relations - Employees need: challenge, continual training, to see results, and to be managed as partners. Partners have to be persuaded, not ordered.
- Safety – The margin for error is nil so proactive safety practices are a must in any workplace, be it a hazardous occupation or a safe environment such as an office.
- Teamwork and Communication – Every business must be built on communication and individual responsibility. All have to think through what they owe to others. All have to think through what they in turn need from others and make sure that others know what is expected of them. Did we mention accountability, too?

Have a great day!