



Three Mistakes I Wish I Hadn't Made When Building My Business

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

Published

February 13th, 2011

We all make mistakes and some of them can be costly - especially when building a business. But, like the old expression "live and learn", I have not only lived through them but also learned from them.

1. Hiring individuals who I liked instead of people who could do the job - I admit that there was a time when I really didn't understand how to hire staff that would help me build the business. I would hire people who had good personalities or seemed to be compatible with me. So many times, I would be surprised to learn that they either didn't have the skills needed to do the job or were just too lazy to get things done.

Well, now I am very good at hiring! I list all the jobs that I need to have done and then only hire people who have the skills and motivation to get them done. That means that I have to start with knowing very clearly what I need and then being able to communicate this to the person I hire. A third important aspect of hiring is following up to ensure that the person is doing things the way that you outlined for them.

2. Buying too much inventory - When I wrote my first book the publisher offered a "two for one" deal. I just "knew" that I would be selling lots of books (doesn't every author?) and therefore bought 3,000 copies. That meant that 6,000 arrived at my door and although I had a good price per copy, I had invested a lot of money into the order. On top of that, I didn't have the space to store them so had to rent an office space to house them. It has now been over two years of monthly rent - just to store them! Oops!

3. Investing too much money into travel and training for staff - My older son and my daughter work for me. I thought it would be a good idea to take them to some training opportunities that required registration, flights, hotels and meals. I don't regret taking them at all. In fact, the training was good for all of us. What I do regret is that I hadn't set up a business start-up loan and therefore used credit cards to pay for this. The interest paid was fairly significant. If I were doing this again, I wouldn't have set up so many trips or arranged for a low interest line of credit.

It's okay. I've heard it said that "experience is something you wish was happening to the other guy". I have good learning from these three experiences and do not regret them one little bit!