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# Business buzz

**Pam Underdown** on injecting the fun back into your business

**D**o you enjoy running your own business? Is it fun for you? Does it make you happy and fulfilled? Do you wake up with a smile on your face as you look forward to the day ahead? Are you motivated and passionate about it? Or are you simply trying to get through each day, hoping that there will be enough money left to pay yourself and enough time left over to do the books, or perhaps a little bit of marketing?

One of the most enjoyable parts of my business is when I receive excited updates from my clients as they recognise and celebrate each win, no matter how small, whether they are sharing the news of a fabulous patient testimonial, or an increase in profits, or sharing the feedback about a new treatment they have just launched, or the excitement of an increase in new patient bookings that week.

Whatever it is, I sincerely believe that taking the time to acknowledge and recognise each of these small wins, makes us feel better, not only because we are moving forwards and are starting to reap the rewards, but because we know that it's all as a result of our own hard work and determination to succeed.

A fabulous testimonial or comment from a happy patient can be "marketing gold" for you and your business, so use it where you can (with their permission of course), but also keep your own diary of what your patients say about you, as

reading them on a challenging day, when things aren't going as well, will definitely help to make you feel a million times better and re-enforce your reasons to keep going when times get tough.

## GET THE EXCITEMENT BACK

For those aesthetic professionals who have lost the excitement and fun element from their business – why is that? Are you too busy each day to realise that you have lost your sparkle and passion? Perhaps every day feels like a chore? Maybe you feel like you are on a constant rollercoaster, haphazardly getting through each day – firefighting and never feeling in control? Or do you simply dread the time when you need to work on that new consent form, or the figures for the accountant or that next month's marketing campaign? Perhaps you don't have the time that you used to have to spend with family and friends and the constant negative comments are driving you even further away from them. Or maybe it is the daily worry of money and cash flow that has taken the spark from you.

Running a business is so consuming, it needs constant attention, nurturing, time, energy, effort and is undoubtedly sheer hard work – it's no wonder that so many people compare it to having a small child. However you are feeling right now, if you have some hope for a better future and

aren't quite ready to throw in the towel, what can you do to re-ignite that sparkle and inject some fun back into your business again?

First of all, you must have an underlying belief that you will be successful and will stay the course, no matter what. If you can always make your goals bigger than your challenges then you will succeed. Make them exciting and fun, don't be afraid to plan for that house, car or holiday "when" it happens, not "if" it happens. Be warned though - if making money is your sole aim, you may get too disheartened when it isn't happening quick enough, to put in the effort that's required on a long-term basis. Supplementing a desire to make profit with a passion for the nature of your business will help motivate you more.

Gain absolute clarity on where you are now, where you want to be and what is getting in the way. If you don't have a clear plan, clear objectives and goals, then how will you know if you have succeeded? And how will you know WHY you succeeded, so you can do more of it and less of what didn't work? Business isn't fun if you don't have the visibility of all the metrics. Imagine how scary it would be to drive a car without a dashboard. You

you and will recommend you to everyone" in a consistent, reliable and predictable way. If this was in place, all of the other challenges that you face on a daily basis will disappear.

If you feel overwhelmed because there is simply too much to do, then "uni-task" and focus on one thing at a time. Turn off your email and social media alerts and just focus for 90 minutes on one task. Start the day with the most uncomfortable task. Get that done, no matter what. If you have trouble focusing and get distracted easily. This can really take the enjoyment out of your day, as you are constantly "telling yourself off". A great book if you really suffer and never feel like you are moving forward is "21 Ways to Manage the Stuff That Sucks up Your Time"



wouldn't know your speed, how much fuel you had left, how long it would take to get to your destination, and if anything went wrong with your car, you wouldn't know why - because the warning light never came on. This is the same for your business. Without a dashboard and a clear plan, you are "driving blind".

Don't be afraid of, or shy away from, the business side of your business (i.e. the finances and marketing). It becomes fun when you are in control you can see what is happening based on facts and evidence and then you are in the driving seat to change things, see the effect of those changes and gain from the impact. Business isn't fun when you don't know the impact of your actions on your results. Taking the time to master the business side of your business will be empowering; it will fuel your self-confidence and belief. As the saying goes "success breeds success". The better you get at understanding your business and being in control of the results, the more you will achieve.

Make your ability to attract and retain patients your number-one priority (aside from your clinical and patient safety skills of course). Imagine how you would feel if you had a consistent flow of your ideal patients who spend, return and refer simply because you have the systematic ability to take somebody from "I don't know you" to "I love



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by Grace Marshall. Also, get comfortable saying no. You have more important things to do than to dance to somebody else's tune.

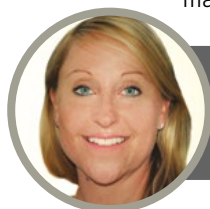
You know that your treatments, products and services genuinely help people, so it can be incredibly rewarding to realise you've improved their lives in some way or brought a smile to their face. There's also no greater buzz than seeing one of your patients whose lives you have changed as a result of making them look and feel better. Being able to give someone a job is also a huge plus that makes all the hard work worth it. As the business develops, you can bring in other employees or external professionals to delegate the parts you enjoy doing least, so you can focus on doing the stuff you get the biggest enjoyment from.

I know a lot of businesses that stagnate once they start making a profit. They become satisfied with what they are making and stick to it. As a result, they

go through the same routine day in and day out, and soon things get boring. Because you are in a competitive industry, you can never really slack off too much and that keeps things interesting. Business owners also often thrive from the variety of their day-to-day - it'll keep things fresh and challenging and exciting and you'll be learning all the time. I

asked one of my clients what makes business fun for her and Dr Pradnya Apte said she just loves the fact that it's a fast-moving, innovative and evolving market place and the most exciting part is not knowing where it's all going to lead to.

Finally, never give up: success doesn't happen overnight, it requires hard work, tears and time, lots of time. If you don't see fantastic results straight away, don't worry. Just keep on doing what you do best: be consistent, stubborn - hustle and don't give up. As Winston Churchill famously said: "If you're going through hell, keep going" **AM**



>> Pam Underdown is the founder and owner of Aesthetic Business Transformations, a business growth specialist working exclusively to help medical aesthetic business owners increase their profits and reduce their costs. Pam has more than 25 years of business development, sales and marketing experience and has been specialising in the aesthetics industry since 2005.