

# The Cake Entrepreneur

*"I wanted to be an editor or a journalist, I wasn't really interested in being an entrepreneur, but I soon found I had to become an entrepreneur in order to keep my magazine going." Richard Branson*

There is nothing more rewarding than the pride that comes with running your own successful business. You are the boss and all the decisions you make will either help or hinder your business, but they are 100% your decisions so you deserve to take 100% of the praise when they go well.

When a cake decorator looks to start their business, they are very much focussed on the product, their cakes, but for any entrepreneur setting up in business there are a range of new skills and disciplines that need to be learned. Every single business needs an entrepreneur, a manager, and a technician and if you are a sole trader then you need to be all three. The technician just loves being hands on with their craft or in this case making cakes, but if you shy away from the basic management responsibilities like creating systems, financial management and planning, your venture will very soon find itself in trouble. It is the same with the entrepreneur, that character needs to be free to look at ways to grow the business and given the time and encouragement to do so.

The entrepreneur, manager and technician should spend at least 3 hours a week working ON the business. The technician's job is primarily involved in working IN the business, but to only work in the business denies the enterprise the exciting lifeblood that every business needs to develop and grow. As soon as a business stops growing and adapting, it starts to stagnate then eventually dies. These business owners have spent far too much time working IN their business and not enough time allowing the entrepreneur within them to breathe.

Business is exciting, challenging and can be extremely rewarding, but success comes with hard work, planning and learning early on to take responsibility for everything that happens to them and their business. I was introduced to the diagram below by a very respected business coach who told me that whatever happens, to always stay above the line. You will see the three traits above the line are all about taking responsibility for your business, whereas the traits below the line are common with a lack of responsibility. You will often find that owners of businesses that are in trouble or fail are all too often below the line, they'll blame the economy, the competition or even the weather before taking responsibility themselves.

OWNERSHIP  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
RESPONSIBILITY

-----

BLAME  
EXCUSES  
DENIAL

There are many opportunities in the cake industry, and it is up to the entrepreneur within to work out where your niche is. This is where the 3 hours a week is so important to allow you to explore new opportunities. If you do not feel that is you, then bring someone in to help. Most will have access to a business mentor or friend who can help so use their time and experience to help guide you through.

As the entrepreneur within you drives the business forward you need to make sure the manager is given their space to ensure that all the practical aspects of running a business are taken care of. If that is not you, then find someone who will do well at this for you. Paul Bradford is an excellent technician and entrepreneur, but he is not a manager. I am happy working as a manager and enjoy the entrepreneurial side, but I am not a technician, so we have the right balance that allows the business to evolve and develop with each of us doing the aspects that we're good at and most importantly, enjoy.

Take a few minutes to allow your entrepreneur a chance to breathe without the technician's constraints of the day-to-day stuff. Enjoy the moment and remember why you started your business in the first place. This is important so spend time finding out what you REALLY want from your business and indeed your life!

David Brice  
Lead Business Tutor  
CakeFlix