**Looking at Expert Advisory Through the Business Owner Lens**



To advise, or not to advise? (Sorry Shakespeare…)

Like it or not, entrepreneurs tend not to be good at calling on advisors/experts in certain areas “telling them what to do”. It’s almost a fact that entrepreneurs tend to be resistant to professionals who were hired to help them improve their business.

*But we know that taking help isn’t always easy (even when you’re paying for it).*

Entrepreneurs often wonder: How will they help me? Are they only in this for themselves? What's the catch? What's the commitment and pay-off at the end?

And while these questions are hard to answer without an initial analysis and dive into the books/operations of the business, it’s important for business owners to understand what is the value add of hiring a professional.

Business owners want to see results before bringing on a consultant or advisor, and even after being provided with hundreds of case studies and success stories from the consultant’s firm, they can be resistant because it’s not “their business”.

This is understandable; business owners work so hard day and night to achieve their goals, and they don’t know that advisors or consultants will care as much as they do.

And while it’s true that no one will care as much as an owner does about their business, sometimes owners need to know when to step away from a problem and leave it up to those with more experience.

We see this every day on shows like Restaurant Impossible, where professional restauranteurs visit struggling kitchens and completely turn them around. The chef/owner is almost always resistant to change but doesn’t know what to do.

This scenario can be applied to any other business on the face of the earth. There is always someone who has more experience, and who has figured out a potential formula for your business’s set of problems. Our advice here is: pay them to help you and take their advice.

**How do you know that your consultant/advisor will help you?**



If you’re hiring this person as a freelancer or contractor, their livelihood depends on you providing a good review. They depend on helping you turn your business around in order to keep their business afloat.

If you’re hiring this person as part of a management consultancy or advisory board, you know that they’re accountable to their company and if you have a problem they will need to answer to a higher power within their organization. They don’t want to look bad at work and we’re assuming they want to keep their jobs, so there’s really no risk in hiring a reputable professional to advise for your company.

**What’s the catch?**



The catch is that you actually have to listen to their advice! It can seem unintuitive to take advice from someone outside of your organization… how could they possibly know your business better than you do?

Well, it’s not that they know your business better. It’s that they have more knowledge of strategies, management tactics, your target audience/market segment, and have a better financial background than you do. And this might not be true either, but having an outside opinion is often necessary because they are not as close to the project as you are. It’s like how surgeons aren’t allowed to operate on their own family members; they’re too close to the “project”.

**How will they help me?**

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Small business consultants or advisors will help your company with whatever it needs. They will tell you how to set up processes for streamlined operations, offer results-driven advice that is practical for you to implement, and will provide tools and knowledge for you to effectively manage your business and get it on the right track.

Your business can benefit from activities like strategic planning, finance management, operations, technology optimization, sales/marketing, digital strategy, and eCommerce, and the list goes on…

And in the end, your business will be optimized and set up for longevity or maybe even a potential sale. It depends on what your goals for the company are, which you should discuss with your consultant or advisor.

Overall, working with an expert advisor shouldn’t be a scary thing for your company. Of course, it can be scary to invest in information and invest in things that aren’t tangibly helping the company with an immediate payoff, but you will see results from your expert advisor that will last well into the future.

