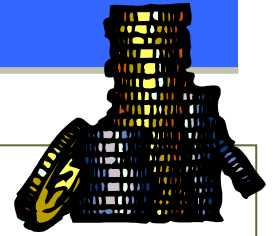


When Every Penny Counts, Count on Us!

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How's Your Cell Phone & Texting Etiquette

While with a client, leave your cell phone off and out of sight. That's it. That should be all that needs to be said.

But many of us seem to think we should be an exception to this common courtesy. Imagine being in a meeting where you are paying your attorney for his professional advice. If his cell phone rings, you will most likely be irritated. You will be even more so if he stays on the call for more than a few seconds.

As a lowly college freshman, I was talking to my economics professor in his office. His phone rang, and he immediately turned it off without so much as picking it up to say hello. I said, "What if that was the university president?" He told me that since I took the time to sit face-to-face with him, the phone would have to take second place. I was very impressed to be that important to him.

Your clients will also appreciate your undivided attention. The fact that they may take phone calls does not give you license to do the same. Besides, they are paying for your time. If you absolutely must take a certain call, tell your client beforehand and then make it as brief as possible.

Keep your cell off and out of sight. It's another way of telling your clients they're important to you.

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Tax Due Dates

June 10

- Deadline for employees who work for tips and received \$20 or more in tips in May

June 15

- Corporation estimated tax payment
- Individual 2nd Qtr estimated tax payment for 1040-EZ
- Individuals living abroad file Form 1040
- Non payroll withholding
- Social security, Medicare & Withheld income tax

Starting a Business? Avoid These Hiring Mistakes

Challenges that merely annoy an established firm often capsize a start-up company. This is especially true in the area of staffing. When a big corporation makes a hiring mistake, the company suffers, but survives. Committed by a fledgling firm, the same mistake may spell disaster. After all, if your company employs only five people, one wrongly hired employee will make up a fifth of your work force. That person's incompetence or poor people skills can bludgeon the firm's bottom line.

Following are three of the most common hiring mistakes made by start-up companies. Avoid these blunders and you'll be well on your way to building a productive team.

* Staffing the firm with friends and family. While this strategy may work in some circumstances, hiring pals and relatives often spells trouble. For one thing, friends and family members often expect - even subconsciously - to be treated differently from other employees. Such a double standard, whether real or perceived, can hurt morale and productivity. As a general rule, hiring decisions should focus solely on the needs of the firm and applicant qualifications.

* Trusting in a handshake. Memories fade. Expectations fluctuate. As with other



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important aspects of your business, employee arrangements should be laid out in writing. This can be as simple as drafting employee offer letters that cover compensation, rights to intellectual property, and bonus arrangements. Employee handbooks are also a good way to spell out the responsibilities of the firm and its staff.

* Bringing in a partner for the wrong reasons. Sure, you might save money in the short term by selling a portion of your firm to a partner. But think long and hard about the downside risks. Do you really need to surrender a portion of your company - including control over important management decisions - to someone else? What will this partner contribute? Can you find other ways to fill gaps in your team? Remember, a bad partnership may end up in the business equivalent of divorce court. So choose wisely. For assistance with any of the issues facing your start-up business, give us a call.



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Be Prepared if You Want to Get a Business Loan

Despite the recent bank bailouts, credit is still tight for small business owners. How can you improve the chances of obtaining a bank loan for your small business? Specifically, you will need to gather documents to provide the lender with a complete picture of your situation.

What documents do you need? The list may vary slightly from bank to bank, but typically you'll be required to produce these five items.

1. Business plan. Draw up a blueprint for business operations for at least one year. Demonstrate how you expect to use the loan proceeds.
2. Cash flow projections. The lender will expect a detailed analysis of what you expect to earn and the manner in which it will be spent.
3. Prior tax returns. For an on-going business, provide past returns for a minimum of three years. Owners of start-ups may substitute individual returns.
4. Financial status data. The lender will likely ask you to list your main personal assets (e.g., home and cars) and outstanding debts.
5. Credit rating report. A good credit history enhances your viability as a borrower. Obtain a credit report from one of the three major reporting agencies - Equifax, Experian, or TransUnion.

The next step is to convince the lender that you deserve the loan.

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Be prepared to give answers to some basic questions, such as:

- * How much money do you need?
- * How much do you intend to finance personally?
- * How will you spend the money?
- * How do you intend to repay the loan?
- * What type of collateral do you have to secure the loan?
- * What type of expertise do you have in your business?
- * How will you proceed if you don't receive the loan?

Project an air of confidence. The lender will want you to show the leadership qualities that can sustain a business through both good times and bad. The interview is as much about you as it is about the business.

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