

**MAKE YOUR BUSINESS SOMETHING YOU
AND YOUR STAFF ARE PROUD OF!**

**MAKE YOUR BUSINESS
SOMETHING YOU AND
YOUR STAFF ARE PROUD
OF, AND YOU'LL REAP
THE REWARDS.**



Everyday we go to work. Some of us wake up dreading another day, while some of us bound out of bed excited. Why do some people and some businesses create life and energy while others suck it out of us? What gives purpose to a business and the people working in it?

Perhaps first we need to ask! What is the purpose of a business? Is it to increase your wealth? To make more money than you would otherwise as an employee? To turn your passion into a job and as a consequence make some money along the way, or it may even be to do something good?

You then might ask, what impact does the business has on its customers and staff and on the community and environment in which it operates.

Widely respected management theorist the late Peter Drucker developed a definition. He said the purpose of a business is simply to create and keep a customer. Druckers definition is strong focused on marketing and delivery—great marketing to attract customers and great delivery to keep them. *Not as simple as it sounds!*

There are many companies that are brilliant at attracting and retaining customers and as a result are financially successful - yet have staff who plainly couldn't care less about where they work. *This may even be you!*

Sir Richard Branson, in his latest book *Business Stripped Bare* suggests that the purpose of a business is to give people the opportunity to achieve something they can be proud of. Branson says “what gets me up in the morning is the idea of making a difference” and he clearly wants to help the people working in the Virgin businesses to feel the same way.

The idea that a business should allow it's people to focus on allowing it's people to achieve personal fulfillment is different to what is taught in most business schools and what is practiced by virtually every large company. Yet it is an idea that people working in many businesses including most small businesses will relate to. *Are you with us now!*

Making money is undeniably important to owners of small businesses and vital to their ongoing existence, but the purpose of their businesses usually goes much deeper. The owner's personal reputation and sense of self-worth is intrinsically tied to their business through providing goods or services they are deeply proud of. Being able to feel proud about their business really is its key purpose. If that sense of pride can be transferred to staff, then everyone will be working in a common direction with common focus. That's always a recipe for outstanding financial performance and it is much easier to achieve in smaller businesses.

Interestingly Branson's business empire is, with a couple of exceptions, made up of hundreds of small companies. He says “small, compact companies are, generally, better run. This is partly because people feel more connected in smaller companies.” Branson says that “when one of our Virgin companies ended up employing more than a hundred staff....we would split the company in two. And when either of those companies got to a hundred people, I would...split the company again.

So is it the Branson way or Druckers way, your way or a bit of both? Perhaps a combination of all views gives the best definition of the **purpose of a business** - do something you are proud of that attracts and retains customers.