

Are you staying innovative?

This month's tip keeps your perspective fresh:

It doesn't matter if your creative side is strong or could use some work, being innovative takes time and effort. You can keep your business on the cutting edge by asking the right questions, maximizing your resources, listening to your customers and keeping an eye on the competition.

Business Tip



Question your goals: Write down what you want to accomplish today and in the future and map out the simple way to get there. It can take work to whittle down your plans to a simple strategy, but clearing the clutter can uncover what will truly work for your

business.

Push your resources to the limit: Think creatively about how to reach even more people with what tools you already have. If your marketing strategy includes an e-newsletter, use that same database to do a quick email blast about an upcoming event or special.

Client feedback: Your clients and customers are a unique source of information. They may have comments and suggestions that can spur new ideas and inspire changes to your business. Consider sending out a survey to your key clients or getting together for coffee to elicit a discussion.

Industry standards: Stay in the loop about your industry news, including what your competition is doing. A trade publication will keep you up-to-date on current trends and an online search will spotlight what people are talking about, whether it's on a blog or in the news.

Source: "Innovate Everyday" by Allison Gergley in Entrepreneur magazine.



Myth: Social media are passing fads.

As more and more Millennials enter the workforce and make their way into management, you can bet social media are here to stay. This is the generation that is riding the Internet wave into the workplace and influencing how business owners think.

But what if you are from a different generation? How can social media fit into your professional life?

Investigate your options: From Facebook to Twitter to LinkedIn to blogging, take some time to do the research about what is out there. Figure out what is a fit for you or your business. If writing isn't your strength, then taking on a blog isn't the best option. If you are a privacy freak, then setting up a Facebook page will just make you uncomfortable.

Learn the lingo: Seminars and workshops are popping up as the social media trend takes hold. Take the time to really understand how to use your medium of choice and see how it can boost your professional life or business. Maybe it's as easy as grabbing a knowledgeable friend or co-worker.

Personal or professional? Make sure you decide how you will really use your Facebook or LinkedIn page and stick with that. As these are social services, it is easy to let the professional/personal line blur when you are online. Remember that anyone can see what you are posting: Is that picture from a party appropriate for clients' eyes? Could that comment be misconstrued?

Networking online can expand your professional connections and spotlight your business beyond your Web site.

Are you at Point A but want to be at Point Z?

The Success Trek team is ready to talk! Sit down with us for a conversation and we will listen to your issues and challenges during a complimentary business or individual coaching session. For more information, contact Lesly Bailey at l.bailey@success-trek.com or 219-707-9250.