
The Top 7 Mistakes

of trade service and construction businesses

and how to correct them



Introduction

Ever felt like you've made a serious blunder and let people down that have been counting on you—and all the while knowing that you could have prevented the mistake from happening in the first place? Moreover, there are those moments where you can see what needs to be corrected but dismiss it, only to pay for the mistake later.

Having run my own businesses and met with, and consulted to, hundreds of trade service and construction businesses over the years, I have encountered many of the same mistakes and challenges throughout these various companies. Different geographic states; different business names; different services; from the smallest to the largest, but the issues are so incredibly similar I thought it worth highlighting these to help you *look at your engine* before severe damage happens or, if you are experiencing the fallout from previous mistakes made, the corrective measures applied to each may be of use.

The top 7 mistakes I have listed are:

1. Lack of Management Skills
2. Hiring the Wrong People
3. Not Holding People Accountable
4. Permitting Inefficient Processes
5. No Finger on the Financial Pulse
6. Not Letting Go. Perfectionism and Control
7. Hit and miss Marketing

There are numerous other mistakes and challenges. However, those listed here tend to be the ones that have the most dramatic effect on a business's engine—damaging its internal combustion, and its marketplace reputation.

Along with listing the seven major areas, I have also added a section following each of these points on the corrective measures you can take to *right the wrongs*. These corrective measures are typical of those I make when consulting to companies experiencing these issues, so they are proven applications as opposed to theoretical concepts. At the end of the article, there is a self-assessment you can take that will highlight how your business is functioning in each of these areas.

Mistake #1. Lack of Management Skills

Many trade service and construction businesses were founded on the skills of one or two people. At the business's inception, the owner(s) got out, found work and performed at a quality standard which then created more work, the need for more people and systems with the growing requirement to manage this growing business.

Being a quality technician/tradesperson involves years of learning the trade which most current business owners went through previously themselves. Then, down the track, they find themselves at the helm of a business where the leadership of such requires management knowledge and business expertise that they never had specific training in. Their learning at this point then, is often deep-end education, having to learn as they go.

In one of my consulting projects, I was involved in meeting divisional managers of a company individually over the course of a day—to review numbers, budgetary forecasts, their plans for the coming year and so forth. What became apparent was that the managers were exceptional in operational management. i.e. the oversight of the projects within their division but when it came to the leadership of the *whole* division regarding strategy, vision, people and leadership, a lot of these skills were lacking to varying degrees. In this case, it wasn't a significant issue given that there was a senior management team that led the way in these other areas, but it gave me some deeper insight into the varying skill sets required for more holistic management and leadership.

Corrective Measures

My recommendation here is that people moving into more of a managerial / leadership role—including the business owner if applicable—is to have a steady diet of education in this area.

I wrote in a recent blog post, *Learning from the Masters*:

“There is no right or wrong way to learn, but I think there is a ‘best’ way for each of us. For some, it is the informal, just in time learning. You might face an issue in your business that connects with your interest and talents, but you are unsure how to approach it. Locating resources, immersing yourself in the material over a period and then practising what you are learning on a daily basis is a great way to be determining what is relevant for you at the time. Others prefer formal education, and this is particularly useful both from the perspective of

connecting the dots around all your prior learning and giving you a broader framework to operate from within and also from the standpoint of gaining qualifications to provide options in the future.”

The other critical area here is the role of mentors and coaches. They can play a pivotal role in helping direct us to higher levels of leadership ability while offering objective insight and feedback along the way. Even when Tiger Woods was at the top of his game some years ago, he employed the services of a swing coach—someone who would provide objectivity in one area of his game.

Wherever you are regarding your leadership and management abilities, there is always more to learn, and incorporating this educational diet on a consistent basis will serve you and your business well in the years to come.

As an end note, I have met some business owners that have dared to take a different path in that, they have realised that they *don't want to work on the business but would instead work in it*, staying on the tools. Those who have adopted this model and whose companies continue to flourish will either have a family member, a business partner or general manager assigned to this role.

Whichever model you choose, management is both a critical and fundamental issue to the continued growth of a business and its ongoing stability.

Mistake #2. Hiring the Wrong People

Have you ever employed the services of someone thinking they were perfect in the job interviews only to ask yourself later, “what was I thinking?”

The wrong people can hamper an organisation at best, destroy it at worst.

Whenever I ask business owners and managers what their most significant challenges are, people issues are most often at the top of the list.

In my book *The Business Of People*, I write:

“Get it wrong at the start, and you’ll pay for it further down the track. A standard error made in the recruitment process is to focus almost exclusively on technical skills, where recruiters forget that each person in front of them is an assorted package of many other things. The right person for a role should certainly have capabilities based on technical expertise, but the personal package also includes:

- *The right ‘fit’ with your organisational culture*
- *Enthusiasm and passion for the work*
- *Behavioural fit*
- *Teach-ability*
- *Personal goals and values*
- *Health considerations*
- *Family situation.*

The other major mistake I have observed is the wrong person in the wrong role, relating primarily to the misfit of personality and behavioural styles. They can be the *salt of the earth* people, but in the wrong position, they will be frustrated and often aggravate those around them.

I remember working with such a person some time back. Rebecca’s role—not her actual name—was reception and administration. Customers loved her, but the administration staff, that was a whole other story. Her desk was a mess; she couldn’t file properly—apparently not knowing her alphabet given where she placed the documents; she was always behind in her work and demonstrated a sloppiness in the administrative side of her role. I spent some time with her and realised that she was merely in the wrong position—for

who she was. While the reception part of her work was perfect—as this was a people focused task—the administrative side was not her strong suit. She lacked in detail and task focus, and it showed in her work. We took the administration work away from her, assigned her to more people related roles, and she flourished—and the administration team were delighted.

Corrective Measures

Hiring the right person for the right role starts with the recruitment process. A few things I would recommend here are:

1. Don't just go on 'gut' feel. Ensure you measure the skill set required for the job against the skill set of the person.
2. Understand the person's particular behaviours when it comes to task or people orientation; big picture versus detail focus; fast or slower paced. Understanding these can be advantageous in ascertaining role suitability.
3. Even though you may be pressured to fill a role, please don't make the mistake of employing someone just because *they'll do*.
4. Look for enthusiasm and teachability along with technical ability. Someone with the former will adapt and learn quickly. Someone without enthusiasm can severely stifle progress and growth, creating frustration in other team members.
5. Have a third party in your interviews—if you can gain access to them. Someone who is emotionally detached from the fulfilment of the position and the objective insight they provide, can be significantly valuable.
6. Gain an understanding of their broader world. I will often and purposefully, take sidetracks away from work-related topics to more fully understand who they are as a person—what they truly value in life; what motivates them; what they find challenging and so forth.

We won't always get it right in recruitment, but if we take more time up front and make the process more rigorous, it will save us paying for it down the track.

Mistake #3. Not Holding People Accountable

Aside from hiring the right people—as per the previous point—ensuring our people continue to grow and develop in their roles and keep increasing in their productivity becomes critical to the ongoing success of the business.

One of my observations over the years is that employees are often left to their own devices. Autonomy is healthy, but lack of clarity about what is expected of our people; no performance metrics to achieve; lack of training and development; no accountability for their performance and the lack of performance reviews on a regular basis creates a workplace that moves sideways rather than upwards.

One thing I have noticed about people, in general, is that we respond to opportunities that open pathways to the future. Fundamental to humanity is growing. Plateaus are good for rest but eventually erode if we stay on them longer than necessary. People, without the provision of stretch in their work, merely go sideways at best and regress at worst. Thus, we often lose good people unnecessarily.

When team members have clarity on leadership's expectations and will be held accountable to those expectations, it provides goals to work towards and boundaries to work within. When these, combined with knowing leadership will do all within their power to help the employee achieve what is required, we have a powerful combination of progressive growth.

Clear expectations and accountability can have a severing effect on those who aren't with you and want to do their thing, their way. I have often found that these people will eventually resign and find another company with fewer expectations, which is precisely what you want.

Corrective Measures

1. Position descriptions that outline the role, related responsibilities and performance measures is the place to start. This way, the expectations for our people will precisely be understood. You can find a basic Position Description Template at <http://www.rayhodge.com.au/category/templates-and-tools/>
2. Key Performance Indicators.
These connect to the person's performance measures in relation to their role in meeting the company's objectives. Measuring the most critical of these on a regular basis is essential. For example, if one of the performance metrics for an administration team member is *to send 50 invoices daily*, ideally, this person records their efforts regularly with the report available to their manager and a regular review is conducted at least monthly.
3. Short term micromanagement to fast track performance improvement.
I developed a Performance Management Improvement Matrix which you can locate at <http://www.rayhodge.com.au/category/templates-and-tools/>.
This template is designed to assist business owners and managers fast-track productivity with their staff. The matrix essentially is a scoring system that both the employee and leader use to:
 - a) Outline the expected progress required in specific responsibilities
 - b) Aid the assessment of progress
 - c) Provide steps and a plan for improvement growth to hit the critical metrics on the position description.

This type of approach provides extreme clarity to all involved in the process.
4. Performance Reviews
There is much debate about the usefulness of performance reviews and their frequency. My recommendation is they are conducted at least every six months and are not related to people's annual pay increases. It is indeed a time for the team member and manager to talk through progress to date and what both parties desire in the coming period.

Mistake #4. Permitting Inefficient Processes

I met an electrician once who worked on his own and had 160 job cards sitting on his desk from the last 90 days—yet to be invoiced. The front end of his business was good. The back end not so good.

I have also worked with large companies where similar occurs.

Whether the organisation is large or small, inefficient processes can accumulate silently like hair in a bathroom sink. Over time, those processes which originally delivered products and services seamlessly to the delight of customers, end up bottlenecking, creating higher amounts of internal chaos and dissatisfaction on all fronts.

A visual representation of this—copied here from my book *Smash The Bottleneck*—demonstrates this bottleneck effect.

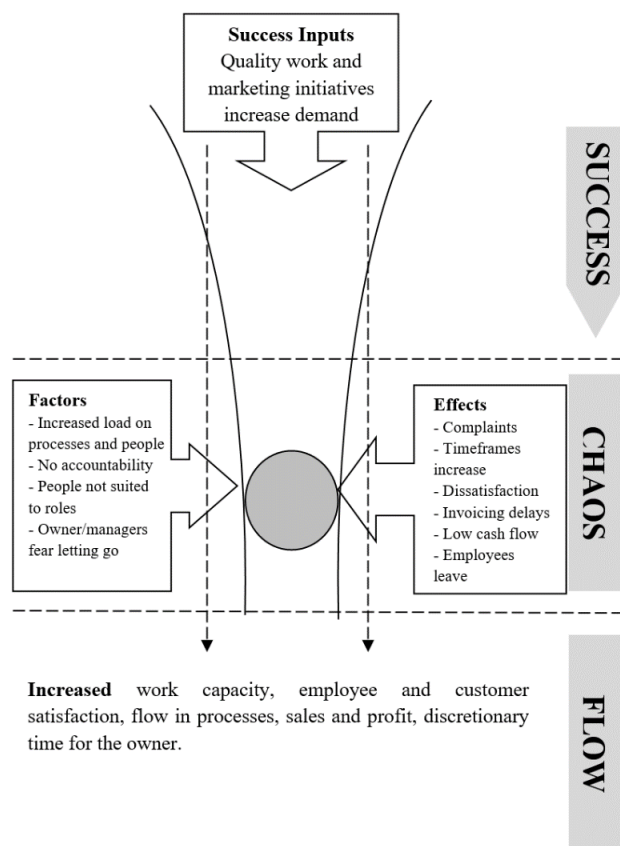


Fig 1.0: The Bottleneck Effect

While inefficiency can be the result of success inputs such as quality work and marketing initiatives driving demand, it is the lack of directly addressing these issues where the mistakes are made.

The critical areas within trade service and construction businesses that I have found to be the significant areas of inefficiency and bottlenecking are as follows:

1. from initial customer enquiry through to the job booking;
2. trades personnel lacking adequate job information;
3. the timeliness of relaying information from field to office and the quality of such information;
4. ordering parts;
5. job planning;
6. invoicing;
7. quoting.

If you look at your businesses and you are experiencing: poor cash flow; disgruntled staff; dissatisfied clients; high error rates and reworks; slow lead times; high overheads—these are often the result of inefficient processes.

Corrective Measures

1. I always suggest that an annual audit be conducted on the significant process flows which I have outlined above. One of the audit processes I use is the *Business Process Table*—a simple method that helps document every step in the process, providing significant insight into where bottlenecks are taking place. You can access it from my website at <http://www.rayhodge.com.au/category/templates-and-tools/>
2. I would also highly recommend the investment in quality job management software along with the relevant staff training. I have seen time and time again that even with 15 minutes of a software specialist showing a staff member how to utilise more fully the software functions in their system, that the time saving and subsequent 'flow' can be quite dramatic and in a short amount of time.

3. The last thing is to always look for the cause.

I consulted to an electrical company who over six weeks, started to have significant issues in many areas across the business. The owner and I got together, listed the *effects*—the major problems that were taking place and then searched for the underlying reasons. The cause of *all* the spot fires that had appeared over recent weeks was found to be one person, a supervisor. In this case, it wasn't the actual work processes that were the issue but a person at the centre of them. Once we identified and corrected the cause, all the problems self-corrected.

For more reading on this topic, you can download a free e-version of my book, *Smash the Bottleneck* at www.rayhodge.com.au/freebook, or it is available in hard copy for purchase from Amazon.

Mistake #5. No Finger on the Financial Pulse

Speaking to an Uber driver recently, he lamented on his poor financial control when previously self-employed, saying it was one of the major contributors to his business failing and the resultant change into opting for the *safety* of his new study and Uber life.

Often, when starting a new business advisory project, the business owner will ask if I am happy to meet and work with their accountant if necessary. For me, this provides excellent insight into the leadership of the company and the careful treatment of their finances. On the other hand, I meet with business owners who have no idea of what is happening on the financial front and this spells trouble.

While I don't propose that business owners must understand financials to the degree accountants do, having a basic understanding is incredibly useful. In saying this, Richard Branson lacked some basic knowledge at the outset but built a global empire amassing a fortune in the process, however, he used other people's financial knowledge to complement his weakness in the area, and this is smart.

Some of the financial areas that are worth keeping your finger on the pulse of are:

- Revenue
- Cost of goods
- Gross Profit
- Expenses
- Operating Profit
- Nett Profit

The above are the basics of the profit and loss statement. Understanding your balance sheet is also extremely useful.

Have you ever looked at your profit and said, "well that's great but where is the money?" As you would well be aware, the flow of cash can be vastly different to profit.

A fundamental mistake in this area is to rely purely on what the bank account balance is rather than forecasting and analysing the flow of cash.

I consulted to a construction firm where we created a year-long monthly forecast that included all progress payments due on current work along with an estimated percentage on the cost of goods—based on the previous periods average. We then had their in-house bookkeeper update this weekly with actual accounts due to the suppliers, sub-contractors and so forth. The business owner found this extremely useful to see where any potential shortfalls would be and heightened the awareness of ensuring progress claims and other invoices for work were going out promptly. It also helped him forward plan for new projects they were winning and the cash that was required to fund them.

If cash flow is weak, a default position is often to increase sales. A cash trickle can be the result of many areas, not just sales. One of my plumbing clients, Kelly Mullins, wrote:

*“when Ray initially began working with us we had significant challenges and bottlenecks in the areas of paperwork and cash flow. I felt like I was behind all the time. Over a period of a few months, systems were created and implemented, our tradesmen adopted the new way of doing things, invoicing was happening quicker, and the chaos started to ease. **What is significant that we couldn’t see at the time is that the results in cash flow turnaround enabled us to fund a million dollar job that we could never have done previously out of business funds.**”*

This provides excellent insight into the link between systems and process efficiency and the resulting flow of cash. Many businesses I have consulted to, have on average a 30-45 day delay in sending invoices out after the job completion. Bringing this back within five days as I do, significantly changes the cash position.

Many areas affect cash flow, and thus the management of such is critical for all businesses and particularly when project work is involved.

Some time back I read of a well-known restaurant chain which went into liquidation. In the report, it stated that due to the rapid expansionary growth they had experienced, the owners got caught up in the whirlwind of activity but neglected to look at the underlying financial performance. They ended up closing the doors. Similarly, I worked with many firms in a mining boom, and the ones who paid careful attention to their finances and who relied on their accountants for deeper financial insight were those most likely to have made it out the other side when the boom went into sharp decline.

One of the other mistakes linked to the financial area is that of *fully trusting* those who have any fiscal responsibility or authority in your company. I have heard story after story of business owners losing substantial funds through theft from those they fully trusted. I always suggest that you maintain a 1% distrust factor due to human involvement. Use that 1% factor to keep them accountable, question expenditure, check for inconsistencies and so forth.

Corrective Measures

These are worth integrating into your organisation if not already in place.

- Accurate job pricing.
- Establishing job-margin goals.
- Monitoring *actuals versus budget* as project work is underway.
- Monthly budget forecasting for the year ahead. Using percentage benchmarks to assist in driving higher financial performance while enabling you to measure ongoing results against the goal is one of the primary benefits here. For example, you might have as a goal, 47% cost of sale with a 53% gross profit margin. Establishing this in advance assists in measuring current performance against the benchmark and when conducted regularly, allows you to make adjustments quickly if required.
- Review your financial reports on a regular basis.
- Meet with your accountant at least quarterly. The business owner's that see their accountant annually are at high risk should adverse financial impacts occur at different times throughout the year. Meeting quarterly or even monthly allows you to make these changes soon after they happen. Ensure also that they provide you with the key metrics required for your particular business.
- If you are not astute on a financial level, ensure that you do learn the basics.
- Creation of a Key Performance Indicator dashboard so that you can see at a glance, the financial performance of your company.
- If you have delegated fiscal responsibility to an employee, ensure you have regular times to review financial progress with them.

Mistake #6. Not Letting Go. Perfectionism and Control

There is a subtle difference between excellence and perfection.

Excellence is a standard to which we strive for and is *somewhere near* one hundred per cent. Perfection, on the other hand, sits at 100%, and anything less is unacceptable. It is this *perfectionist position* that is the mistake and prevents us from moving forward as fast as we'd like to or that is required for our particular business.

Leaders who lean toward perfectionism are considerably more controlling than those who strive for excellence, the results of which are as follows.

The leader must be involved in everything

When the owner or manager exercises a perfectionist tendency, all roads lead to them and through them. They must know everything, check everything, control everything.

When business growth transpires, it is unnerving for the perfectionist, often resulting in longer days, jammed hours, a shorter fuse, deeper levels of stress and minimal sleep.

The mindset—either consciously or sub-consciously—can be: “nobody can do it as well as I can.” Thus, holding this control position creates massive workloads and responsibilities that aren't necessary.

Perfectionism can also relate to our inner worlds. A business owner I worked with discovered theirs as a *need to be needed*. Years ago, my perfectionism was connected to a deep sense of internal emotional *lack*. I wanted to be seen by others as successful because I didn't feel it on the inside. I controlled because I didn't feel in control. A psychologist, helping me with this perfectionism and control, suggested I leave my bed unmade for the day. I didn't like him very much after that.

These are more related to personal identity issues and I mention them merely to highlight the importance of self-reflection in this area.

Future Growth Is Stifled

Because of the need to be involved in every transaction, the business is prone to reaching a point—generally when the business owner’s capacity is exhausted—where it plateaus.

As the palm tree releases its old growth as new fronds emerge, in expanding the business, we need to take a similar approach.

As the organisation grows, the methods and systems that for example, served us in the 1-20 personnel increase, need to be updated to allow for the new future. Along with this is the owner’s control over every detail. This type of mindset and activity require the *letting go of*: to increase higher levels of trust in others, reporting functions, systems integration, staff training and so forth.

The other growth issue is that the perfectionist tends to want everything perfect before the trigger gets pulled. I have seen many ideas and initiatives held back when they were *perfectly good to go*, but because they still weren’t at the elusive 100% mark, they were held back and more often than not, never saw the light of day.

Innovation, opportunities and future growth strategies become entangled in the vine of perfectionism.

Good Staff Become Disillusioned

A friend of mine said it this way: “I have been working with the company for five years now. I know what I’m doing yet my manager continues to micromanage me.”

Micromanagement can be an indicator of perfectionism within the leader and if maintained, will frustrate many a qualified worker to the point of departure.

Corrective Measures

The 80% Rule

Someone said it this way: “80% out the door is better than 100% in the draw.” Now obviously we don’t want to do that with issues around safety, which require a 100% standard, but we can do it with initiatives and activities that don’t need absolute perfection. A space between the text and period on an invoice; a website that has all the necessary detail but not your photo yet; an email newsletter template that isn’t quite as good as you want it however it is 95% completed—these are examples of what I have seen leaders delaying on because it wasn’t 100%.

The key is, ascertain what can go out at 80%, learn to release it around this mark and then perfect as you go.

Start with one delegated responsibility or freeing one person.

If you’ve been holding the reins tightly, you don’t suddenly need to let go of everything in its entirety. Start small.

Delegate a responsibility to a team member using a delegation checklist that documents what you have handed over and the deadline. Ensure that they are clear on your expectations and that they can do the job. Follow up the task when the period expires—if you haven’t heard from them prior.

Train Others

Emphasise the training of others. One of the most efficient ways of doing this is to enlist their help when you are completing a task. Using invoicing as an example, training someone while you are converting the job cards to invoices—while slowing the process down at that specific time—will significantly speed things up down the track.

Use Reporting Tools

Reports can be a great way of feeling like you are maintaining control over your business while others are doing the work. Ensuring that key areas such as financial, quality, safety and productivity outputs are being measured and reported on provides a sense of control and also assists in identifying where the shortfalls are taking place.

Design a New Road System

If most roads are leading to you and through you, take some time to redesign the road network. List all the items that you are involved in and then begin placing people's names beside them. You can also consider outsourcing appropriate tasks to others outside your business. Then, list the highest priority items or those taking the most amount of your time and create a plan moving forward, incorporating some of the above corrective measures in the process.

Mistake #7. Hit and miss Marketing

Years ago, I called a plumbing company to do some work at my home. A week after they completed the job, they sent discount vouchers to apply on my next lot of work. I used them again. Then, they started sending me their e-newsletter—the content being a combination of product specials and helpful household tips.

That was ten years ago, and I still receive their newsletter to this day. If I were living in the same city as I did then, they would be the ones I would call.

This company demonstrates four excellent marketing practices.

1. Consistency
2. Get Front of Mind
3. Value
4. Targeted

1. Consistency

When things are busy, we tend to let go of marketing. When things go quiet, we ramp things up. The issue with this roller coaster is that when things do go quiet, the lead time for increasing incoming enquiries can be significant.

I'm sure this company, in the last ten years, have experienced lean and abundant times but they have maintained their presence by staying in front of me.

2. Get Front of Mind

I once had a painter come to my home and provide a quote for work to be completed. Upon seeing the price he came back with, I decided I would delay the job. A year later I was ready to get the paintwork done. I had misplaced the quote and couldn't remember his or the company name. I called another painter, and he got the job.

This is a case of *out of sight out of mind*.

The plumbing company kept in front of me and were top of mind when it came to be needing a plumber. The painter—he failed in this regard.

At one time I spoke, over a period of a few months, at eleven of the NECA roadshows. As part of my speech contained a marketing emphasis, I asked the attendees how many sent a regular update to their clients and prospects. The percentage of those doing so was under 5%. My response to them after their show of hands was to say that *if a trade service business keeps in front of its clients and prospective customers on a regular basis, you have little competition, as most don't do this.*

3. Value

This week, I called a rose company to order a particular type of pesticide. The person who answered didn't take my initial order immediately but explained numerous plant conditions that could be affecting the plants—providing significant value in the process—and ultimately, I purchased twice as much.

Most people don't like being *sold to*. However, when somebody provides loads of value for free, we are more apt to listen, engage and eventually buy from them.

Moreover, this is what the plumbing company has done well through their newsletters over the last ten years; while they showcase their products they provide value through their household tips.

4. Targeted

I was an easy target. I used the plumbing company once, they did good work, I paid my bill, they kept in touch, and I subsequently called them back to do more.

Most of us running businesses have multiple targets, and to hit the bullseye, the marketing activity has to be focused directly on that particular type of buyer and their needs. A facilities manager has different requirements to Mrs Jones living down the road. The buyer for commercial construction has different needs to the residential homeowner.

What I see at play in many businesses is what I have termed Shotgun Marketing. If they do happen to perform any marketing, they fire in the general direction and hope a few pieces of lead will do the job. On the other hand, I see a few companies who take the Sniper approach—they know who their target is. They identify them, learn about them, keep in front of them by various means while providing significant value in the process. It's a focused, more direct approach.

A Note about Quotes

This is more a sales process mistake but worth mentioning because of its critical nature. Not following up quotes in a diligent manner amounts to significant revenue loss—just as the painter, I described above lost out on my work. We often spend countless hours a week quoting but when we fail in the follow-up, we fail to realise the increase in sales that could have been ours through a simple process. This, like keeping in front of our buyers, is one area that most don't do well in and if you are disciplined in this, you again will go to the top 5% in the industry.

Corrective Measures

Understand the Buyer

Take time to identify your key prospects (buyers) and then target your marketing accordingly. To assist with this, you will find a free template called Marketing Planner at <http://www.rayhodge.com.au/category/templates-and-tools/>

A Regular Newsletter

I always recommend a monthly e-newsletter that provides value, not just one that sells. The newsletter doesn't have to be long, only a straightforward article, 200-300 words in length, that helps the customer understand a common issue is enough. You can also add a featured product or service you are promoting that month. Just your business name, seen in their inbox on a monthly basis—even if they don't read it—is enough to keep you front of mind. Combine this with a social media presence and regular calls and meetings with key customers and prospects can be a simple yet highly effective strategy. The key to the newsletter's focus must be on the particular type of buyer that receives it and tailored according to their specific needs.

Quotes

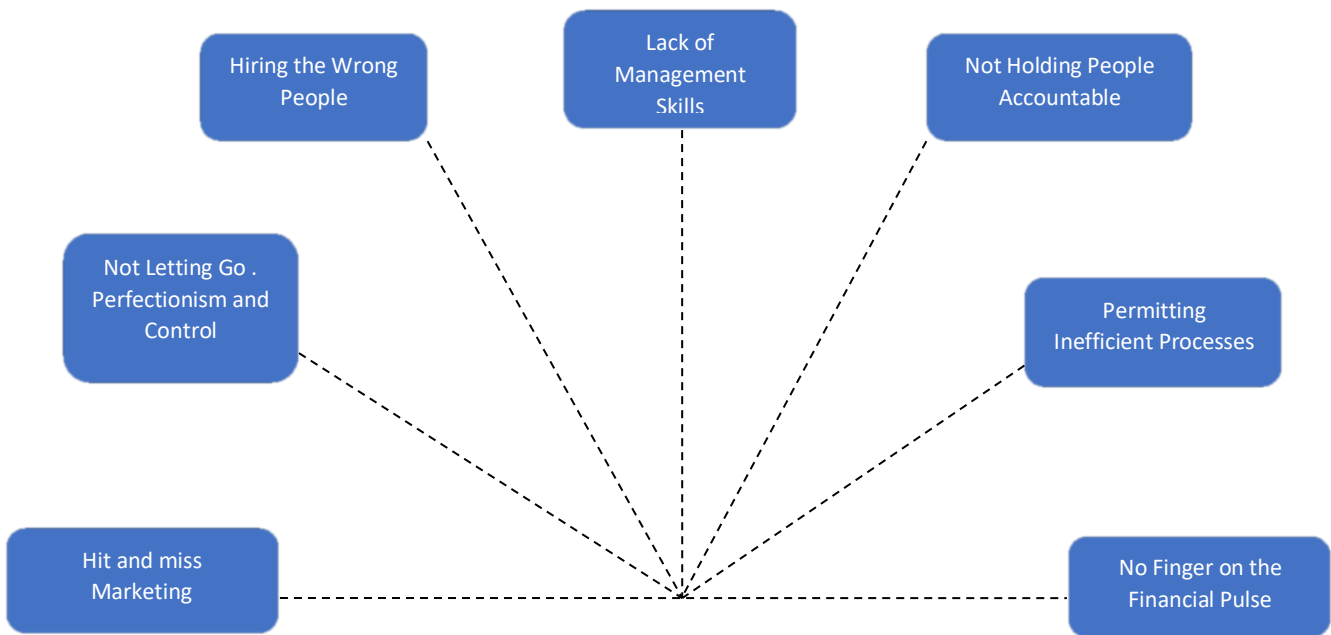
Create a process for following up quotes that includes a register that lists the sent date, the customer response and why it was accepted or declined. Implement follow up time frames, assigning relevant staff members to make the calls and update the register with regular reviews in place.

Sales Training

One highly overlooked corrective measure is—and this is counterintuitive for a trades or construction business, is to have your front-line people—those who are in any way influencing others to buy from you—trained in the sales process. Whether it be quote follow-ups, phone calls or meetings with prospective buyers, understanding some of the basics of selling can dramatically increase new business.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT

Below is an assessment based on the seven mistakes mentioned in this paper. It is designed to provide you with quick and extreme clarity on where your business needs attention. Give yourself a rating out of 10 for each area—the centre of the chart representing 1, the end of the lines representing 10. Then join the dots. Once completed you will have a visual representation of the critical areas requiring concentration.



Top Three Priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Contact Information

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A Little About Me...

Having improved many national trade service and construction businesses over the last ten years and having worked with the smallest to one of the largest, I specialise in streamlining efficiencies primarily in the areas of process and people while helping business owners get their lives back. Whether it is taking business from chaos to order, assisting in next level growth and much in between, I'm always happy to discuss the necessary improvements you require. For a complete overview of my work head to www.rayhodge.com.au

The nice things people say...

"Having worked with Ray on numerous simPRO customer sites, he always seems to be able to find and drive the efficiency gains our customers are looking for. He identifies any bottlenecks in their processes and realigning their workflows with simPRO and the correct personnel within the organisation to carry out the tasks to create a very efficient end to end process." **Stephen Bradshaw: Co-Founder - simPRO Software**

"Working with Ray has been beneficial in helping us to effectively look at our business costs and analyse them so that we were able to break it down and really discard our inefficiencies. This has given us the confidence in our own budgeting and structure, that if we wish to expand further, we will do this with confidence; that our costs will be kept to a minimum and we will be using the most cost-effective ways to expand but still minimise our overheads". **Annette Edwards - Red Soil Constructions, Toowoomba**

"Our business had grown to a point where we really needed assistance with the systems and related people who interacted with the various procedures. Ray's help has been invaluable in that we have achieved a more fully process-driven business with significant reductions in turnaround time frames, particularly relating to administration, with quoting times reduced by half. Increased role and responsibility clarification of staff and management along with the introduction of a new job management system Ray introduced us to has also helped this to become a reality. His ability to spot the key issues has been immensely helpful and are grateful for his assistance." **Brett Matthews - RNM Solutions Pty Ltd Perth [Electrical]**