



Care Enterprise, LLC
Solutions to Complex Problems

Frugal Business Survival Tips

By Sharman G. Lawson

Every small business will go through a time or season of struggle. Whether small, medium, or large businesses will feel the pinch of a slowed or depressed economy. Businesses that prepared for those times survive. Businesses that do not prepare and make immediate adjustments as the economy slows down or tanks tend to close or downsize. If you are a business owner you need a strategic plan to survive and stay sustainable. That means there are no “sacred cows.” Everything is open to being cut back on, eliminated, or finding an alternative way to do it.

In uncertain financial times, image, perception, and status quote should be thrown out the window. In other words, who cares what others say, think or do regarding your business. It is about you and your business surviving through a rough patch. Below are five things you can do to help your business keep more of its revenue, reserves, and cash flow.

Employees

When times are hard you have to look at every position to determine their viability. Solution: have employees track their daily activity for one month. This way you will see in black and white if they have enough work to do each day. You cannot afford slackers, time wasters, or someone sitting around doing nothing. Also, scrutinize employee travel, training and expense reports to identify areas of potential waste.

Office Space

Do you have too much office space for the number of employees? Do customers come into your office? Do you need all of the office space that you are leasing each month? If not, move to a smaller and cheaper location. If you do not want to move, sub-lease some of your office space to bring in extra revenue. Can your company and employees go remote? Maybe there is a possibility the whole company can scale back further and trusted staff can work remotely from home.

Utilities

Do not be wasteful by leaving on lights in unused offices, bathrooms, copy rooms, and break rooms. Consider the amount of your utilities and how it eats into your profits. Turn off the lights if they are not necessary, and make sure your employees know to do the same.

Office Supplies

Put more controls in place regarding the process to order office supplies. Office supplies are costly. You need to know what people are ordering and are they necessary and needed. Have someone in place that orders once a month, or as needed. That person should review the list, have a monthly office supply budget, and determines what stays and comes off the supply list.

Catered Lunches

If catered lunches for meetings and events are a regular occurrence – stop it or cut back on it. Your goal is to get through the period of uncertainty, and create new “best practices” that will free up extra money for reserves and capital. Are all the catered lunches necessary? Sure the employees and clients enjoy the free lunches, but is there a better way? A simple suggestion, schedule meetings earlier in the day or after lunch. Have snacks or beverages available to save money.

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