

# Finding the “Right” People; It’s a Myth, they Don’t Exist



Over the years I’ve looked at lots of business plans and one of the most common inclusions I’ve found under the strategies section is the statement “to recruit the right people” or words to that effect. As nice a sentiment as this is, it is fundamentally flawed and I’ll tell you why. The right people don’t exist. Now before you get all hot and bothered and start sending me e-mails telling me what a stupid statement that is and your business is full of the right people, read on and I’ll explain what I mean.

If you’re building a business and one of the keys to success in your plan is to “recruit the right people” well, as I said to a good friend of mine recently “you’re starting with the spectre of failure holding your hand”. The “right” people simply don’t exist. There are good people, there are dedicated people and yes even the right person exists but there’s no group of them out there just waiting for your business to discover them. The reason is simple, you can’t replicate a person, you can only replicate what they do. In the book the “E-Myth Revisited”, Michael Gerber talks about the power of systems and how successful small businesses should be designed. He says that the work of that business needs to be broken down into simple systems so that it can be carried out by people of the LOWEST possible skill level not the highest. I learned this lesson many years ago when I tried to build a business based on the “right” people. I had two particularly good loan writers working for me, Mitchell and Cayce. These two, in their best year, settled 320 and 280 loans respectively. I said to myself; “if I want more business all I have to do is replicate these guys”. “If only I could clone them” is a statement I remember making to my 2IC. So I went on a mission looking for loan writers just like the two I already had. Loan writers, who knew their stuff, didn’t need hand holding, were self motivated, could self generate loans etc, etc. Well I found a bunch of people who I thought matched the description and we got straight to work. From that point on every day for me was like trying to herd cats with a stick. I hadn’t recruited a team of champions who would meld together as the perfect team as I had envisioned. Instead, I’d recruited a bunch of self centred ego maniacs who’s every whim needed to be fulfilled. Nothing was right and any lack of production was the fault

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of the company. The post code areas are too small, the products aren’t competitive, we need a “whatsit” loan, they get paid more across the road, the processing staff are crap. Good grief, this was the same business that had two of the best writers I had ever seen producing serious volumes, how could all these things be wrong?

Now you might say that I simply hired the wrong people, but didn’t they have the same attributes as my two gun writers? So how could they be wrong. If you do think I hired the wrong people you’d be partly right. Their failure to perform was in fact my fault not theirs and I’ll tell you why. Just because someone knows how to do something doesn’t mean they are right for that job, because success in anything is less about an individual’s capacity to be successful and more about their ability to successfully implement and maintain the proper systems and disciplines. This is what I failed to see, I didn’t really want clones of the people I had but people who could do what they were doing. I needed people who could repeat the processes, do the work the way my top people did it. I needed to identify the things my top people did, create a repeatable process and then teach someone else how to do it. You can’t replicate a person; you can only replicate the things they do by creating a system that allows someone else to do it. That’s the challenge; that’s the ultimate success aphrodisiac.

Take a close look at your business, what is it you do that makes it work? What things can you document and replicate by creating a system? What is it you have that will attract good quality people to your business?

A wise person once said “give a writer a lead you feed them for a day, teach them how to prospect you feed them for life.”

Like I always say, success is not a mystery, it is a system, a system that can be learned and replicated.