



5 DAY

**Business
Makeover
Challenge**

Day 1:

THE NEED FOR PERSPECTIVE

Welcome to Day 1 of the 5 Day Business Makeover Challenge.

Analyzing how far you've come and where you'll go next in your business is essential to getting a perspective that supports your success. Today we'll look at why and how to take time to gain a fresh perspective.

REFLECTION:

When a business is brand new, there's excitement and motivation in seeing it take off. You love the hands-on involvement. Hours fly by and you're highly motivated.

When you've been in the thick of it for a while, it's easy to get so caught up in the day-to-day work of your business that you lose sight of what really matters. The most urgent needs get all the attention.

Some of the fun tapers off. It's hard work. You begin to forget why you got into this business in the first place.

It's important to step back and take a big-picture look at your business from time to time. What core principles and practices really matter to you and your employees?

This isn't a "once and done" practice. Once or twice a year it's wise to stop and re-evaluate. Recalibrate and move forward with confidence.

It could be that a small tweak is all that's needed, or your business may be in need of a major overhaul. Success or failure in business is all about perspective.

In order to regain perspective, you need to briefly stop working **IN** your business and take a good look **AT** your business. That's the purpose of this 5-day challenge.

ACTION:

Take time to answer these clarifying questions:

Why did you start your business in the first place?
What was your original vision?

Are you still fulfilling your original vision? If not, why not? What has changed?

Where do you want to be in 1 year? In 5 years? 10 years?

Will you get there if you keep doing things the way you are now?

If you could snap your fingers and change some aspect of your business instantly, what would it be?

Avoid rushing through these questions.

The answers you provide will help you begin to think clearly about what really matters to you in your business and whether you're headed in the right direction.

Day 2:

DEFINING YOUR MISSION

Welcome to day 2 of the 5 Day Business Makeover Challenge. Yesterday we examined how perspective is vital to maintaining a vision for your business. Today we'll look at defining your mission.

REFLECTION:

Are you able to clearly state the mission of your business? This foundational concept goes beyond simply making a profit. This is about having clarity as to *why* your business exists. Your mission is the driving force - the engine - of your business.

A mission statement shouldn't be generated simply because every other business has one. It also shouldn't be generic or vague. Your values are on display in your mission.

Tim Berry, the originator of Lean Business Planning, says he loves it when **a mission statement defines a business so well that it feels like strategy.**

Your mission is what gives you and your employees purpose. It's also what helps you set business goals and objectives.

Berry goes on to say that "A good mission statement:

- Defines what the company does for its customers
- Defines what the company does for its employees
- Defines what the company does for its owners

Some will go even further to include what the company does for its community and the world."

Think about what makes your business unique. What good does it accomplish? Why is your business different than other businesses in the same field? If your mission statement could be used by some other business, then it's definitely not specific enough.

ACTION:

Take time to get clear on your mission:

What do you want to achieve as a business - for yourself (including any other owners), for your employees, and for your customers? Include community and beyond if applicable.

Put your mission statement into one or two concise sentences. Some business mission statements begin more broadly in the first sentence, but the second sentence is much more specific as to how they'll accomplish the first.

Is your mission big enough to stretch you and your employees, but realistic enough to be achievable?

Will your mission take you to where you want to be in a year? What about five years? Ten years?

Again, don't rush through this exercise. Your mission is your foundation. If your foundation is unstable, you won't be able to build a highly productive business on top of it.

Day 3:

DEFINING YOUR BRAND

Welcome to day 3 of the 5 Day Business Makeover Challenge. Yesterday was all about defining and stating the mission of your business. Today we'll clarify what is meant by brand and how to define yours.

REFLECTION:

Do you know what your brand is? Most entrepreneurs don't.

Since you can't be all things to all customers, getting clarity on your brand will help you to target your customers. Figuring out your specific niche is crucial.

Entrepreneur.com contributor John Williams explains branding concisely:

Branding is one of the most important aspects of any business, large or small, retail or B2B. An effective brand strategy gives you a major edge in increasingly competitive markets. But what exactly does "branding" mean?

Simply put, your brand is your promise to your customer... what they can expect from your products and services, and it differentiates your offering from your competitors.' Your brand is derived from who you are, who you want to be and who people perceive you to be.

In other words, your brand is not *primarily* about a logo (although that is important) or website colors. Your brand is what sets you apart from your competitors.

It's what makes you unique. It's your competitive advantage, your secret sauce.

Strong branding allows you to charge more because customers will have a desire to choose you over other businesses. So, in addition to your mission, you must get clear on your brand.

ACTION:

Answer these questions in detail. Where possible, put the same questions to an outside party, such as devoted customers. Their feedback helps you to see what customers value most.

- What exactly makes you different from other companies in your industry?
- Why should someone choose your **product** over a competitor?
- Why would someone choose your **service** over another company?

Sum up your brand in a single sentence. What is your niche?

Does your brand fit with your mission? Go back and look. They should be in line with each other. Your mission statement is really for guiding your internal organization, but branding focuses on what customers want or need.

That's it for today.

Tomorrow we'll look at the culture of your business - whether it's a healthy outgrowth of your mission and whether it supports your brand.

Day 4:

DEFINING YOUR CULTURE

Welcome to day 4 of the 5 Day Business Makeover Challenge. Yesterday we saw how a strong brand defines who your customers will be and what you are giving them. Today we examine the culture of your business.

REFLECTION:

Every business has a culture, and no two are alike. Even the smallest business has one. A healthy culture retains employees, while toxic cultures drive employees away.

The question is whether your business culture is one you've intentionally created or one that has simply evolved on its own. Don't let today go by without examining the robustness of your business culture.

You may remember that on Day 1 we said: "Your values are on display in your mission." Those values undergird the culture too and are what employees should experience day-to-day.

It's essential for each individual to feel cared for and be recognized for the unique place they fill. "We're in this together" should permeate the culture.

If you're going to achieve your mission along with remaining true to your brand, you need to maintain a culture that causes people to trust you and want to work with you.

ACTION:

What is the current culture at your business?

- Inclusive or isolated?
- Peaceful or harried?
- Warm/friendly, mediocre/tepid, or at worst - aloof/hostile?

- Fun when appropriate, or typically grave?

What are the current culture's strengths? What are its weaknesses? Is there anyone causing toxicity that may need to move on?

Is your current culture supporting your highest values or making it more difficult to achieve them?

What are some manageable steps you can take to create a healthy business culture that propels you toward your mission and helps you to stay true to your brand?

Who can help you to implement these steps? You may want to communicate these steps to a select few within the business after discussing what you are sensing.

That's it for today!

Tomorrow we'll finish up with a strategy that helps bring together all we've been discussing.

Day 5:

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER...

Yesterday we looked at culture, the fourth area of clarity needed for business owners. Today we'll finish with a focus on bringing together perspective, mission, branding, and culture. We're going to see how all the elements work together to enable you to build a significant business.

REFLECTION:

You've set aside the time to participate in this 5-day challenge because you recognize a need for a fresh **perspective** on where you've been and where you want to go with your business. A fresh perspective will re-energize your business for success.

Your original vision may not have changed at all, or it may have evolved as your business focus sharpened and the business grew.

Each step of the way, a clear **mission** statement keeps you on track for where you'll be in five years, ten years, or even longer.

With a clearly defined mission, a purpose is evident to you and your employees in all that you're undertaking daily. Each one understands and collaborates on what to provide for customers, how they'll impact the community, and even what your business can do to "contribute good" to the world.

The uniqueness of your business sets you apart and causes customers to choose your products or services over others. That's your **brand**. It makes you distinct from competitors, and long-term customer loyalty is the gratifying reward.

But it's not only customer loyalty that you need to be successful. The work **culture** must be healthy too, to cultivate staff loyalty and strong identification to the overall mission of the business. Satisfied employees will have your back even during challenging seasons!

ACTION:

By now you've clearly defined both a mission statement and a brand statement. How will these two be communicated to all business participants?

How can these be strategically reviewed on a regular basis?

Many successful businesses have signs made or the mission statement stenciled onto the wall inside the front entrance.

Ensure that the mission statement is added to social media and to your website.

Schedule a yearly or twice-yearly enjoyable event with everyone to emphasize mission. Plan ahead and ask for stories, successes, and lessons learned.

Make it festive. Sincerely thank everyone for their contributions and be specific. Look forward with anticipation to the season ahead.

Congratulations on completing the 5-day Business Makeover challenge! It's our hope that you'll experience a rewarding phase of new insights and even greater success!