

## COACH'S CORNER



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## The right tool for the job

Trying to leverage resources without considering the potential repercussions can reduce your company's efficiency in resource allocation, rather than enhancing it.

### POWERFUL PLANNING

There's a right and wrong way to leverage your business's resources.

in-house mentorship, will make them feel valued and give them a sense of pride and progress in their work. These new skills can be applied to their day-to-day activities to improve performance without adding additional expense.

**Bad Idea:** Forcing current staff to take on roles beyond their sphere of expertise to save money. Just because a staff member is personally active on social media, doesn't mean they should implement your social media marketing strategy – especially if it has nothing to do with their role. The more 'informal' leveraging you attempt with staff, the more diluted and vague their position becomes. This saps energy and makes employees feel that their skills are undervalued – a one-way ticket to a resignation.

**LEVERAGE**, in short, means getting huge results by maximising existing resources at your disposal. This can be anything – from staff and business connections to technology and your company's other assets. Not all leverage is created equal, though, so when it comes to maximising the potential of these common resources, make sure you can spot a good leverage technique over a bad one.

### LEVERAGING DATA

Your customers produce tons of usable data that can improve your understanding of their pain points, and how you can improve your services. Phone numbers, email addresses, social media behaviour can be a gold mine if used correctly.

**Good Idea:** Leveraging your customer insights to improve your service. Adding customers' names to marketing email subject lines can improve your marketing efforts exponentially. Incorporating more detailed data, such as browsing history, enables you to automate follow up emails, issue reminders of products they may have browsed on your website, or send them

personalised specials they may be interested in.

**Bad Idea:** Abusing your customers' data. Just because you have a big database of phone numbers and email addresses, doesn't mean your customers are willing to receive countless spam emails and text messages punting your latest product. This can be a major annoyance, especially if unsolicited, and doesn't do your brand any favours. Rather use your customers' data to provide them with greater value and a better experience.

### LEVERAGING STAFF

Your staff is your most valuable resource. They can drive your business to new heights if they are leveraged correctly. Here, it is important to distinguish between making the best use of the staff at your disposal, and squeezing every last drop of work and inspiration from them, day after day, to the point that you're running a sweat shop.

**Good Idea:** Encouraging your 'top-performer' staff to expand their skill-sets through formal part-time education, training programmes, and

### THE RIGHT FIT

Your business has a wealth of resources, but how you deploy them is the difference between a successful strategy and a waste of time – and resources.

### LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

Technology has flipped business on its head. From HR to customer relations management and financial systems, technology can cut costs, reduce errors and increase efficiency.

**Good Idea:** Making use of technology to free up your staff's time and make their lives easier. Collaboration tools and the Internet mean that technology can greatly improve your employees' workday and productivity. It also allows many processes to be automated or performed remotely, leaving key staff free to get on with other work and get more out of each day.

**Bad Idea:** Using technology against your staff. It can be extremely tempting to use a technological tool to cut down on staffing costs, but this can be a fatal mistake. Monitoring communications, invading privacy, and keeping your staff on an electronic leash may seem to increase productivity, but is at the expense of company loyalty and office morale. The moral of the story? Use technology wisely. **EM**