

The pros and cons of a career in a small business

The day to day operations of a small business are very different to big business. For your staff, there are distinct benefits to working in a small business, as well as perceived, or real, disadvantages. In order to recruit and retain great employees, it's helpful for small business owners to understand the pros and cons from the perspective of the employees. Here's four of each for you to consider.

Pros

1. Opportunity to learn.

In small business a wide range of skills are important. Often there is not enough staff to specialise in only one area of the business. It's a great opportunity to learn a multitude of skills and gain enormous experience.

2. Ability to make an impact

Smart and dedicated staff can positively influence your business decisions through thoughtful and constructive feedback. With less bureaucracy in a small business, the staff can have a greater impact. They just need an open minded business owner.

3. Flexible working conditions

Most small businesses have the ability to offer flexible working conditions to their staff. There's usually only one person to negotiate with, and small business employees have more flexibility to make individual arrangements. Again, this does require an open minded business owner.

4. Greater responsibility

In small business, there is an opportunity to take on greater responsibility than you might have in a similar position in a large organisation. You have access to the person making the decisions and, when you've proven yourself, the opportunity to be involved in business management tasks.

Cons

1. The owner/manager

In many instances, the business owner is also the business manager. If the business owner is not open minded, professional life can be very uncompromising and demanding for the small business employee. There is usually no well defined HR department, leaving employees with minimal objective support.

2. Spontaneous environment

The absence of red tape is certainly a pro for the small business employee but can also be a con. Some small business owners are more reactive than proactive in their business planning, changing things as they see fit, without any consultation with their team. Frequent, poorly considered business decisions can be frustrating for the team and detrimental to the business.

3. Training and development

In a large company, training and development are frequently provided. In a small business, an extremely delicate balance exists between income and expenses. Investment in training and development can be less frequent in small business, leaving the employee to wonder how they can grow in their current role.

4. Career advancement

Arguably the most common concern for those considering a career in small

business is career advancement. Realistically, in a small business, there is often limited opportunity for advancement. It's up to the business owner and the employee to come up with solutions that will keep the employee motivated in their role.

Good staff aren't necessarily hard to find, but may be hard to keep unless you ensure your small business recognises and rewards them fairly, and provides a satisfying work environment. It pays to take the time to consider whether you're on the right track with your team. 💡

© Successful Minds – February 2012



e: info@successfulminds.com.au
w: www.successfulminds.com.au