



ActionCOACH Lockdown To-Do List

What a blessing this time of lockdown is for any business owner. Finally, you've been gifted the time to get to work 'ON' our business. Invest your time wisely in these critical areas that will allow you and your business to not only survive and thrive.

1. DREAMCHART

Get the whole family together and make this a fun exercise together. Gather any old magazines you can find, grab some glue get some scissors and get down on the floor and start designing your perfect life. Sometimes also called a vision board, your Dreamchart is your collection of dreams you'd like to chase. Make them personal and selfish and grand and fun and do think BIG. If you don't have the tools available at hand, feel free to create a digital one but if you can, rather do the cut and paste old school version. This will be the most fun that your family has had together in a long time.

2. VISION (WHY, PURPOSE, BHAG)

What is your long-term vision for your company? Why do you do this? Remember, a business is a chosen vehicle to serve you and the Dreamchart you created above. Set aside some quiet time with a blank piece of paper and create a new vision for you and your company. Think along the lines of why you're in this business in the first place? What are you trying to achieve? What is your BHAG

(Big Hairy Audacious Goal)? What's the purpose behind what you do and why you do it? Make it exciting and personal to you but inspiring enough to share with your team, add to your marketing and use as an influencer with your prospective, current and future customers.

3. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

"The only place that earn comes before learn is in the dictionary." Set aside a minimum of 30-minutes but preferably 60-minutes per day, for learning and development. Not just any learning and development but focused learning on those areas that you need to take you and your business forward. Don't just grab the unfinished books lying next to your bed. For the next few weeks create a learning and development plan that focusses on the highest priorities you're trying to chase and include the learning you need for those first. Include books, TED Talks, online learning (e.g. Udemy or Masterclass), YouTube, resources from websites or whatever it takes to move you forward.

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Invest in you first and the interest will be the investments in your people and your business.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Whilst the next few weeks or months can seem uncertain, it is the certainty of the future we want to create and hang on to. Think at least 3 years out. What will your company look like then – 2023. What divisions will you have? Who and which roles will you need? Which positions will report to which managerial roles? Don't put names of current staff in yet. First think 3 years out and complete the org. chart first. This helps create a visual picture of your hierarchy, no matter how flat, so that you've got a roadmap to work towards. Next, populate the names of those who you current employ. Where can they be developed for promotion? What new roles will be a priority to fill? Creating the long-term structure of your company now will save you lots of frustrations, and plenty of school fees, in the future.

5. ECOMMERCE

Like it or not the world was heading this way anyway. Now more than ever you need an ecommerce arm to your business. Find ways to monetize whatever you do with offerings that can be purchased online. This may be as easy as

creating an ecommerce portion on your website for existing product and services. Fantastic, get going!

It may however require a bit more thought and actually require some creativity around your current products and/or services or maybe even pivoting your business as a whole. Whatever it takes, make sure people can buy from you online AND make sure you make it a simple for them to buy as well.

6. DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Your digital footprint extends a lot further than just your website. It's also not just the digital footprint of your business but of you as well – the business owner. Think of it as tentacles out there in the big wide web of the internet. Start by first analyzing what your current digital footprint looks like. Google your name, your businesses names, your products/services, your vision, your slogan and anything else relevant to your business. First, make sure that what you find is still relevant and up to date. Make the necessary adjustments where applicable.

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Then find what else is coming up in your search terms—where it's not you—and find ways to either play on those platforms, find new ones to be part of or really start dominating in that space. If someone can't find you online, or doesn't like what they find when they do, you've got a problem. Fix it.

7. GET TO KNOW YOUR CLIENTS

Surveys, polls, questionnaires, phone calls and anything else you can find to engage with your customers (past and present). Now is the time to get feedback from them and get the necessary insights they already have on you and your business. Why did they choose you in the first place? What brings them back? What influenced their decision the most? What makes you unique in their mind etc. etc. etc.

The gold at the end of the rainbow are the people that have done business with you in the past and those that continue to do so. Tap into their psyche to gain valuable information you need to amend your sales and marketing, your customer service, your team training and so on.

8. REVISE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Revisit every single product and service you currently provide. Physically list them so that you

can see exactly what they are. Now consider which can be transitioned online? Which can be delivered virtually whether live or pre-recorded? Where are gaps in your current offering? Where are opportunities to bundle things together, partner with other companies, finally launch that long outstanding idea you've had. For more fixed offerings what will you offer differently once you re-open. What can you produce first, market first, sell first to ensure you hit the road running quickly?

With change being a reality for everyone now is the perfect time to transition either into new ways of delivering the same thing or otherwise new ways of delivering new things to the same customers.

9. MARKETING 101 TO PHD

NEVER STOP MARKETING! Marketing is the lifeblood of any business and also the only way to ensure a stable pipeline. If you're tired of riding the business rollercoaster then smooth out your finances by ensuring a more stable and sustainable marketing effort. You may need to change the way you market but you definitely still need to be marketing. Now is the time to up the level of your marketing knowledge and expertise.

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Critique what you've done, learn about new marketing avenues, build a pro-active referral/ word-of-mouth marketing strategy and stop relying on the 'hope and pray' and/or reactive strategy that has worked in the past. You now need to move from beginner marketer to one with a PhD, quickly. Focus on three marketing areas:

1. During Lockdown
2. Post Lockdown for the next 3 months and
3. Annual Marketing Plan (the new normal).

10. REVIEW FINANCIALS

Start with a new budget for the next 90 -days and make sure you add the cashflow projection element to it. What will be coming in and what needs to be paid and when? What else do you need to go look for in the form of new business now or what will be our first call-to-action from our customers once we re-open? Focus on the next three months to ensure you're getting back up to speed as soon as possible. Grant Lottering says: "The goal doesn't change but your training plan may have to". Then take your most recent financials and literally go line-item for line-item and do an analysis. For example: 'Why did sales go up only 8% yet staff costs went up 13%?'

The year-on-year comparisons either need to have very tangible and valid reasons for differences. Otherwise they're the first areas that require conversations and further action. Use this time to also get revised quotes from current suppliers and get additional quotes from competing companies to ensure you're still getting the best deal for your requirements.

11. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Whilst people seemingly run businesses, it's critical to understand the business cycle: *The business owner supports the team > the team support the customers > the customers support the business > and the business supports the business owner.*

The more structured and systemized that support is, the easier it becomes. 80% of your business needs to run on routine so that you've got the energy for the 20% that is an exception. Design the 80% routine and create Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for as much as possible. We often assume staff know the basics but often they truly don't. Example: *Is the way staff answer the phone documented into a Standard Operating Procedure?* Ask the same questions of everything else and get designing and writing. Your future self will thank you for all the headaches saved.

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12. DECLUTTER AND RE-ORGANIZE

Not just your home but everything. Less clutter creates the feeling of space and comfort. It creates a new vacuum to grow into and has physical, mental and emotional benefits. Declutter and re-organize your home, especially your new home office, your cupboards, your To-Do Lists, your filing, your PC's files, your Cloud storage, the Apps on your phone, your WhatsApp's settings, your photos, your backups etc. The more your time seems productive, the more you have the energy to keep going. Start in one area and work from there. Perhaps set a daily area of focus and do as much as possible in that area for that day.

Tomorrow move onto the next category and so on.

If you declutter 'stuff' make the following piles:

1. Redundant items for sale post lockdown.
2. Items to give away to specifically identified recipients and people special to you.
3. Items for charities or those less fortunate than you.

The sense of freedom this will bring will pay off long after we're all back to normal.

13. ACTION PLAN FOR RE-OPENING

Whether you're working from home, or have had to close your business completely, know that this too will end. What is your plan once you re-open? There will be a feeding frenzy once the 'new normal' returns and you need to have a very clear reaction plan long before that happens. Don't get to the end of lockdown still trying to figure it out. You need to be pro-active and ahead of the market, your competitors and your customers.

That said, you'll probably need to be increasing the communication around your re-opening plans well ahead of that actually happening. That way, your business becomes a priority at start-up and not someone else's. Who will do what, when, where and how once re-opening? Design it now and be ready to implement with everything you've got.

Invest this time wisely and start at number 1. – Dreamchart and systematically work through to number 13. – Action Plan for Re-opening. Invest this time wisely and you'll come out ahead of where you started. You'll have created a solid foundation from which to ensure you not only survive but thrive. You CAN do this!

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