



Building Your Dream Team

Entrepreneurs are usually big-picture thinkers, but they also need a team to build their business around. It's unusual for an entrepreneur to succeed without a great team.

The perfect team will have complementary skills that come together to create a business that's more than the sum of its parts.

Pentins have employed many different people over the years, and far and away the most important quality in a team is attitude. You need a team that has a can-do attitude rather than a resistance attitude. What people lack in skills can usually be trained, but attitude is much more difficult to change.

It sounds obvious, but many, many entrepreneurs recruit based on skills, qualifications and experience. After all, it's how we've been programmed since our schooldays.

A team should consist of at least the following people.

1. Entrepreneur – the ideas person who drives things forward
2. Salesperson – the person responsible for making sales, pricing and marketing
3. Operations – the person responsible for systematising the business and creating value
4. Finance – the person who keeps the score

Most entrepreneurs are decent, fair people who want to reward their teams for their efforts to help the business grow. However, across the economy as a whole, there are employers who seek to take advantage of their workforce.

Today's employment laws tend to be written to deal with the unscrupulous employer rather than the majority. Specifically, in the UK there are rules governing the following:

- The time in which a business must give written particulars to the team
- Minimum wage
- Auto enrolment
- Working hours
- Holiday time
- How disciplinary action should be taken
- How people should bring up grievances
- Equality issues



Now consider that there is no longer a defined retirement age. There's also a raft of health and safety legislation regarding employees.

An employee may decide to leave a business and give the agreed notice (typically one month), but an employer has no similar right to sever the contract with a notice period. Additionally, HMRC charges a tax on employment, and employing team members can be a costly exercise.

All of the above emphasises the point that your team members are 'volunteers' and can effectively leave at any time. This is a reality check – ensure you hire the correct people and take the hiring process seriously. Remember, *hire first for attitude and then for aptitude*. You should also be looking to build a balanced team with a mix of skills.

You have a limited time to make your project a success. You simply cannot afford to carry passengers on your team, so rid yourself of the bad attitudes as soon as you're able. You should engage an HR team (in house or outsourced) to ensure you stay on the correct side of constantly updated employment legislation.

HR DIY is dangerous

Case Study: A client thought he could cope with HR policies without any specialist support. When his business lost a major customer, he decided to downsize. In the process of downsizing, he made two women redundant, one of whom happened to be on maternity leave at the time.

The client hadn't consulted enough with the woman on maternity leave, and the employment tribunal awarded her a year's salary as compensation.

Conclusion

Before recruiting any employees, keep in mind that regardless of the qualifications the job role requires, you need to first ensure the candidate will be a good fit. They need to be able to share the same values as you, believe in the culture of the company, and be able to get along with the whole team.

Without a great team around you to support your vision, the road to success can become all the more difficult. But, get the team right and you will see the positive impact and results it can have, right away.