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Donald is respected by clients in over 40 industries throughout the world as a “thought leader” and passionate visionary in the key areas of management, marketing, and service excellence.

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An article by Donald Cooper, MBA...

Why do many new businesses get stuck in “start-up” mode...and what to do about it?

I was recently asked by a business writer why so many businesses get stuck in “start-up” mode and don’t move forward as they should. I see this a lot in my work as a business coach and here are some thoughts that might be helpful.

In my experience, many new ventures get stuck because very few of us are strong in every aspect of management. It’s highly unusual that any one entrepreneur has within themselves all or even most of the competencies required to move a business into second or third gear.

If an entrepreneur is strong with the “numbers” side of the business, they may spend an inordinate amount of time getting their numbers, cash flow projections and the Five Year Plan in perfect shape...and not enough time actually making or selling something.



If they’re the inventor type, they may fiddle and fiddle to make their “invention” perfect and not get it produced and launched in the market. If they’re sales focused, they may go out and get orders for a product or service that isn’t yet ready for “prime time”.

So, we all tend to hide in our area of comfort instead of creating a balanced business approach that gets every aspect of the business moving forward effectively. This is one reason why so many new businesses don’t make it and why so many small businesses remain “small”.

The solution? Sometimes it’s a partnership of two or more people who bring complimentary skills to the business. But remember, for any partnership to work, you must have a shared vision for the future, shared values and a shared commitment to the business. Otherwise it will never work.

Another option is to form an Advisory Board of experienced mentors who will support, push, guide and encourage you to cover all the bases. Or, your new venture might have deep enough pockets to afford a small management team that brings the required skills to the organization from the beginning. Good luck on that one. Finally, you can outsource as many business functions as possible to trusted and affordable professionals.

So, if you’re building a new business and it seems to be stuck in “first gear”, identify the problem and take appropriate action before the cash runs out and you’re in no gear at all.