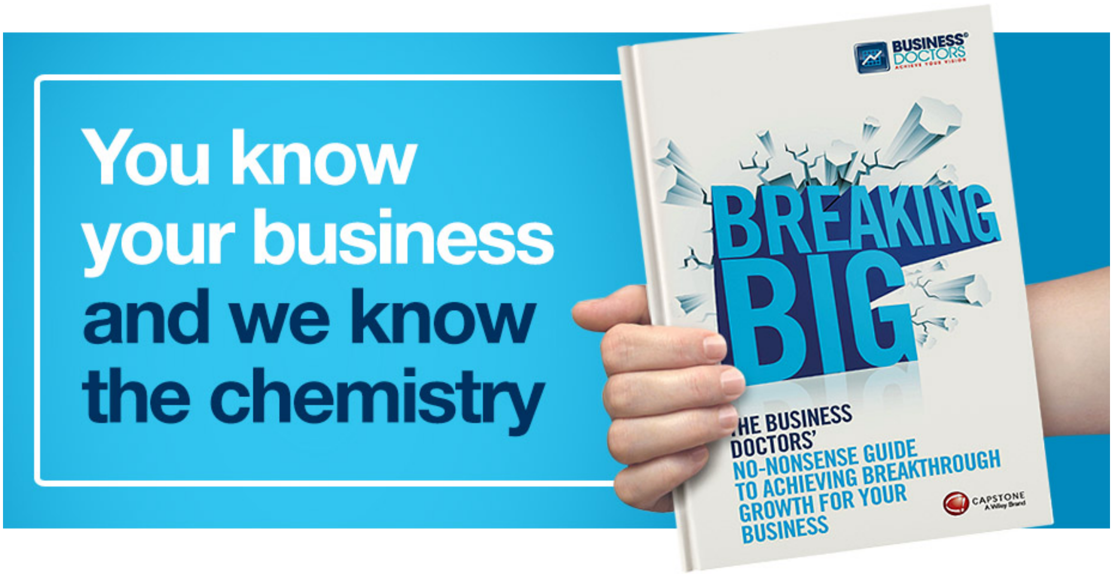
Business Doctors' has recently published Breaking Big, the no nonsense business guide to breakthrough growth



When it comes to learning how to grow your business, these 9 lessons from the Walter White School of business, are applicable, memorable and engaging.

Breaking Bad, one of the most beloved television shows of all time, came to a close this year after six successful and gripping seasons. Viewers finally got to witness Walter White's unforgettable exit and find out which of the key characters made it out alive.

For those of you who haven't seen it yet, the series is set in a post-GFC, recession ravaged America. The protagonist Walter White is an understated high-school chemistry professor who is forced to take on a second job at a car wash to make ends meet for his young family. After being diagnosed with lung cancer and realizing that he does not have enough health care to cover his treatment, he puts his expertise in chemistry to use and begins cooking the most pure crystal methamphetamine (meth) on the market. But as this career teacher quickly realizes, starting and learning to grow your business successfully, isn't as easy as it looks.

But there's more to Breaking Bad than exciting science, shocking drama and riveting character development – there's plenty here for you to take and apply to grow your business. If you want to succeed as an entrepreneur and be even more profitable than you are right now, you should consider these practical lessons from Walter White at Heisenberg College.

1. Technical Expertise is Not Enough

When faced with insurmountable medical bills, Walt realizes that he is never going to make enough money working as an employee. Like so many other entrepreneurs, Walt is passionate about his technical skill (chemistry) and he starts a business that has the potential to maximize the return he can get from that expertise, albeit in this case, an illegal activity.

What he quickly discovers is that he knows nothing about actually running a business – inventory, distribution, marketing, collections etc. So he does what most entrepreneurs do – he wings it and finds out with disastrous consequences that he needs to educate himself quickly on how to operate a successful business and how to outsource the things that he does not have the skill or the time to do himself.

The Lesson: If you really want to grow your business, you need to invest in your development, put a good strategic plan in place, outsource tasks to others who can do them well and learn to manage your team members properly. Don't expect success to be easy. Every business faces its own obstacles and challenges. Those who succeed, do so because of their ability to adapt quickly and take responsibility for their actions.

2. Establish a Premium Brand Then Establish a Premium Price

Walter White was a world-class chemist and as a result, he consistently produced the highest quality crystal meth that you could buy. In fact, his trademark "blue sky" was widely recognized by both the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and drug users as "the bomb". Walter could easily have cut corners and produced a mediocre range of product that appealed to the mass market at a discount price, but he didn't. His pride in his own expertise and his commitment to excellence meant that he owned the upper end of the market.

By creating unprecedented demand for his unique formulation, he could dictate the terms his product was sold under and the price consumers would have to pay. In Walter's own words – "Corner the market, then raise the price," White says. "Simple economics."

The Lesson: If you insist on competing based on price, you are doomed to failure. Anyone can cook crystal meth (or make a mediocre version of the product/service that you are currently selling) but only one person can truly be the best in the world at creating the most pure version on the market. To grow your business and succeed, you must be willing to do what it takes to cure the #1 pain that your customer has with buying your product/service.

3. If You're Good Enough, You Can Get Away With Murder

There is no denying the fact that Walter White was the best in the world at cooking crystal meth. This fact rendered him virtually untouchable. Walter's unparalleled cooking skills kept him alive over and over again. Even Gus Fring (the chicken man and notorious drug lord) could not afford to kill him after it became clear that both Walter and his junkie sidekick Jessie, were loose cannons. When Gus came close to finding a replacement, Walter was quick to eliminate his competition, thus restoring his own unassailable status.

Even Jessie, as flawed and messed up as he was in his personal life, was excellent at distribution and sales, thus making it difficult for Walter or Gus to eliminate him easily.

The Lesson: If you are without question, the best at what you do, you cannot easily be fired or replaced and you can charge a premium for your expertise.

4. If You Can't Decide, You Won't Succeed

Throughout the fast paced six seasons, Walter was continually forced to adapt to changing circumstances and make decisions. When Gus hired a hit man to kill Walter in Season 3, the only thing that saved him was his clever last minute call to Jessie. Armed with the address of Gale Boetticher (the chemist that Gus had hired to replace them), Jessie was then forced to put a bullet into Gale's head.

This episode and in fact the one that followed were not for the faint hearted or the squeamish but they illustrate one important point very clearly for you as an entrepreneur - your success or failure relies solely upon your ability to make quick and good decisions… and then take action immediately, based on those decisions.

The Lesson: In order to be the boss and grow your business, you have to be willing to make decisions and do whatever it takes to achieve your goals. You can't afford to sit on the sidelines of your business hoping and praying that things will change. You need to be the change that you want to see and you need to get good at making decisions today.

5. No One is Ever Successful Without Help

Nothing is impossible when you have the right team around you. As flawed as they were as individuals, Walter and Jesse were successful together because they each brought different skills to the table, they divided up the tasks and they trusted each other to deliver on their responsibilities. On their own, neither one of them would have survived two weeks in the meth business but together, they thrived for years and built a multi-million dollar enterprise.

The Lesson: If you want to grow your business and build a scalable, robust business that runs without you (or is saleable), you need to stop trying to do everything yourself and learn how to delegate and lead others.

6. If You Can't Negotiate, You're Doomed to Fail

Ever wondered why most people don't say "yes" to your product/service? Without a doubt, it's because you have no idea what they need to hear in order to make a decision in your favour. Walter White started off with absolutely no clue how to run a business or negotiate with suppliers, colleagues or customers. And more than once, this shortcoming almost cost him his business and his life. He stumbled upon a universal truth – that if a person's pain is bad enough and you provide the only solution, they will decide immediately and won't need "time to think about it".

The Lesson: The best negotiators know how to persuade others. In order to succeed you need to master the art of identifying, quantifying and curing your customer's (employee's or supplier's) #1 source of pain. If you do this well, you immediately disqualify your competition and are much more likely to get a "yes" today.

7. Distribution Can Make or Break Your Business

As phenomenal as Walter's blue sky crystal meth was, he would never have achieved market penetration, leading brand recognition and phenomenal sales without Jessie's distribution efforts. Jessie's ability to build relationships, enforce collections and find distributors who were willing to do the hard yards to reach customers, was integral to their commercial success.

Walter didn't know the first thing about pricing, competitive analysis, money laundering or channel management; he needed to connect with the right people – Jessie, Saul Goodman, Gus Fring et al.

The Lesson: If you insist on doing everything yourself, then you must be prepared to accept the fact you will never have a scalable, successful and saleable business.

8. First Impressions Are Everything

Gus Fring was by all outward appearances a legitimate, respected member of the Albuquerque business community. He owned a chain of successful fried chicken restaurants and he was a vocal and public supporter of the DEA. He was also the most feared and successful drug lord in the southern states. Even though he was targeted and questioned by the DEA, Gus avoided investigation and culpability by always putting his best foot forward. He was articulate, well-dressed, outwardly legitimate and successful. He made it difficult for anyone to identify and convict him as a drug trafficker. Both Gus and Walter understood that first impressions are everything.

The Lesson: You only get once chance to make a good first impression. The part of your customer's brain that decides is highly visual and hasty. If you don't appear credible and trustworthy, it will be infinitely more difficult to influence and persuade others to do business with or believe in you. Fail at making a good first impression, and you will never grow your business successfully.

9. It Pays to Manage Your Liabilities

Slowly over the six seasons of the show, Walter and Jessie go from being small time players (much like the typical consultant or start up) to fully fledged business owners of a manufacturing and distribution empire. But there's just one problem. No matter how much they make, it seems that the overheads (fixed costs of running the business) just keep getting bigger and bigger. Sound familiar? Not only does Walter have to pay Saul Goodman for legal protection, but there's also plenty of money going towards collections, enforcement and dealers who "know too much".

While Walter is initially disgruntled about all these expenses he learns an important point – while it's important to keep your overall expenses as low as possible, you should never skimp on items that are crucial to your success. Although you might be frustrated with fixed expenses, you can afford to pay top dollar for the best employees, legal services to keep your business on the right side of the law, or an advisor/coach to help you grow your business profitably.

The Lesson: If you want to grow your business you cannot afford to be penny wise and pound foolish. If someone or something is integral to your success, ensure that you invest your time and money here. You can always find money in the budget for everything that is worth spending on or investing in.

Breaking Bad was poignant, provocative and powerful on many levels. And the genius of the show is this – despite all his shortcomings, killings, and character flaws, Walter While has longevity and likeability as both a character and successful business man. When it comes to learning how to grow your business, these 9 lessons from the Walter White School of business, are a whole lot more applicable, memorable and engaging than a boring, introductory business book like the eMyth.

The above lessons have been brought to you by Rhondalynne – ImagineeringNow and mirror the Business Doctors ten steps to breakthrough growth which can be downloaded from our website.

http://www.businessdoctors.co.uk/top-tips

More information on Breaking Big – the Business Doctors' no-nonsense guide to breakthrough growth.

http://www.businessdoctors.co.uk/breaking-big