

Are You an Expander or Contractor?

As business owners, we naturally lean toward being an expander or a contractor in our businesses. In a nutshell, an expander makes things bigger and a contractor pulls things in, but there's far more to this analogy which can explain a lot about what roles you want to have in place in your business.

The expander is a salesperson who can bring in the business and maintain good client relationships. An expander is a person who has a million ideas and can create profitable new service and product lines, but may not be best at implementing them. An expander will also tend to spend a lot, go over budget, and start a lot of projects.

A contractor is great at staying on budget. They love systems. They will create rules and systems and follow them. They are not natural at selling. They might be introverted. They are great implementers. They can rein in an expander's ideas by encouraging them to choose one. They can implement it and see it to its finish.

Which Role Do You Play?

It's fun to think about which role you naturally play, and which roles your team members naturally play. There may even be some tension between the team members who are opposites, but when they can play well together, your business will flourish. To succeed effortlessly in business, you need both types of roles in your business – an expander and a contractor.

Challenges for Expanders

If you're the business owner and the expander, the challenge for you is finding the time and discipline to do the work as well as keep up with all the marketing. You might feel the pull of that seesaw between delivering services for clients versus going out and getting new clients and keeping your business full.

If you're in business alone, the first person an expander business owner might want to hire is a contractor type – a project manager type or an admin type that can help you offload some tasks that you can systematize and delegate. Your biggest challenge is time. You need help to get all your great ideas done. Choose an admin person at a low hourly rate that will do the lowest level tasks on your plate. This will free you up to do the higher dollar stuff you need to do with clients and to do the strategy work that no one else can do in your business. Another way an expander can bring a contractor role into their business is through coaching or a mastermind group that can hold them accountable.

Challenges for Contractors

If you are the business owner and you are a contractor, you love doing the work but hate going out and getting clients. You are introverted, maybe a numbers or rules or

systems person. You might dislike marketing and avoid doing it. Your biggest challenge is getting enough business in the door. The first step you can do is to leverage online marketing as much as possible. Systematize your marketing so that it's as automated as possible. You can also employ a strong support team of expanders in your business to help you. Find a fabulous employee that has client service, sales and marketing experience that can be your expander.

Your Business Roles

You will easily be able to tell if you have too many of one role in your business. In an all-expander business, client projects can run over-budget which hurts your margins, important initiatives may not get implemented, and details can get overlooked. In an all-contractor business, you do great work but you are a best-kept secret and you may fall short on revenue goals.

Take a look at your business roles. Are you naturally an expander, or does your business have too many expanders? Are you naturally the contractor, or does your business have too many contractors? Let us know how we can help you keep your business in balance.