

Business Partners & Marital Partners, Will the Marriage Survive? Part

2

By Chuck And Sue DeFiore

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In the last article, we concluded by saying that keeping your business and personal relationships separate is very important to the survival of both your business and your marriage. In this article we will talk about how to achieve this goal.

One of the most important ways to accomplish this is to set up distinct business hours, and when they are over, don't discuss business, concentrate on your relationship. It is difficult, but make a concentrated effort at it. Confine your business discussions to business hours or set aside a specific time to discuss the business.

For example, take the last half hour of the day, and discuss the business day; any suggestions you have, what was accomplished, what needs to be done tomorrow, during the week, how are the monthly goals you set at the beginning of the month progressing. Remember to couch any criticisms or suggestions in a positive vein. Think of how you felt in the work situation and how supervisors dealt with you when making suggestions. Negatives only cause resentment. They do in the corporate arena, and even more so, when dealing with a spouse you must live with 24 hours a day. Be sure to set aside time for each other-go for walks, out to dinner, or just for a drive with your spouse. Do not discuss business.

You should have outside activities that are not business related. If not, join a group that interests you. It will allow you to meet with others who are not connected to your business. Running a home-based business can be very lonely; getting away from the home, and having outside interests is imperative.

In addition to the problems inherent to couples running a business, starting a home-based business presents its own set of problems and questions. Before you start be sure to ask yourself the following:

1. Are you self-motivated? Organized? Able to prioritize your work? You will no longer have a supervisor or a boss to tell you what to do. You will be the decision maker. You will have to motivate yourself. One way to accomplish this is to use a To Do List and stick to it. In addition, set definitive business hours, and stick to them.

2. Will you be able to deal with the isolation? You will no longer meet people in the halls,

congregate around the coffee pot, or take a break to talk with your co-workers. To combat the loneliness and isolation be sure to join groups that meet outside the home, or schedule luncheons with friends and associates.

3. Write up a business plan. Be sure the business is something that interests you. You might want to start on a part-time basis, and grow from there. Research the business carefully, make sure there is a market, and the competition is not overwhelming.

4. Be sure you have at least six months living expenses set aside. This will give you the time to work through the marketing strategy outlined in your business plan, and avoid bad marketing practices. In addition, if changes need to be made, you can do so, without monetary concerns becoming an issue.

5. Be sure your office space is located in a separate room or area of your home that offers the least distractions. A separate office is best, especially if you are meeting with clients. Remember to always present a professional appearance.

6. When will you do your regular household chores? Make up a schedule of when you will deal with them. Some individuals find getting chores done before the start of the work day is best. At the end of the day, close your office door and then deal with the remaining household items that need to be handled. Time management will be a very important factor in running a home-based business.

7. For husband and wife teams, it becomes imperative to have some form of disability insurance for each other. Remember, even though your partner may be your husband or wife, he or she is still your business partner. An accident or illness to one of you can severely impact the operation of the business.

A business is only as good as you and your partner make it. It takes a lot of dedication, time and energy to run a business, whether it is home-based or not. It can be a very rewarding experience. Think carefully, and ask yourself a lot of self-searching questions before you begin.

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