

TOP TIPS FOR START UPS

By Kelly Weideman

Kelly openly admits to experiencing many of the challenges commonly faced by people starting a new business. Following are her top tips that will significantly increase your odds of succeeding.

Make sure your service or product is solving a problem

Getting any sort of traction will be impossible if no one sees the point of what you're trying to do. So be wary of creating a service/product in a saturated market, or in a market where you cannot be easily differentiated. The key to ensure your product or service will be well received is to test and know your market. Doing so will ensure you learn who your competitors are, which will make it easier to identify exactly how you are different (i.e. your USP).

A large part of your success will lie in your ability to stand out from the crowd and be dynamic. This can be achieved with smart marketing, a passionate and committed team who have very clear and thorough product knowledge, as well as a clear company vision.

Don't be scared to be a disruptor. The most successful businesses are often those who remain forward-thinking and stay ahead of your competitors.

Surround yourself with the right people

When the time comes to hire people, make sure you choose those who have a clear 'team player' mentality. The best candidates will share your passion and core values, so bypass anyone who's not a go-getter, lacks initiative or who can't work independently (as well as part of a team).

Your goal should be to create a team who can handle high stress, adapt with little notice, work hard, work independently and have a great sense of humour!

Of course, as a manager, part of your role is to uplift and inspire your team. You can do this by bringing the energy, excitement and know-how. Be quick-thinking and efficient, and have

confidence in what you're doing by steadfastly believing in your dream.

To ensure you are constantly expanding your connections, commit to networking. You can achieve this by attending expos and other industry events. Try and keep an open mind at all times because you never know what can come from a casual conversation with someone new.

Accept that starting a new business is tough

As a start up, you need to be prepared to work long hours and endure a decent amount of stress. The tough times won't last forever, but they will be there.

It's equally important to take measures to avoid burning yourself out. All start ups will demand long working hours, especially in the first few years (or longer). While this is necessary, you must find ways to let go and switch off in order to be able to play the long game!

You should also accept that you will make errors and mistakes along the way. But the good news is, one day you will look back and be grateful for the errors as most often they will have become your most valuable lessons.

And finally, always stay true to who you are and the values you hold. A new business will test you, but if you maintain authenticity and keep your eye on the prize then you'll be able to minimise self-doubt and overcome any challenges.

Be adaptable

As a new business owner, rigidity is the enemy. You need to remain ready and agile to respond at all times because you never know what's around the corner! If something is not working then you'll need to find a better way to do it, so be prepared to pivot. If you're too set in your ways you may struggle to adjust quickly to changes and your business will bear the brunt.



About Kelly Weideman

Kelly Weideman is the Business Development Manager and Co-Founder of Evolt, a body composition analyser offering advanced metrics for fitness professionals and their clients. While based in Australia, since beginning in 2015, Evolt has grown to include an international client base.

While you should expect problems to crop up, stay strong and fight smart when they do. People and competitors may try to bring you down along the way, but remain calm and react sensibly rather than emotionally.

Take control of the details and push to grow

Remember to register your IP and trademark; in our early days, one of our competitors registered ours before we did which proved extremely stressful, as you can imagine! You can check out some key business resources [here](#).

To ensure all your contracts and agreements are watertight, engage a great lawyer. It usually costs quite a lot, but it's 100 per cent worth it in the end.

And finally, reinvest, reinvest, reinvest! Put your profits back into the business as much as you can for as long as you can, so you can build the brand and grow the business to the level you want, as quickly as you can.

Starting a business in the health, fitness and wellness sectors is a great idea. There are already billion dollar businesses in our industry, with forecasts of steady growth over the next few years. Just remember to find laughter, fun and smiles amongst all the hard work. When you do this, you'll do great! Good luck! ♦