From the Handbook of Business, the Bible

31: Watch the ants and be wise

Ants are seemingly an insignificant part of God's creation, but they play a critical role in the scheme of things, fascinating to watch and learn from. Have you noticed they…

…Don't stand around, they're always moving forward; and not walking, but running
…Are constantly seeking other ants to connect with
…Perish if left alone because an ant is useless & has no purpose outside its community
…Go into their world on a mission: serve the community – find & store food and protect the nest.

In business, we can imitate these humble creatures when we GO into our world, the marketplace.

What Bible verse can we apply to this phenomenon?

Proverbs 6:6 - *"Go watch the ants, you lazy person. Watch what they do and be wise"* **ICB**

…***Watch*** means not operating on your own as an island but observing what the best do

…***Lazy*** means don't watch; don't learn; don't be wise; take-it-easy; run round in circles

…***Wise*** means applying what you learn to build and continually improve your business model.

From my experience, virtually every business is blessed with amazing growth opportunities but these don't eventuate because, to put it bluntly, the owners ignore some of those ant principles!

What are business owners not doing that could make a difference?

HERE ARE THREE PRINCIPLES YOU NEED TO LEARN FROM THE ANTS

1. Stop waiting around for your customers to make the 1st move:

* A classic example is the menswear store I visited for the first time in April last year…

  …In the 18 months since, guess how many times they've connected with me? Right, none

* Maybe it's an Aussie thing, conditioned from childhood 'not to be a sticky beak' or to 'mind-your-own-business; it's like they fear going into their customers world

2. Understand the difference between customer service and serving customers:

* Service (i.e., customer-service at POS) is a NOUN; serving is a VERB, an action word (i.e., implies, go to; interact & communicate with; anticipate needs; educate)

  …Service is an event that ends with the transaction; serving never ends, it's a lifestyle

  …May I ask, how many customers did you contact or visit last week? Last Month?

  …Tactic: Use the list of emails & phone numbers to stay close to your community

* I trust your customer follow-up system works better than that menswear store!

3. When systems break down don't stand around complaining & blaming, fix the problem:

* Look how quick the ants fix a broken nest! So, if there is a customer problem fix it, FAST

* You '*systemise procedures but humanise exceptions*' meaning someone takes responsibility

Be encouraged: *Solomon confirms that watching, learning & applying ANT principles will lead you to wisdom; so, you can't lose! It will bring joy & satisfaction as you love your community. In return, they will favour your business with positive reviews, repeat sales and referrals.*