

From the Handbook of Business, the Bible

41: We must dress and keep the garden

Back at the beginning there was a sole occupant of the mortal coil, Adam. He lived in a garden. The Creator made him responsible to look after it; he could not delegate or outsource that job.

As the manager, he had a job description; his key responsibility, outlined in **Genesis 2:15**...

"The LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" KJV

* **Dress** here means to care for or to serve; **keep** means to guard or have charge over.

Adam was also required to adhere to various other rules which he did for a while; and eventually he was blessed with an assistant manager but it turned out they weren't a great team.

Can we link this ancient garden scene to a modern business?

Definitely; there is a parallel between Adam's role in his garden and your role in your business...

- * The garden was a wealth asset; so is your business
- * Both are externally owned (by Jesus) and internally cared for by a manager
- * Adam was to dress the asset (i.e., to serve it, making him a servant); your role is the same
- * Adam failed in his role and was driven out, never to return
- * Stats prove about 1/2 of all startups fail; the owners unable to dress it & keep them going!

We know why Adam failed...but why do so many fail in dressing & keeping their business?

After more than 40 years observing owners and their businesses, I can say there are a myriad of reasons. Here are 3 reasons in 3 key areas a servant/manager needs to understand...

The first area has to do with owners and their business model:

- * They started with a vision to make \$ rather than solve a problem & make the world better
- * They get bogged in day-to-day issues instead of strategic issues - the OT of SWOT
- * Even in times of trouble, they don't seek wise counsel from someone who knows.

The second area is poor marketing:

- * Marketing is not well understood; it's not selling or advertising; it's communicating love
- * Their product offer is weak with no real point of difference compared to the competitors
- * Their marketing messages are 'about us' instead of about customers and their problem.

The third area is an inability of managers to manage wisely:

- * They don't have clearly defined targets, monitor actual performance & deal with variances
- * They ignore critical numbers: gross profit & cashflow; instead focus on sales & net profit
- * Poorly documented systems & procedures mean inefficiencies & constant problems.

As a listener to our 105.1 Handbook of business session, I trust you understand these issues such that none of them will negatively impact your future. In other words, when it comes to the business garden the Master put you in your role is to dress it & keep it so as not to be driven out.