

From the Handbook for Business, the Bible

33: Chasing fantasies makes no sense

Following last week's discussion on strategic issues, we need to consider a phenomenon that can impact a business whereby the owner chases a non-business 'opportunity' that is simply a fantasy! Yet it can put the business viability at risk - loss of owner focus; draining resources.

Believe me I know what it's like, because it's happened to me, twice!

What about a verse from the Handbook and an example:

Proverbs 12:11, *"Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies have no sense"* NIV

- * **Land** is referring to a farmer but in context, it can mean any business
- * **Abundant food** simply means building a successful operation
- * **Fantasies** are described brutally as 'worthless pursuits'

Remember years ago, many business owners were cajoled into joining Amway? Great products but few succeeded as it too turned into another of life's fantasies. Today people go into joint ventures; other businesses; property development, derivatives trading; there's lots of options!

Here's a classic example: I once acted for a business that had been successful in manufacturing products for the building industry; sales growth became a problem because the owner wanted to control everything, but was not gifted to do so. What happened next is quite common when stressed owners lose interest trying to deal with all the growth & control problems that arise...

- * Frustrated by all the problems, he sought & created a distraction in the form of an invention for the leisure industry that just happened to align with his hobby
- * It turned out his factory manager was also happily distracted, going full-bore together
- * Precious resources were wasted on what had become a complete fantasy because the invention had little chance of commercial success, although they hoped it might
- * The point is, it provided some 'relief' from the daily grind but made no sense in terms of his core business or making \$\$; his solution to mounting business problems was avoid them

In the end, the owner came to his senses: he ditched the invention and replaced the manager with the right person; it worked so well he was able to retire; today the business is booming.

How can business owners avoid the no-sense fantasy trap?

I appreciate being in business can be a tough and lonely gig. So, it's easy to see how owners get enticed into an 'exciting new project' that has nothing to do with the business; but as today's Proverb warns, it can quickly become a fantasy...making no sense at all.

If you're feeling the urge to pursue a fantasy, consider these simple suggestions:

1. Take the opportunity before the Lord, per Proverbs 16:3, 16:9 and seek His direction
2. Ask yourself a question, why? Then consider the chance of success & cost of failure
3. Seek counsel from a trusted mentor, advisor, pastor rather than family or friends
4. Identify & seek a solution to the real business problem that's causing you grief

Counsel: You're the steward/CEO of a business owned by the Master; it makes NO sense getting caught out in some side-hustle that, looked at objectively, is clearly just a fantasy!