

Is leadership and management the same thing? Are they mutually exclusive or two halves of a successful owner/manager? Many small business owners would say they manage their enterprises more than they lead them, but what is clear is that the traits of both are needed to ensure a business is sustainable and profitable.

There are leaders who stand out from the crowd, but many small business owners wouldn't put themselves in the same category as Richard Branson, Bill Gates or Steve Jobs.

PRECIOUS

In the post-industrial age, where information is often the most precious commodity a business has, companies need to have their direction and business philosophy defined. Employees no longer want to be given instructions for specific tasks, but to become part of a purpose defined by a strong leader.

Often, leadership will mean self-promotion and the ability to seek publicity, which can often be at odds with managing a business, which can be insular. According to the Chartered Management Institute, being able to lead requires that an individual knows and understands the processes by which they make decisions, as well as having the inner belief to execute them.

Small business owners should become leaders and managers in their own right. The idea of leaders being big picture thinkers with little or no interest in the day-to-day operation of their business, while managers are immersed in this detail, is a distinction that can have harsh commercial consequences. A balance has to be struck between the two. The late Steve Jobs, for instance, made a point of visiting Apple's retail stores to stay in touch with his customers.

Nick Hadfield, founder and director of airport transfer specialist Ski-Lifts, says: "I think leading is about having a vision and being able to make others buy into that vision, whereas management is about creating the infrastructure to allow that vision to flourish.

"I don't think they are mutually exclusive, but often the best leaders don't have an eye for detail and the best managers aren't as good at thinking outside the box. Some people have a mixture of both skills."

Every successful business has both a leader and a manager who can communicate effectively with consumers and employees. Being customer and employee focused is often held up to be the two supporting pillars of great management and successful leadership.

Jane Sunley, CEO at HR consultancy Purple Cubed, says: "Leaders such as Steve Jobs and Jack Welch were known for clarity of message and for clearly articulating their respective cultures and goals. Develop managers so they are excellent at listening and developing their people, otherwise they can stifle innovation and free thinking.

"I'd recommend sitting down and working out your leadership principles - a few descriptors for 'how we lead around here' helps managers to be clear about your expectations as a leader and how you want them to behave within the business."

VISION

Becoming a good leader who can also successfully manage a business requires mastering a number of skills. Being able to develop a long-term vision for your company is vital, as this provides a clear road map to follow. After this, management skills are

essential, as they will deliver this vision as products or services.

John McLachlan, a leadership development expert at Monkey Puzzle Training & Consultancy and co-author of the book *Real Leaders For the Real World*, says: "The key tool for any leader or manager is what we call emotional regulation - the ability to express true and appropriate emotion in any given situation. This is rare and essential, as an emotionally regulated leader or manager will be clear, real and behave in a consistent manner, which will make it easier for those around them to feel comfortable and perform to their best.

"For both leaders and managers, another essential tool is self-awareness. That is an ability to accurately assess their skills and weaknesses, so they can focus on their skills and, where it is relevant, get training and develop the skills to improve in the areas they are weaker."

Leadership and management are certainly not exclusive, Jason Downes, managing director of Powwownow, a company that provides low cost conference calling facilities, says.

He adds: "The aspiration for any manager, in my opinion, is to be a leader. However, it's important to state that being one doesn't imply you are the other

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too. Both leaders and managers have advantages, but equally, both have flaws and a leader still needs to work on their management skills."

It appears that leadership and management roles are different, but small business managers need to be both. As the wearer of many hats, it can be difficult to separate you as a leader and a manager, but on a day-to-day basis this is precisely what needs to be done in order for your company to grow.

Cardiff bar owner Jon Saunders says: "I believe that being able to listen to people is one of the strongest skills a leader can possess. The best leaders and managers all have to listen and understand what they're hearing in order to achieve anything. The biggest weakness a person can have is to think they know everything. The day I stop learning is the day I down my tools and do something else."

According to Jane Sunley of human resources consultancy Purple Cubed, people might not aspire to lead in the traditional way, though everyone will require leadership traits, such as the ability to listen and question, to solve problems and to communicate well.

CULTURE

She says: "People have increasingly more choice about where they work and there is far more emphasis on the culture of an organisation. Therefore, a key task of today's leader is to create and maintain distinction in these areas. People want to work somewhere they can make a difference; the leader's job is therefore to create purpose and engage employees within that."

Not everyone can be a stunning leader or a great manager, but all small business owners can develop these traits to the point where they have a positive impact on their companies. As a small business owner, only you know where the emphasis should be placed for your enterprise's success.

Assess the leadership and management skills you possess. Improving the ones you have will ultimately make you a better manager and a thoughtful and insightful leader. **MM**

