

# The YEBDC Small Business Information Column

by Sue Gingerich, Business Advisor

## "Post Motivation Syndrome, Do You Have It?"

There is a new virus out there. No, it won't make you really sick, and no, it doesn't wipe out the hard drive on your computer. It deflates your enthusiasm. Those most susceptible are those in business for themselves, by themselves. It's called Post Motivation Syndrome.

In the beginning it is very thrilling to think about owning and operating your own small business, maybe even a bit scary. In the beginning, you expect to put in lots of hours. You know that it will take hard work and dedication. You can't afford to hire staff, because you know you will need every penny to either, reinvest in the business, or take out money to pay personal expenses. But you're hyped, you want to do this! You do the research, the business plan, get your loan and you're off and running--your own business!

Everyday you go off to work, by yourself. Yeah, independence! The sales are coming in and MOST DAYS you are making your projections. But, it's becoming routine, everyday is the same. The thrill is tapering off. You work 40 to 80 hours a week. There is no time in your life for you. Soon you start to lose steam. Your lack of enthusiasm is noticed by your customers--but, unfortunately you can't see it yourself. All you can see is, "this is my business, I must do what I can, to ensure it survives. I must cut costs, at all costs!" It's nose down, butt up... work, work, work!

Unfortunately when we get in a rut, we can lose perspective. We really don't see where we are headed. So what can small business owners do to keep from catching Post Motivation Syndrome? Try the following:

1. Change your routine. Do things in a different order. Review your present priorities. Why did you set them as you did? Maybe there is a more efficient way to order your day.
2. Hire part-time staff. Chances are you are working hard, very hard, but you are probably not working smart. Having someone else around to share the work, will allow you to stand back and have a different perspective. Give it time though. First you have to train this person properly. Give it at least three to six months to have any real effect.
3. Take a break. Allow yourself some time off. Again this may mean hiring some staff. Or you might consider changing the hours you work. Evaluate the times when you are busy and slow. Could those customers who usually come in during the slow time be enticed to come in at a different time?
4. Concentrate on one area of your business for now. Either increasing sales or cutting costs. Fix one problem at a time.
5. Set a new goal for yourself, a clear realistic goal. Then create a detailed plan on how you will reach that new goal.
6. Take in a trade show, a conference or a course related to your business. Here you will get to talk to others who may have similar concerns as you. You may be able to find new and better ways of doing things, if you expose yourself to new situations and ideas.
7. Review your original business plan. Tick off all the goals you have achieved so far. You have probably come a lot further than you think.
8. Take in motivational speakers. (The YEBDC offers great lunch speakers the second Wednesday of every month.) It will help to recharge your batteries.

If you think you already have Post Motivation Syndrome, don't despair you can still try the above remedies to lessen or even eliminate the effects of the "virus"!

If you have a small business and have a question or problem that you think The YEBDC could help you with please call or write to: The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation, Box 249, Sangudo, Alberta, T0E 2A0  
1-800-556-0328 or 1-780-785-2900, e mail: [yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca](mailto:yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca), or access our Website at:  
[www.yebdc.ab.ca](http://www.yebdc.ab.ca)

**"Takin' Care of Business... Takin' Care of You!"**