

5 Ways to Stop Being A Slave to Your Business

By Ruth Schwartz



Building a transparent company is the key to building a business that gives you freedom to be a leader and not someone who is stuck in the minutia of the daily grind. If you can stop longtime habits you can stop being a slave to your business and shift to the leadership principles that are the foundation for health—your health, the health of your employees, and of course, the health of your business.

Can you stop having all the answers? Can you coach rather than do the work yourself? Can you work on the team rather than the delivery of your product? Can you stop solving all the problems and making all the decisions? Can you cope with the frustration that comes with stopping longtime habits that no longer serve you? To stop being a slave to your business means moving towards trust and change and away from the status quo. It takes time to shift to a leadership role, but the results are well worth the effort. You'll see positive changes that you never believed possible.

The five steps listed below will help you begin the process of making the subtle changes that will change your company and give you the key to the golden handcuffs (the physical, mental, and spiritual ties that lock entrepreneurs and business owners to their work) that have prevented you from becoming all that you and your employees can be.

1. **Create a Passionate Team Experience.** When employees are asked about their most joyous work experiences (Yes, it is possible to experience joy at work), they describe a shared experience. It is often unexpected, not formulaic, and it is rare, but it is a time when the group is passionate about *something*. It's when the team is working toward the same vision, when the team feels like family.
2. **Create a Clear Mission (who you are) and Vision (where you are going).** If you are able to put into writing something beautiful and articulate it, then you have the basis of strategic thinking that will serve you for the lifetime of your business. It will be the

reason that your decision are made and you become successful. It will keep you aligned and on track. The mission and vision are your guides.

3. **Communicate Your Clear and Compelling Vision.** Make sure everyone in your company hears your mission and vision over and over again until they can recite it by heart and rally around it until it becomes their passion. Put your mission and vision on posters, in your email signature, on your website, and in your social media.
4. **Differentiate Yourself and Then Get Really Good at it.** What sets your company apart from others? What do you do that is more significant, helpful, amazing? It could be as simple as paying vendors on time, every time, but it has to be something your customers truly value. It's what keeps them coming back to you again and again.
5. **Define Your Company Culture.** All companies have a culture. The key is to have a culture of your choosing, not one that occurs by default. Determine the type of environment you want and then lead by example. Imagine what your business would be like if you had a highly functional family atmosphere, where cooperation and teamwork were valued over ego. Where people worked but also had a life.

Ruth Schwartz started Mordam Records in 1983. By the time Nirvana hit the pop charts and Green Day went platinum, Schwartz was running a ten million-dollar company. In 2012 Schwartz chronicles her success in *The Key to the Golden Handcuffs – Stop Being a Slave to Your Business*. Published by Outskirts Press, and based on Schwartz' business experience, the book gives entrepreneurs and business executives insight into shifts that can be made to create a transparent, open-book company. Today, Schwartz is an internationally certified business coach, motivational speaker, and the facilitator of business peer advisory boards. She owns High Performance Advocates, a management development and marketing company. Contact Ruth through www.highperformanceadvocates.com or by calling 530-288-0180.