

Small-business Savvy: Identify Yourself as a Small-business Owner

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When you head out in the morning, are you going to work, headed to the office, or picking up the reins?

Is business ownership your work or your career?

Do you work in your business or on your business?

These three questions point out two ways that business owners can look at what they are doing. So often the owner finds himself or herself caught up in the daily tasks of the business. With little or no help, the duties of stocking, running the till and even sweeping the floor fill up the to-do list. The tasks of building the business, marketing, networking, planning and analysis are what gets done when time permits.

Breaking from the habit of riding the bus to driving the bus is crucial. You need to think and act like a business owner. Think back on how you spent your last day at your business. How much of your time was used to build the business?

I have heard business owners, when asked where they worked, respond with the business name only. Others, though, go on to clearly identify that they own and operate XYZ. This later group understand that business ownership is an attitude and an identity.

Some of you may respond to my comments by stating that your business is a lifestyle enterprise. That's fine, but if it is to continue in this face-paced world, working on your business and planning for tomorrow is as important to you as the owner who wants to be the next Google.

Or you may think that my comments really are a small issue. But small issues, when repeated over and over, become habits. Those habits are often predictors and drivers of a final outcome.

So when asked what you do, tell people that you are the CEO of (name your company). It may feel funny at first, but in time, it comes naturally and can help you spend more time at building the business.

Your business of tomorrow begins with your focus today.

For more help, visit our website, <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness>, and sign up for the monthly newsletter.

More information is available at your local Extension office, as well as at <http://powerofbusiness.net> and <http://www.eXtension.org/entrepreneurship>.

The Small Business Administration and its related organizations, such as the Small Business Development Centers and Service Corps of Retired Executives, along with many other state agencies, also can be valuable resources.

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