

Q. My company has two locations offering the same service, and while one location is thriving, the other is suffering. In the past 6 months, it has become increasingly difficult to manage; people aren't following direction, moral is down, and there has been a serious decrease in revenue, to the point where I can't continue to operate both locations if this keeps up. I've tried several times to talk with my office manager about my concerns, but feel like I'm not being taken seriously and worse, feel my authority is being undermined. I'm ready to close this location, but I'm painfully aware of the impact that will have.

A. It sounds like closing the troublesome location is your last resort, yet consistent revenue loss beyond three months is a big concern. And, it's a sure sign something outside or inside your business is sabotaging your success. Time for a business foundations check up.

Your business success relies on the interdependent systems at work within your business that need to operate independently, effectively, and efficiently: your people, finance, sales, marketing, service, operations, manufacturing, distribution, etc. Effective communication is the oil that makes your systems run smoothly. Trust your instincts while being strategic – analyze your business systems within each office to understand what's working and what's not.

Get close to the heart of the matter – spending time at this location is a priority. When office moral is low, something isn't right within your people systems. What's driving the lack of trust and respect? How do you promote camaraderie and friendly competition between offices?

Dust the cob webs off your purpose statement and guiding principles. How do your decisions support your purpose? How do you communicate with your people so their efforts align with your purpose, and they know they make a positive difference?

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