

Starting up a Business in Fiji - a look at the

Corporate Advice



Caryn Walsh

From humble beginnings often come great things. Starting a business is hard work and demands long hours and ongoing dedication.

For those entrepreneurs who succeed at it, the return on financial, emotional and life-style investments are well worth it.

Being an entrepreneur is not for the faint-hearted. It takes energy, tenacity and relentless drive to get a business up and running. It's not for everyone.

Many try it, find it hard and ultimately walk away from it. Note I don't say they fail. Nobody who tries to start a business fails. The fact they tried makes them a winner.

Barons of industry

We read about the Captains of Industry like Bill Gates (Microsoft) Nigel Branson (Virgin Airlines) and Gina Rinehart (Hancock Prospecting).

Self-made, dedicated people who had a vision and who refused to take NO for an answer.

In the younger fleet of entrepreneurs, we see Mark Zuckerberg (founder of Facebook and worth US\$51.2 billion) and Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin (worth US\$70 billion together).

It's not about luck. For some, they make their own fortunes whilst for others, they have the opportunity to build on fortunes made by others.

Their challenge is to keep the business making money and sustain profitability and success over time.

If we consider these barons of industry, there are various characteristics they share, including a keen sense of creating business opportunities and identifying 'gaps' in the market in which they want to operate.

I have included information in this article to help those want-to-be entrepreneurs decide if they have what it takes to start a business or to ensure they know what is required should they choose to proceed.

Example

In this article, we will look at how today's renowned Rosie Group started off back in 1974 with only a vision.

Caryn Walsh is an International Business Consultant, Executive Coach, Keynote Speaker. Do you have a question about your team or business. Write to us at info@puremagicbusiness.com.au. We will gladly answer it.

Personal Attributes of Successful Entrepreneurs

Coaching and Mentoring need to have outcomes in the context of the relationship they are occurring and in order to do this, there are three clear roles that the Coach and/or Mentor play:

- **Perseverance.** They never ever give up
- **Creative.** If they struggle in a particular area, they constantly look for new and alternative ways of achieving their dreams
- **Adaptable.** They have flexibility to move around barriers and overcome obstacles as they arise
- **Dedication.** They work long hours, often for little return (in the beginning) to build the business, knowing that to get a Company off the ground takes insight and energy
- **Optimism.** They possess a healthy dose of believing in themselves, their product/service and that they will succeed in the end
- **Business Acumen.** They have done their homework and realise the steps and processes needed to start a business, including legal demands and financial considerations
- **Resilience.** No matter what, they keep at it.



Rosie Gockhai in 1966 before she started her own business. She possessed all the attributes needed to become a successful entrepreneur.

10 KEY PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER

- 1 Sell what people want and need. Not what you think will work. If you think you have a good product or service idea, conduct research and ask people before you make and try to sell a product nobody wants. It's a quick way to go hungry!
- 2 Keep costs down. Watch your expenditure and see where you can leverage off other aspects of your business. For example, instead of using a courier to deliver some of your products, can you deliver them yourself?
- 3 Your cash flow is your blood-line. Make it your top priority. This is a key reason why many start-ups don't make it. They don't manage money well. Even if you are on a strict budget initially, make sure you NEVER RUN OUT OF MONEY or else you won't have a business to grow. Know how to make and manage money in a start-up. Make this your first lesson.
- 4 Overestimate costs and underestimate income. Be conservative. Always think you will pay out more and budget on earning less so that you run the finances in a lean way. When you earn more and spend less, you will be pleasantly surprised and enjoy more profit.
- 5 Have a key focus on Marketing and Selling. Through marketing and selling, you grow a business. If neither work, your business won't grow. Get a clear understanding of both.
- 6 Find ways to increase profits. Increase your leads, approach more potential customers, think about how to market your product/service creatively, find ways to encourage potential clients to come to you time and again.
- 7 Test and measure the success and failure of everything you do. If you don't, how will you know what works?
- 8 Learn more to earn more. Learn as much as you can about operations, selling and marketing to grow your business.
- 9 Always add value, don't discount. If you discount your product or service, you eat into profit. Instead, add greater value or add-ons to entice your customer to buy, but ultimately increasing your margin.
- 10 Get a business coach. To guide you as you move along the journey to growing a great business

Source: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/203046> (Adapted)

Key tips for start-up business owners

<p>Clear Vision Have a clear Vision about what you want to create, the product or service you are providing and how you will grow the business. You may not know it all at the beginning, but have some direction about where you want to go.</p>
<p>Do your homework Are others doing what you want to? How do they do it? What tips and strategies can you learn from them?</p>
<p>Have a clear business plan What will you do? How will you do it? Who are your customers? How will you reach them? What is your unique selling proposition? What do you do better than your competitors?</p>
<p>Marketing - What is your product, your packaging, position and promotion?</p>
<p>Where will your business be? A shop? Online? A resort?</p>
<p>Do the legal things Register your business name, register for taxes, understand your responsibilities as an employer (if you want to employ people) and obtain the relevant business licenses you need.</p>
<p>Watch your cash flow. It's like your life-line. The blood to your Organisational heart. Without it, nothing pumps.</p>
<p>Choose a capable team to work with you as you grow. Even if you are flying solo at first, choose a reliable printing supplier of your stationery, for example. As a small company you cannot afford for anybody not to pull their weight.</p>
<p>Be passionate and energetic in everything you do. You know your business best so you better get excited about it. Both inside and outside of the Organisation.</p>

5 Key Financial Terms for Start-Ups

- ✓ **A lead.** The number of people who have contacted you, or you have contacted, over the last year
- ✓ **The Average Dollar Sale:** The average dollar amount for every sale over the last year. Depending on the industry, this amount can be vastly different. For example, in a retail shop it could be \$50 whilst for a car dealership it could be \$5000.
- ✓ **The Conversion Rate:** The percentage of people who purchase from you. For example, if 10 people come and look at the cars you are selling and 3 purchase a car from you, the conversion rate is 3 out of 10 - 30% for that day.
- ✓ **The Average Number of Transactions:** The number of purchases (transactions) the average customer will make with you over the year. It will vary depending on the industry.
- ✓ **The Profit Margin:** How much profit you make in every sale. If you sell an item for \$100 but it cost you \$75 to make and market, then you have made \$25 profit – a profit margin of 25%.

Source: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/203046> (Adapted)

iconic Rosie Holidays

How a successful Start-Up has become a National Icon! The Rosie Holidays Story - From a small seed has come a large tree in Tourism!

Started in 1974 by Rosie Gockhai and husband Roy Whitton, Rosie Holidays has become an iconic organisation in the tourism industry, both within Fiji and internationally.

It has claimed various national awards (such as the 2015 Westpac Prime Ministers Exporter of the Year Award), owns various resorts, employs more than 600 people and has offices in seven different countries – Italy, London, Beijing, Mumbai, Los Angeles, New Zealand and Australia.

Like every organisation, Rosie Holidays started off as an idea. Humble beginnings. Big ideas. Little money to throw at it. But two passionate entrepreneurs saw a gap in the market and took it.

How it began

After having lost her mum at a tender age, Rosie and her sister were raised by their father, entrepreneur and businessman Tim Gockhai.

He was the first person to manufacture ice-cream in Suva – and it was from he that she inherited her entrepreneurial mindset.

As a young woman, Rose kept hearing about this new amazing thing (tourism) that was developing in Nadi and how it was providing employment and livelihoods for many people.

With her bags packed and optimism in her heart, she made her way to where the thrill was – finding a waitressing role initially and then working for Hunts Pacific – a tour company in Nadi.

In 1964, having met and married the dapper Roy Whitton, a senior Qantas manager, responsible for running the entire Fiji airport operations for the airline, this entrepreneurial couple saw huge opportunities in tourism in Fiji.

They realised nobody was providing holiday transport and packages for people getting off planes in Nadi.



Rosie Gockhai and husband Roy Whitton, started Rosie Holidays in 1974, and the company which has today become an icon in the tourism industry and indeed, Fiji.

In true entrepreneurial fashion, they saw a gap in the market and decided to offer the service themselves.

They identified that when people got off planes few had an itinerary. No tours, no sight-seeing, nothing. Rosie and Roy saw and filled this gap. It was the genesis of the iconic company.

Big Dreams, Little Cash

Rosie Holiday Tours began with two drivers. Like many entrepreneurs with cash flow problems, three weeks later they realised they did not have enough cash to pay them.

But the drivers saw the potential in the small start-up business and offered to work for five days but be paid for three.

Roy, Rosie and the two drivers held on. Resilience is a key factor in being a successful entrepreneur.

They worked hard and never gave up. There were ongoing challenges and mountains to climb.

Employing more people, increasing business, watching cash flow – they experienced all the challenges modern day entrepreneurs do.

Slowly, over time (42 years later) Rosie Holidays has grown to the national icon it is today.

And now, under the wing of son Tony Whitton and his dedicated family of more than 600 people, they are taking the Company to greater

heights. In a recent discussion with Mr Whitton, I asked him what he regards as the most important part of growing a successful business.

He did not hesitate. His people! He explains that Rosie Holidays is a family and his people are critically important, not only to the success of the company, but in the lives of each other and customers. And tourism in Fiji at large.

The rest, as they say, is history. Rosie Holidays continues to be the leading provider of high quality Tourism services in Fiji and the South Pacific.

The company values integrity, team work and a deeply held belief that Tourism improves the social and economic well-being of every Fijian.

For Rosie it was never about the money. She had a passionate belief that tourism promotes understanding and tolerance of other cultures and provides employment for people that helps build lives and the country. Tourism is a force for good.

An iconic Organisation that started from a small seed and developed into an international powerful tourism Company.

Can you do the same? Absolutely. Just follow the advice outlined in this article and take on board what other successful companies, like Rosie, has done.

3 KEY VALUES THAT ROSIE LIVES BY AND SHE HAS EMBEDDED INTO THE COMPANY CULTURE

- Keep your promise (integrity)
- Create a company that is a family
- Tourism is a force for good – it will bring people from all over the world to Fiji

FIJI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

2016 Open Day

Also Celebrating

World Veterinary Day
&
Engineering, Science
& Technology Exhibition

Theme: Invest in your future at FNU

Venues

CEST, Derrick Campus, Samabula

Thu 21/7 and Fri 22/7

Thu: 9am – 6pm | Fri: 8.30am – 7pm

CMNHS, Pasifika Campus, Suva

Thu 21/7 and Fri 22/7

8am - 4pm

CAFF, Koronivia Campus

Thu 21/7 and Fri 22/7

Thu: 8am – 6pm | Fri: 8.30am – 7pm

Naiyaca Campus, Labasa

Thu 21/7 and Fri 22/7

8am - 5pm

Natabua Campus, Lautoka

Thu 21/7 and Fri 22/7

9am - 6pm

Find us on:
facebook.

Apply Online

www.fnu.ac.fj or Call US on (679) 339 4000