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Blueprints for Tomorrow helps business owners plan for the future

Phoenix Business Journal - by [Angela Gonzales](#)

Nate Sachs, a Scottsdale financial adviser, realized long ago what many small-business owners are missing.

They are so caught up in running their day-to-day operations that they haven't spent any time creating blueprints for their future, he said. Instead, they lie awake at night worrying, with no set plan on how to improve the business side of the company.



“Without a blueprint for the future, you don't figure out how to keep key employees from leaving, how to take more time off from work or how to retire,” Sachs said. “As a result, you continue to be the key person in your company, the rainmaker, forever stuck in your business. Without you, the entire business would fall apart.”

He formed *Blueprints for Tomorrow*® in 2007 to help business owner's map out the future of their companies. He licensed the concept to 300 accountants, financial planners, investment advisers and insurance agents nationwide. The growth has come largely through word-of-mouth.

“There's a huge void right now,” he said. “Our timing couldn't have been better. Business owners need us now more than ever.”

Sachs said when times started to get tough during the recession; he tightened his belt and sought more from his staff. He said he's managed to stay financially healthy by staying “liquid” and not investing in anything he can't control. Still, he said, it's been challenging to generate additional revenue to keep the bottom line sound.

Jay Halverson, owner of Financial Blueprint Design LLC in Scottsdale, heard about Sachs' idea and reached out to him. As a result, he signed on to license the blueprint concept and even changed his company name to include the word.

“These business owners, they just get hunkered down working in their businesses, answering phones, putting out proposals, dealing with customer and employee issues,” Halverson said. “They have the best intentions in the world to work on their business and create good plans for themselves in the long term. It's become super complicated for them to work in their business and on their business at the same time.

David Seems, owner of Business Advisors LLC in Denver said he has garnered 30 customers in the 15 months since he licensed the blueprints model.

We've enabled the business owner to wrap their arms around a process to be able to get a piece of what they need done," he said.

One example is rethinking how to compensate key staff to promote employee retention. If bonuses are given every year, that bonus becomes expected and employees begin to think of it as part of their regular income, Seems said.

He recommends that business owners restructure bonus plans with an employee-retention aspect. Instead of giving a \$10,000 bonus every year, they might consider giving \$7,000 instead and putting aside \$3,000 for key employees to access after they have been with the company for 10 years.

"Now, when the headhunter comes to you, you think twice before you walk away," he said. "You're leaving money on the table."

Sachs developed the program based on his experience working with hundreds of business owners over the past 30 years. "We have learned that most business owners, even the most successful, could be only 90 days from bankruptcy," he said. "That's why it's so important to take a little time away from working in your business to work on these blueprints and protect yourself, your family and your company."