

What matters to you?

I want you to do an exercise to help identify those things that really matter to you.



Give yourself ten minutes or so, get a piece of paper and a pen, and take a look at the following list of issues.

Consider each one in turn and ask yourself, 'How important is this issue to me?'

Score it on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is very important.

		Importance	Urgency
1.	Increasing sales to existing customers		
2.	Getting new customers		
3.	Expanding your range of products and services		
4.	Improving quality and service		
5.	Reducing your costs		
6.	Energising your team members		
7.	Having a written strategic plan		
8.	Having a detailed budget		
9.	Getting accurate and regular reporting of budget to actuals		
10.	Knowing and tracking your key performance indicators		
11.	Improving cash management		
12.	Reducing debt		
13.	Knowing how you're doing compared to others in your industry		
14.	Having a succession plan or exit strategy		
15.	Using new technology to improve productivity		
16.	Having everyone follow uniform systems for all processes		
17.	Having greater flexibility with work hours		
18.	Taking more time off		
19.	Funding your retirement		
20.	Protecting your family against your death or disability		
21.	Funding your children's education		
22.	Protecting your business with funded cross-purchase agreements		
23.	Building your personal wealth		

What matters to you?

Continued ..



Once you've worked through the list, look back over your scores and see if any thing should be rated differently. It could be that what you thought was an 8, say, at the outset, is now more realistically a 6, because you've had a chance to consider everything on the list and to see each in context. Make any necessary adjustments.

Now what?

Okay, so whether you looked at importance only, or importance and urgency, you should now be in a position to prioritise your personal objectives and set actions for business improvement.

Put them in order of importance and add some detail – for example, increasing sales to existing customers by £X over three months. That makes an issue into an objective, and you can measure how successful you are at achieving it.

The most profitable small businesses all have one thing in common: the owners' personal objectives are congruent with their business strategies. It's this congruence that gives meaning to action and helps to drive things forward. Because what matters to you personally, really matters to your business.

Making it happen

In this exercise we've established your core personal and business objectives. But here's the thing – without a plan, you're not going to be able to achieve them. It's like setting off on a journey with the satnav locked in the glovebox – or the wrong postcode keyed in.

Need help getting going? You'd be surprised how much we know and what a difference some advice and guidance can make! Get in touch to talk things through – we'll be happy to explain how we can help.

