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7 Myths People Believe About Systems

1. You'll need hundreds of systems to systemize a business.

It's not the number of systems. Oftentimes, less systems is more. If you can find the 20 percent of the systems that deliver 80 percent of the result, you can just focus on that. Even more than that, it's not the systems. It's the culture you're building for your team to be able to solve problems through systems and thinking.

2. The business owner is the only one who can create the systems.

The best person to create a system is the person who actually uses it, which in a proper business is not usually the business owner.

3. Creating systems is time-consuming.

It doesn't require a lot of time to work out a system. If you can get everyone involved in one place and determine who does what and in what order, it can take just a couple of hours.

4. You need to invest in expensive and complex software.

Complexity is actually the enemy of systemization. Systems are about deconstructing a process into its basic, repeatable parts. You can start with the 20 most important processes in your business, using Google Docs. And if you can't manage with that simple a tool, no fancy software will make it any easier.

5. Even if you have systems in place, your team won't follow them.

A bit of structure is actually comforting to people. It gives them boundaries within which they can play, and rules by which they can gauge their performance. It gives order, and eliminates unnecessary guesswork, and provided it's not taken to an extreme, creates an area of security wherein which your team can thrive.

6. Systemization destroys creativity.

True, there can be a connection between too much process and a general lack of excitement. Done right, however, systems free up creativity rather than hamper it. When you have the minutiae of organization and setup out of the way and handled by systems, it gives you the time and space to focus on the creative aspects of a project.

7. You need to systemize like McDonald's.

When people talk about systemizing, the image that straightaway springs to mind is McDonald's, or Amazon, or Google, companies that have been in business forever. The mistake is looking at where they are now and thinking that's where you have to start, when naturally that's not where they began decades ago.

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