

RonaldBlueTrust®

Wisdom for Wealth. *For Life.*®



Determining Purpose

Helping Business Owners Ask the
“Right” Questions

Trust and investment management accounts and services offered by Ronald Blue Trust, Inc. are not insured by the FDIC or any other federal government agency, are not deposits or other obligations of, nor guaranteed by any bank or bank affiliate, and are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of the principal amount invested.

This material is intended for informational purposes only, and it is not intended as specific financial planning, investment, or business consulting advice for any individual or business organization. Ronald Blue Trust and its employees and affiliates do not provide legal or accounting advice or services. Work with your attorney or accounting professional for such services.



Introduction

While some believe that expressions of their faith are limited to church activities, others may hope to use their business as a platform for ministry work. The purpose of this white paper is to help business owners who would like to apply a biblical worldview to their business, in order to build a purpose-driven organization.

Determining a company's purpose is accomplished by developing:

- 1. The Right Mindset** - In Genesis 1:26, God created work. Business is simply organized work; therefore, since God created it, we can look to Him on how to conduct business.
- 2. The Right Perspective** - In Genesis 1:28, God connects work (or business) to furthering His mission on the earth through what is known as the Cultural Mandate, which calls Christians to partner with God in his work. This connection demonstrates that work can be seen as sacred and not secular in nature. This perspective on work is reiterated in Colossians 3:17 and 3:23.
- 3. The Right Purpose** - In Psalm 24:1, David explains that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” With the mindset that God owns everything in the world, including businesses, company owners must understand that they are actually stewards of the business, not the true owner.



Approach to Determining Purpose

A business owner can practically apply this biblical wisdom to their company by: 1) Understanding their company's Kingdom Positioning; 2) Creating corporate clarity; 3) Developing a business generosity plan; 4) Prioritizing business continuity; and 4) Finding personal identity in Christ.

Understanding Kingdom Positioning

A company's Kingdom Positioning identifies the unique characteristics that it has been blessed with that no other business on the planet possesses. Kingdom Positioning is the foundation for determining purpose. Looking to God as the greatest strategist, business owners should focus on the 4 Ps:

1. Purpose - Discerning God's purposes for creating the business
2. Passions - Identifying the passions that God has placed in the hearts of the company's owners and leaders
3. People - Understanding the five talents that every business owner has been given to steward
4. Placement - Prioritizing where God has given the business influence

This process of identifying the 4P's, along with spending time in prayer, is beneficial for all business owners to identify God's generational plan for the business. The insight gained through this process applies to all business owners, not just those nearing retirement. Business owners who have clarity about God's plan for the business can build a business that is positioned to accomplish His purposes.

Creating Corporate Clarity

Applying a Kingdom perspective, leads owners to start with understanding why God inspired them to create the company and how it contributes to a better world. The answer to this important question will focus the business and its employees on a common cause, purpose or reason for being and define how they adorn the gospel through operational excellence (Titus 2:3), fulfill the Great Commandments by building loving relationships (Matthew 22:37-39), and further the Great Commission by sharing the gospel (Matthew 28:19-20). The resulting alignment around a common goal is an integral part of the business's mission statement.

The company's vision builds on the mission statement to identify and communicate what a compelling future state is for the business. This vision should identify the God-sized task the business seeks to accomplish. A well-crafted vision will align the company's leaders and employees to fulfill the business's mission.

The company's core values provide clarity for its owners, leaders and employees regarding what it means to be a part of the team, how the company behaves, and the basis for the company's culture. Additionally, the core values keep the company from losing sight of its mission over time and God's purpose for creating the business.

Developing a Business Generosity Plan

Using the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25 as a guide, business owners can use the skills, gifts and abilities that God has blessed them with to steward:

1. Employee relationships
2. Client relationships
3. Vendor relationships
4. Community influence / Brand influence
5. Company profits

A business generosity plan based on stewardship of the company's five talents cultivates dependable, consistent relationships between a company and its employees, clients, vendors and community. These relationships strengthen a company's operating performance by improving employee morale, increasing customer retention and building reliable supply chains.

Prioritizing Business Continuity

Continuity planning prepares a business to survive expected and unexpected changes (e.g. death, disability, promotion, resignation, etc.) to its leadership teams that can dramatically impact a business's ability to fulfill its purpose. A good continuity plan starts with identifying likely successors for all strategic leadership positions. It then prepares and equips these successors to eventually assume a leadership role through intentional discipleship that builds the company's bench strength. The final step in developing a continuity plan is to determine a transition timeline for the orderly transfer of each leadership roles.

Finding Personal Identity

God thinks generationally which means that He has a purpose in mind for the business that extends beyond the current owner, as well as a purpose in mind for the owner that extends beyond the business. Therefore, it is important to align the owner's thinking with God's thinking by discerning the primary reason God gave the business to the current owner.

- Did He give the business owner the company to provide for their family's current needs?
- Did He give the business owner the company to be stewarded across generations?

In addition to discerning God's generational plan for stewarding the company, business owners need to discern God's plan for the rest of their life. After most business owners transition their business, they still have 20-30 years of their life remaining. Anchoring their identity in Jesus, not the business itself, will help them make a successful transition at the appropriate time.

Conclusion

If a business owner really believes that God is the company's owner and that their work is connected to fulfilling His mission, they should invest the time to determine the company's purpose as an integral step to being a faithful steward (1 Corinthians 4:2). Every business owner will one day stand before their Heavenly Father and provide an accounting for the stewardship of their company. Merely hoping that the company fulfills its purpose is not a strategy; it takes intentionality and time on behalf of the business's owners and leaders – a process that will impact God's Kingdom for eternity.

About the Business Consulting Division and Ronald Blue Trust

Ronald Blue Trust's Business Consulting Division focuses on helping companies determine purpose (developing mission, core values and vision), enhance value (conducting strategic planning and creating an engaging culture), and preserve legacy (preparing transition plans and financial forecasts). Ronald Blue Trust advisors apply biblical wisdom and technical expertise to help clients make wise financial decisions to experience clarity and confidence and leave a lasting legacy.