

Transparency, Trust and Confidentiality

There is no two syllable word, let alone one syllable with more or less that I dictate more to my assistant or write to clients and prospective clients in memos than transparency. I sign far more confidentiality agreements and non disclosure agreements (collectively, "NDA") than all other agreements combined. I sign 8-10 a week or more that are requested of me, and on principle, I request and get more signed when I disclose items from my business ventures. Certainly, there is protection in an NDA when someone breaches the agreement and you become aware and you choose to pursue legal remedies because the value of the non-circumvention outweighs the time, effort and legal costs. On the other hand, as said, I get them signed on principle, as it is nearly impossible to value breach of a non circumvention and the time spent as such would take away from the time I pursue positive pursuits.

What is the purpose of a confidentiality agreement? As a business consultant, it is transparency in disclosing an open book of due diligence to be able to help a client but so many people do not trust regardless of an NDA and they are incapable of transparency or don't seem to comprehend the definition. Usually, clients and prospective clients are seeking to raise capital in a business plan yet they almost always withhold information that all investors would want to know like what they have invested in the business as just one of many examples. Their business plans skirt over details on competitors or their market analysis is very incomplete. Often, their business plan contains hyperbole versus facts on everything from their bios to their historical revenue.

We will not complete business plans that lack transparency as they are not only poor business plans, but they are also not honest. What is honestly has been redefined by many, even good Christians. It isn't just being honest in what you write, state or claim, it is being truly honest when you do not avoid complete disclosure or you make general statements when specific statements are readily available. True honesty is full disclosure and full transparency.

Trust begets trust. When someone trusts you to be transparent and open with them, to share their business details completely as an example, then you trust them. You can then have faith and confidence in them. Conversely, if they hold back, it is easy to wonder what do that have to hide and that fosters mistrust. You want to have faith in others, but that should be faith based on trust developed from honest transparency. Blind faith should be saved for faith in the Lord or other Gods or deities if you are not Christian.

Lastly, but far from least, I want to work on projects and with people that can succeed, and opportunities for success are greatly impaired without trust and transparency. If you have a similar philosophy, contact me at tim@thebusinessplanconsultants.com to schedule a call.