

Working with your Accountant – your most trusted business advisor.

This article was inspired by a conversation I have just had with a client and good friend of mine – Shane Nipperess. Shane is a finance broker and owns Esdale Sinclair & Assoc in Yeppoon, he is an excellent broker and really knows his stuff.

Shane is in a unique position because he gets to see things from both sides of the desk. Firstly he is a GTC client and we work with him "on" his business, but he is an advisor with clients of his own and can then compare how his clients work with their accountants. His observation is that most of his clients only use their accountants to prepare and lodge their tax returns. He finds this surprising because in some cases the clients need help with business management issues and their accountants are often in the best position to help.

With Shane's permission I have outlined below the areas that we have helped him with over the past year.

- MYOB Training for his bookkeeper.
- Helped him prepare his business plan.
- Reviewed his budget.
- Gave him advice on his business structure.
- Tax Planning before 30 June.
- Prepared his tax returns.
- Acted as a sounding board for Shane on a variety of business matters.

Accountants can help their clients in other ways too, these could include;

- Preparing timely management reports (monthly or quarterly) that show you what's happening in your business. (Banks love this)
- Identify your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and measure them regularly.
- Using those reports to improve profitability and cash flow.
- Preparing and updating profit and cash flow forecasts. (Banks are insisting on these a lot now).
- Benchmarking client's businesses against industry averages to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Business Valuations.
- Succession planning.

The list is endless.

So how do enlist your accountant's help in areas other than tax? My suggestion is to organise a meeting with them and tell them what you need. We sometimes find that clients know they need help but are unsure what they need, which is why we use questionnaires to make sure we flush out all the issues.

From there you can put in place a plan for the year with your accountant to help you achieve your goals. Does this cost more than preparing your tax return, yes it does but what are you missing out by not doing so?

If you need help with any of the above areas or would like to talk to us about how we could help your business, call us for a free initial consultation on 49725177.