

March
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E xtension Educator

Cowlitz County

THE ABCs of BUSINESS PROFITABILITY

It's never too early to start thinking about how to make and keep your business profitable. In simple terms, profitability is the amount of sales revenue left over after business costs. Learning to measure profits helps to answer the question, "Are we making enough or going to make enough money to achieve our goals and make this worth our efforts?"

Cowlitz County Fair

Just the Basics

Rave Review

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Camp Luqal Luqal

Cowlitz County Fair

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Frozen Strawberry Smoothies

Baked Mozzarella Sticks

Want to know more about....?

*Beneficial Insects, Spiders,
and Other Mini-Creatures in
Your Garden:*

Who They Are and How to Get
Them to Stay

You can download a full copy for
free at: [Beneficial Insects, Spiders
and Other.pdf](#)

*Red Lily Leaf Beetle
Pest Watch*

During your springtime activities, there are a few different insects that you should be aware of. One of those that will be emerging soon is the red lily leaf beetle. To learn more, you can download the factsheet, [Pest Watch Lily Leaf Beetle.pdf](#)



10 Tips to a Great Plate

Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips. Use the ideas in this list to balance your calories, to choose foods to eat more often, and to cut back on foods to eat less often

Visit us at cowlitz.wsu.edu to learn more

WSU Extension

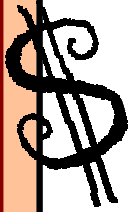
Cowlitz County

360-335-3014

THE ABCs of BUSINESS PROFITABILITY

As a business owner or future entrepreneur, I believe it's never too early to start thinking about how to make and keep your business profitable. In simple terms, profitability is the amount of sales revenue left over after business costs. Learning to measure profits helps to answer the question, "Are we making enough or going to make enough money to achieve our goals and make this worth our efforts?"

You, as a business owner, have control over four major areas that affect profitability:

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- ◆ Price you charge for your products and/or services.
 - ◆ Quantity (or volume) of products and/or services you sell (marketing or operations issue).
 - ◆ Variable costs you directly incur by producing or buying the products and delivering the services you sell (These are called variable costs because they increase or decrease as your sales increase or decrease).
 - ◆ Fixed costs – the expenses you incur whether you make any sales or not (i.e., rent, utilities, insurance etc.).

The strategy you come up with involves taking action to increase or decrease any of the four factors in consideration of its impact on, or the impact from, each of the other factors. In other words, the factors are not independent of one another and should be addressed as a 'system' or package.

Here is an example of learning to measure profitability and make changes. A while back I met with the owners of a service business that had not been profitable since it started two years prior. I prepared a break-even summary for them, which is a simple equation that says how many sales dollars or units sold are necessary to cover fixed and variable costs.

The quick analysis indicated they needed eight sales a day (with an average invoice of \$xx) to break-even. Their gasp of horror was the only thing I heard. "But we can only process three sales a day," they said. "Ah ha," I responded. "There are two things you need to do to improve (in this case become profitable) profitability in your business."

- ◆ Streamline your system, (operations), so you can handle more sales.
- ◆ Raise prices. In this case the detailed documentation involved with each sale is what was providing their value to the customers.

The reason it took them a few years to recognize they weren't profitable was because they were not keeping on top of their bookkeeping. Bookkeeping errors is my fifth addition to the four factors of profitability. SBDC advisors around the state will agree that nearly all of the businesses we advise have errors in their books.



One of the best things a business owner can do is to learn what each financial report means; how to read it and how to set it up to accurately reflect the true activities of the business. Questions I often hear are:

- ♦ “What is the difference between a balance sheet and income statement?”
- ♦ “Why does my business show a profit on the income statement yet we have no cash in the bank?”

As the leader of the business, learning the answers can be one of the most empowering things an entrepreneur can do. When set up correctly, the information in these financial reports can be used to make accurate decisions toward being/becoming and staying a profitable business. As the saying goes, “All roads lead to the numbers.”

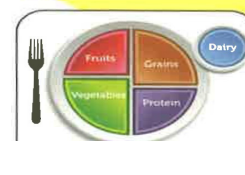
If you have questions like those above and would like personal, confidential help reviewing your business financials including support and guidance with improving your business performance I encourage you to contact your local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Advisor. We are here to help you and your business thrive and prosper.

This article was prepared by Jerry Petrick, MBA, CGBP, SPHR, PMP and Certified Business Advisor with the WSU Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Longview, WA. Jerry provides no-cost, confidential business advisory services by appointment. He can be reached via email jerry.petrick@wsbdc.org



10 Tips to a great plate

Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips. Use the ideas in this list to balance your calories, to choose foods to eat more often, and to cut back on foods to eat less often



- 1 Balance Calories** Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.
- 2 Enjoy Your food But Eat Less** Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories.
- 3 Avoid Oversized Portions** Use a smaller plate, bowl and glass. Portion out foods before you eat
- 4 Foods to Eat More Often** Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and dairy products.
- 5 Make half your plate Fruits and Veggies** Choose red, orange, and dark green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.
- 6 Switch to Fat-free or Low-Fat (1%) Milk** They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.
- 7 Make Half Your Grains, Whole Grains** To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product
- 8 Foods To Eat less Often** Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt.
- 9 Compare Sodium in Foods** Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals.
- 10 Drink Water Instead of Sugary Drinks** Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar and calories in American diets.

[To View the full Document](#)

Frozen Strawberry Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups orange juice, chilled
- 1 pkg. (10.5 oz.) silken tofu, chilled
- 1 banana
- 8 oz. frozen strawberries
- 1 to 2 Tb. honey (optional)

Directions:

1. Put orange juice, silken tofu and banana into blender container and whirl until smooth.
2. Add frozen strawberries and blend well, stopping



<http://clark.wsu.edu/family/recipes/DrinkAndSmoothieRecipes/Food-Sense-Frosty-Strawberry-Smoothie.pdf>

Baked Mozzarella Sticks

Ingredients:

- 1 (12-ounce) package reduced-fat Mozzarella string cheese
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 8 tablespoons panko (Japanese) bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup prepared marinara sauce, warmed (optional)

Directions:

- 1) Position rack in upper third of oven and preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray lightly with cooking spray.

Directions:

- 3) In a small bowl, whisk egg until foamy.
- 4) In small non-stick skillet, mix Italian seasoning with bread crumbs and place over medium heat. Cook and stir bread crumbs until lightly browned, about 5 minutes.
- 5) Dip one piece of string cheese in egg until coated and then into toasted bread crumbs, coating completely. Re-dip the string cheese in egg and again into the bread crumbs, if desired. Place on baking sheet. Repeat with remaining string cheese and place on baking sheet 1 1/2 inches apart. Spray string cheese lightly with cooking spray.
- 6) Bake 5-6 minutes or until heated through. (Cheese may melt slightly and lose shape. Simply press it back into place.)

Suggested serving: Pair with warmed marinara sauce for dipping

- 2) Remove cheese from packaging and set aside.

<http://clark.wsu.edu/family/recipes/SnackRecipes/Food-Sense-Baked-Mozzarella-Sticks.pdf>



Recipes



Calendar of Events

March 9th: 4H—Just the Basics

for boys ages 8 -18 of Cowlitz County and the surrounding area will be held Sunday, March 9, 2014 at St. Joseph Parish Hall, 696 Elm St. in Kalama, from 2p.m. to 4p.m.

This is a unique day of learning the art of interview, personal appearance, public speaking and dressing for success from a team of local experts. The cost is \$10 for the first child and \$5 for each additional child in the same family - parents stay free!



March 15th: 4H—Rave Reviews

for girls age 8 - 18 of Cowlitz County and surrounding area are invited to participate in the 2nd annual day of learning poise, modeling, personal appearance, public speaking, hygiene, and manners from local experts. Pre-register to be entered in the door prize drawing by calling Maxine at 360-673-4479 by March 10, 2014. RAVE Review will be held, Saturday, March 15th from 12 - 4 p.m. at the Kalama Community Building, 126 N 2nd St. in Kalama Washington. The cost is \$10 for the first child and \$5 for each additional child in the same family - parents stay free!



March 31st – April 4th—4H Spring Day Camp

For more information contact Patricia Hamilton at (360) 577-3014 ext. 6
hamiltonp@co.cowlitz.wa.us



April 19th Earth Day

July 7th—11th Camp Luqal Luqal

July 24th—27th—Cowlitz County Fair



Save the Date



Spring Workshops

March 19 Your Doctor Says You have Pre-Diabetes, what Now! Noon
Cowlitz County Administration Building, Room 300, 207 4th Avenue North, Kelso

Debbie Fredricks of WSU Extension will give a overview of pre-diabetes. You will learn the official definition of pre-diabetes and the important steps you can take to either prevent developing Type 2 Diabetes or delay the onset. You will leave the session with a clearer understanding of your diagnosis and some tools to help you on your journey to living a healthier lifestyle. **FREE**

April 5, 6 Home and Garden Show FREE Cowlitz County Fairgrounds

April 5

9:00 a.m. Managing Small Fruits

10:30 a.m. Preparing your Vegetable Garden

12:00 p.m. Tips to control moles

April 6

11:00 a.m. When and what to do to Control Weeds

12:00 Basics of Composting

Provides Voucher to purchase \$10 Composting Bins

April 16 Brown Bag Luncheon—Growing a successful Garden Noon

Cowlitz County Administration Building, Room 300, 207 4th Avenue North, Kelso

WSU Master Gardener Jon Griffin will discuss the tips he uses to produce a bountiful crop of red tomatoes and other vegetables. You will learn how to get your garden off to get an early start and what it takes to maintain a healthy garden to get a great harvest. The workshop is **FREE**.

April 17 Vegetable Plant Start Workshop 6 - 7:00 pm

Fairgrounds- Floral Building

Participants will pre-select their seeds for 18 starts (lettuce, tomato, basil, zinnias, etc.) prior to the workshop. Attendees will receive a 1 - 10"X20" tray with greenhouse dome, 18 - 4" pots, seed starting mix and seeds. **The workshop cost is \$20.00. All participants must pre-register by April 11.**

April 26 Vermi-composting Workshop 10:00 am

Cowlitz County Training Center, 1942 First Avenue in Longview

Master Gardener Tom Welch will discuss the use advantages of vermin-composting. Vermi-compositing uses worms to break down food into compost. Attendees will assemble and take home a worm composting bin that includes the worms. **The workshop cost is \$30.00. All participants must pre-register by April 18.**

April 29 Raised Bed Workshop 6 - 7:00 pm

Cowlitz County Training Center, 1942 First Avenue in Longview

Learn the benefits of using a raised bed to grow a vegetable garden. **Participants will take home a 4 x 8 foot raised bed from the class. The bed can be delivered for Cowlitz County residents.** Learn the benefits of a raised bed and how to manage a garden in a raised bed to lengthen your gardening season. **Cost of the class is \$200.00 per raised bed. You must pre-registrar for a bed by April 25.**

May 10 Master Gardener Plant Sale 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Cowlitz County Fairgrounds— Floral Building

May 14 Rain Barrel Workshop 6 - 7:30 pm

Cowlitz County Fairgrounds— Floral Building

Learn how to construct a rain barrel and the benefits of using one. **Participants will take home a rain barrel.** Find out how to get started, managing a rain barrel and how to construct a system that will make economic and environmental sense. Cost of the class is \$40.00 per barrel. (Additional barrels for sale at \$30.00) **You must pre-registrar by May 10.**

For workshop information, contact Gary Fredricks at
garyf@wsu.edu or 577-3014 Ext 3.

