

# How to succeed in business without getting divorced

By Gleba & Associates

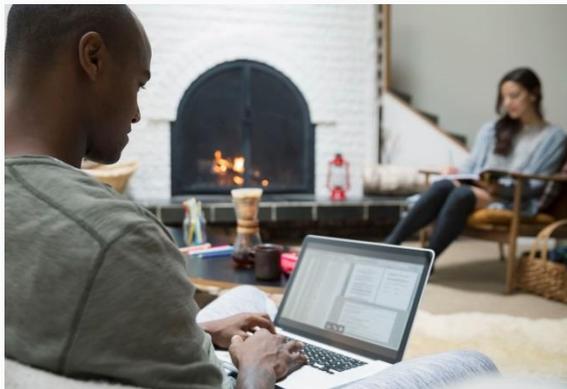
Do you love your small business more than your spouse? Wait, don't answer that!

When you're an entrepreneur, it's easy for your spouse or partner to feel like you care more about your business than you do about them. Running a business can be all-consuming, taking a lot of time, a lot of money and a lot of attention.

Marriages – like small businesses – require work, whether you're about to launch your company, growing your company or dealing with the day-to-day issues of owning a small company.

Fortunately, I've got nine tips on how to help keep both your marriage and your business afloat:

**1. Don't bring your spouse on the roller coaster.** Running a business has gut-wrenching ups and downs. You'll have too much work or too little. You'll land a big new client and feel on top of the world. Then the client will be incredibly difficult and you'll feel like you're in a dark hole. This roller coaster is tough enough for you, so try to spare your partner by not bringing every up-and-down emotional rise and fall home to them.



**2. Get out of their way.** If your kitchen table becomes your office, neither you nor your partner have any place to get away from your business. Get an office outside your home, or carve one out of an extra room or space in your home. It's easier than ever to have an office, thanks to the explosion of co-working spaces, such as WeWork, Regus and Serendipity Labs.

**3. Do things together that have nothing to do with work.** Go for walks, out to dinner, movies, bike rides. Have date nights. And don't talk business: See No. 4.

**4. Be present.** When you're with your partner, be with them. You may be willing to work 24/7, but your partner really resents all those emails you're sending at 11 p.m. or that you're constantly checking your phone. Set work hours, and when you're not at work, turn it off.



**5. Keep family and business finances separate – always.** You may be comfortable seeing a huge check go out of a bank account to buy inventory, but that's going to raise your spouse's blood pressure. It's an imperative business practice to have separate business and personal bank accounts and credit cards. Do this.

**6. Give yourself a paycheck.** Your partner – and you – will feel more secure if you deposit a consistent amount of money each month in the family bank account. Choose a realistic amount you can pay yourself monthly. Keep the rest in your business account. You can later give yourself "bonuses" quarterly, semi-annually or annually if you're having a good year.

**7. Answer the question:** To go or not to go? Business travel can be a great source of tension in a marriage. Your spouse may resent it if you go to an exciting location for a trade show, even if you know you're going to be in an overcrowded convention center the whole time. On the other hand, they may be happy doing tourist things on their own while you work. Too much travel definitely means a lot of extra work at home for your partner. Figure out the right balance of whether to bring your spouse along, leave them at home, or say no to the trip altogether. And try to take a non-business vacation just for the two of you and/or your family.

**8. Don't take on debt without getting their buy-in.** In most cases, small-business lenders will require a personal guarantee on loans, which may have implications for your spouse and your family finances. In community property states (Arizona, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin), spouses may be liable for business debts, but in all states, the amount of debt may affect your credit-worthiness.



**9. Get a business "therapist."** While it's a good idea to bounce off important decisions with your spouse, discussing too many day-to-day issues can cause friction. Instead, find an experienced

business person you can turn to: Hire a consultant, find a business buddy, connect with others in your industry.

Remember, divorce won't just be emotionally difficult, it can also ruin your business. If you get a divorce, your spouse may have ownership in your company, you may have to sell or close your business or you may be in business with your ex. So take steps to keep both your marriage and your business thriving.

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