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HAMILTON BRADSHAW
Investing in people with passion

Don't do everything yourself – delegate and ease the pressure



James Caan

Dear James

As the owner of a SME I have my fingers in a lot of pies, so to speak. How can I make sure I cope and am keeping abreast of everything, both internal and external? I worry about getting overwhelmed.

Jamie

This is obviously an issue for many a business owner, and one of the most important things here is to delegate.

Don't feel you have to do everything on your own – people within your

business are there for a reason. It will not only ease the pressure on you, but motivate the people you are trusting.

The employees at the coal face of your business are essentially the experts. They will know far more about what the latest trends are within your client base. Speak to them regularly and try to grasp what is going on at an operational level.

Also consider external help. This can come in a number of ways, for example, a non-executive director. This would be someone with no attachments to the company which will allow them to properly analyse the business structure and advise you accordingly. It's good to get a

fresh perspective from an external source, and you will be surprised at how much you will learn.

Another option is something I passionately encourage, and that is a mentor. Preferably it will be someone experienced who has been through the same issues as you. It has to be a two-way street though – there is no point in having that sounding board if you are not regularly in contact and completely honest.

When you are near the top of an organisation you can become isolated.

It's easy to become complacent and plenty of chief executives are more than happy to take their foot off the gas. Many times this is done subconsciously but credit to you for recognising that you need to keep up to date with what is happening.

■ *For more tips and advice, download James Caan's free Business Secrets app on iTunes and Android.*