



The Most Overlooked Growth Practice for Business Owners Isn't What You Think. And It's Free.



You spend a lot of time encouraging everyone else. Your customers. Your team. Your family. Even total strangers on social media.

Today, it's your turn.

Before the year gets away from you, give yourself a gift that costs nothing and can pay off all year long: write a letter to yourself to read this time next year.

Not a to-do list. Not a strategic plan. A pep talk.

Think of it as sitting down with the future you, looking them in the eye, and saying, "Here is what mattered. Here is what I dream for you. And here is why you're stronger than you remember."

Here is how to do it in a way that actually supports you as a business owner, not just adds one more thing to feel guilty about.

Step 1: Start With Where You Are Right Now

Before you talk about dreams, honor the reality.

Where are you today in your business? Be honest and specific. You might write about:

- Revenue or customer growth
- New services you launched
- Systems you finally put in place
- Tough seasons you walked through or goals that remained in the either because they never materialized

You do not have to dress it up to make it sound impressive. This letter is not marketing copy. Your competition won't read it. It is a snapshot.

You might write something like:

“Right now, I am tired but hopeful. We got through a difficult quarter, but we also retained our best customers and improved our online reviews. I am nervous about cash flow and still figuring out staffing, but I can see how far we have come from a year ago.”

This gives your future self context. A year from now, you will likely forget what this moment really felt like. The letter will remind you that you were doing your best with what you had.

Step 2: Name What You're Proud Of

Business owners are experts at moving the goalposts. You reach one milestone and immediately focus on the next thing you haven't done.

Slow down here. List what you are proud of this year.

This might include:

- A customer you went above and beyond for
- A risk you took, even if it did not turn out perfectly
- A boundary you set to protect your time or health
- A partnership you formed
- A new skill you learned

If this feels uncomfortable, pretend you are writing about a friend. How would you describe what they achieved?

Your future self will need this reminder. There will be days next year when you will wonder if you are making progress at all. Reading your own words about what you already accomplished can be powerful proof you are capable, resilient, and resourceful.

Step 3: Talk About The Hard Things

A good pep talk does not skip the hard parts. It acknowledges them and then points forward.

In your letter, gently name your current challenges. Staffing, supply chain, energy, pricing, burnout, uncertainty, or simply the pressure of wearing every hat at once.

Then, write to your future self with compassion:

“If you are reading this and still facing some of these same issues, that does not mean you have failed. It means these are real, complex challenges. You are allowed to grow at a human pace.”

You are not predicting disaster. You are promising yourself grace. That is fuel, not fluff.

Step 4: Cast A Vision For Who You're Becoming

Now shift from where you are to where you want to be.

Think about this time next year. What would you love to be true about:

- How you show up as a leader?
- How your business feels day to day?
- How much time you have for your life outside of work?
- The kind of clients or customers you attract?
- The way your business contributes to your community?

Write in the present tense, as if it is already happening:

“You are more confident delegating. The business is less chaotic and more goal-driven. You have a clearer sense of which opportunities to say yes to and which to politely decline.”

This is not magical thinking. It is a quiet nudge to your brain: *this is the direction we are headed.*

Step 5: Give Yourself Instructions For Tough Days

Every business has days that make you question everything. Use your letter to speak to that future version of you.

You might include:

- A reminder of why you started
- A story of a customer you helped
- A phrase that always steadies you
- Permission to rest without guilt

For example:

“When you feel like quitting, remember the customer who said, ‘You made my day.’ Remember that the work you do matters here, in this town, with these people. Take a day off if you need it. The world can wait 24 hours.”

Future you will be grateful you took the time to write that.

Step 6: Seal It And Set A Reminder

When you are done, put the letter somewhere safe. If you write it by hand, seal it in an envelope and label it: “Open December 2026.” If you type it, save the file with a clear name and set a calendar reminder to open it.

If six months from now, you're having a tough day and need a pep talk, open it then. But write yourself another one.

Why This Matters For Your Business

Running a small business is demanding. You are constantly pushed to plan for the future: next quarter, next campaign, next season. It is easy to lose sight of the person at the center of it all—you.

Writing this letter is a simple practice that:

- Grounds you in what you have already accomplished
- Clarifies what you want more of (and less of)
- Reconnects you to your “why” when things get noisy
- Offers your future self encouragement from the one person who truly understands

Your business is part of the fabric of the community. When you are strengthened, focused, and supported, everyone benefits.

So, sometime this week, give yourself 20-30 quiet minutes. Pour a cup of something warm. Put your phone in another room. And write the pep talk you will be glad to read a year from now.

Your future self is already cheering for you. This letter is your chance to cheer back.

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