

Be prepared checklist from SBM #107- Beware of the Whale

If we are honest with ourselves, the excitement of landing the whale, blinds us to the structural weaknesses in our company. In most cases we assume we can deal with problems once we land the client. Unfortunately, many of these issues should be dealt with beforehand.

So, here is a list of questions you need to consider before making the pitch

1. Staffing

Will you need to increase your staff to execute the requirements for this new client?

Do the new staffing requirements require technical skills that can't be taught on the job? If so, where are you going to find this people? How long will that take?

Is the current job market tight? If so, have you factored in paying higher wages for new hires?

How do higher wages for new hires impact the wages for existing employees? Inequity here could cause serious dissention.

2. Management

If hiring new team members, do you have the necessary supervisory in place to train, coach and oversee?

3. Space

What physical space will you need for new employees?

Will they work from home? Hybrid? Full time in the office?

Do you require new production or warehousing space? If so, where? How much will it cost? What are the terms of the lease? Do they align with the client commitment?

4. Equipment Needs

Do you require to equip new staff with all the office fixing? Laptops, printers, desks, cell phone, etc.

Do you need to acquire additional equipment? Is it available when you need it?

5. Finances

How do you plan to pay for all these new expenses? Can your cashflow handle these new expenses? If not, can you lease or get a loan?

What many forget when onboarding a new client, you need to front all these expenses before ever seeing any revenue. You may have a cash cushion to cover these expenses but depleting that safety net can leave you dangerously exposed.

6. Protection

What are you doing to protect your business, should a large client leave? Do you have a plan B?