

"One of Australia's 25 most intriguing"

## Sample Interview Questions & Answers

You talk about 10 Hidden Barriers to Success that are found in every business. How can someone spot them?

**Ainslie:**

It's usually really simple to spot the most problematic one or two barriers; it's admitting the problem that is often the big challenge here. The way you identify the biggest problem is for an owner or manager to honestly ask themselves "What is the huge frustration for me that I think about every day when I walk in the office; that sometimes interrupts my sleep; and I'm somehow mentally blocked from addressing?" Most often this first barrier is the **Wrong Person in a Key Position**; perhaps your brother-in-law as head of marketing when he's really an operations guy. He's unhappy because he's not successful no matter how hard he tries; you're unhappy because your marketing isn't working; and there is strain in your family life. But, and here's the big thing, you perceive it as an insurmountable problem because none of this turbulence would measure up to the grief you would get for firing your brother-in-law. You can see the challenge – wrong person, wrong job, and for whatever reason you are reluctant to make a necessary change.

What is **Another Hidden Barrier** that a business owner can find and eliminate?

**Ainslie:**

One barrier really stands out and I think all business owners can identify with this; it's when a **Key Employee** or a key supplier is **Holding You Hostage**. For most of my clients it meets my "What frustrates you most when you walk into the office?" test. We've all seen the key employee who is no longer a team player and makes unreasonable demands for special perks, refuses to show up at office meetings...that sort of thing. They think you have no leverage over them and you always feel like you're under some sort of threat, even if it is subtle.

The same thing applies for a key supplier who believes, for whatever reason, that you are completely dependant upon him. Close long-term relationships with suppliers are very valuable but sometimes they can sour when a key supplier not only starts taking your business for granted but starts pushing for better terms while giving less service. The test for the problematic key employee or supplier is "Do you feel that you're under some sort of subtle threat?" If yes, there's a big barrier to success.

What can you do in a **Wrong Person - Wrong Position** or **Key Employee - Key Supplier** holding the business hostage situation?

**Ainslie:**

It's a **Simple Answer**: in the first situation either put the brother-in-law in a position suited to his abilities or send him on his way. Those are the only two choices and anything else holds your business back. For the problem employee or supplier, set yourself up with a backup position and THEN voice your concerns. I've seen many situations where the employee or supplier improve overnight, especially when they know that you have a backup plan. Of course, wisdom dictates you keep the backup around in case you need it in the future.

To arrange an interview with Ainslie Waldron mba [maggie@platformstrategy.com](mailto:maggie@platformstrategy.com)

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potential in six months. Why wait?"

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