Following is a summary of what a manager should do to avoid operation competitor.

**1. Protecting intellectual property (IP)**

Having the law on your side is handy when it comes to stopping any imitators. Your ‘IP’ includes the parts of your business that you can legally protect and take action if anyone breaches your rights.

This includes:

1. Copyright
2. Patents
3. Designs
4. Trademarks
5. Trade secrets
6. Company and domain names.

**2. Protecting intellectual assets (IA)**

An intellectual asset is a competitive advantage that usually can’t be legally protected, such as your business contacts, networks, your business know-how, and knowledge of what customers want.

In these cases, you can still build a barrier by:

1. Keep your information secret.
2. Have staff sign confidentiality agreements.
3. Document internal processes with key employees only.
4. Share information (like prices) only to qualified leads.
5. Limit what you place online and in the public arena.

**3. Maintaining price advantage**

If one of your key advantages is being able to source inventory or materials cheaper than competitors (allowing you a higher than average margin or to price lower while still making a decent profit), protect it by:

1. Lock in exclusivity of supply with a legal contract.
2. Build cash reserves to buy in bulk for volume discounts.
3. Document your systems or processes that give you a cost advantage.
4. Keep fixed costs low (own your location, contract out when busy etc.).

**4. Make it harder for other businesses to compete in market**

Look to deter new entrants by emphasizing the barriers to enter your market, or anything that makes another business owner think it’s ‘too hard’ to compete directly. An established brand in the minds of customers is one way.

To prevent new businesses entering your market, try:

1. Be first to market with unique products or services.
2. Set up an exclusive service area you can defend legally.
3. Have a supplier agree to only supply your business.
4. Be the only approved vendor.
5. Develop partnerships within your industry.
6. Build an online following in social media.
7. Establish top search rankings.
8. Anything which makes someone think twice before setting up outside your business is useful.

**5. Being better than competitors**.

Having an amazing business with happy customers that refer business is the ultimate way to protect your competitive advantage, but even then, doesn’t take anything for granted. Some of things to consider are:

1. Auditing the quality of his/ her products or services to check is better than the competition.
2. Making sure his/her products last longer than competition.
3. Having superior after-sales service.
4. Ensuring he/she is the most reliable.
5. Finding out what makes him/her unique and put steps in place to make sure the customer experience is consistent every time.

**6. Being the industry expert**

If a manger can prove to know more than anyone about the industry, it’s a great advantage and hard to copy. A manager can:

1. Post his/her thoughts in social media,
2. Speak at well-known events,
3. Run webinars or podcasts with other industry experts,
4. Emphasize your qualifications
5. Publicize any testimonials from high profile people or businesses.

At the end of the day, if you’re successful and making a profit then you is doing something right. Find out what that ‘something’ is and plan to protect it for as long as you can.