

How Small Business Owners can Motivate Themselves!

We ask these vital questions in the *9 Lies*: Why did you go into your business to begin with? What was the original dream?

Independence? Freedom? Wealth? Lots of vacation time? An exciting adventure and a sense of winning at life?

Go back to before you started and re-create that dream. List all the benefits you imagined there would be. List the benefits to yourself and to all the people close to you. Be precise about the benefits of your business succeeding in a big way. Don't hide that list or repress that dream, because it will be the source of your "Want to." It will get you up in the morning and lift your thinking all day. Dreams have a function. They are there to start you up!

And once you get clear on that dream, speak that vision every day. Communicate it loud and clear. To your family. To your customers and to your team. (Because this is the sad truth: Without creating a vision for my team, my team will live according to its problems.)

Without goals (the subsets of vision) my team will just fight fires, work through emotional upsets, and worry about the dysfunctional behavior of other people. I, myself, as their leader, will have attracted a problem-based existence. Soon I will only end up doing what I *feel* like doing, which will sell me short and draw on the smallest of my own brain's resources.

But when we humans begin to *create*, we use more of the brain. We rise up to our highest functioning as humans. So it's my primary job as a

motivator to create a vision of who I want to be and then live into that picture as if it were already happening in this very moment.

And it has to be a vision I can talk about every day. It can't be a framed statement on the wall that no one can relate to after some company retreat is over. It is not surprising that one of the biggest complaints about leaders that show up on employee surveys is, "He had no idea where we were headed. He had no vision of our future that he could tell us about."

The great Green Bay Packer football coach Vince Lombardi was once asked why his world championship team, which had so many multi-talented players, ran such a simple set of plays.

"It's hard to be aggressive when you're confused," he said.

One of the benefits of creatively planning your life is that it allows you to simplify. You can weed out, delegate and eliminate all activities that don't contribute to your projected goals, dreams and vision.

And once you can visualize your dream business, the trick is to keep your motivation going. To deliberately feed your spirit with the optimistic ideas you want to live by. Any time a thought or sentence or paragraph inspires you or opens up your thinking, you need to capture it, like a butterfly in a net, and later release it into your own field of consciousness.

For me, discovering an exciting idea in a book or website is like a true peak experience. It makes the world bright and incomprehensible. I get that tingle in my spine. I get that "Oh, yes!" feeling. Why am I this lucky? And the more I deliberately fill my mind with the words and phrases that originally stirred the peak experience, the easier it is to remember that life is good and my business is going to soar.

During my talks on self-motivation, one of the questions I'm asked most often is, "How do I keep this going?" People say, "I love what I've learned today, but I've often gone to seminars that got me motivated and then a few days later I was back to my old pessimistic self, doing exactly what I used to do."

If I were in the mood to be blunt, I would answer the question this way: Why, if you love what you've learned about self-motivation, would you ask *me*

how to keep it going in your life? The person in this room best-equipped to answer your question is *you*. So I'll ask you, "How will you keep this going in your life?" I bet you could give me 10 ways you could do it. And I bet that if self-motivation were a foreign language you had to learn you would set aside a certain amount of time each day to review it, to read it out loud, and to make certain you learned it. I bet you'd buy tapes or CDs for your car and even arrange small study groups. So the real question is this: Is mastering the art of motivation as important as learning another language?

Even a single phrase, placed prominently in a home or office, can have a huge impact on your life. In Arnold Schwarzenegger's childhood home in a poor town in Austria, his father framed and hung the simple words, "Joy Through Strength." It's not hard to see what effect that idea had on Arnold's life.

Are you willing to remind yourself to treat yourself to your own best thoughts? Are you willing to set visual traps and ambushes, so you'll always see words and thoughts you know you want to remember? Self-motivation is an inner game. And you are in charge of it. Your small business will be successful to the degree that you are enthused by it! Like Emerson said, "Nothing great was ever created without enthusiasm."