



## Four Steps from Apathy to Accomplishment



**There are many definitions for apathy, but generally it is a state of indifference and the feelings of powerlessness to change.** For small business owners, this state of apathy kills a small business in record time.

**The journey to apathy often comes out of a constant struggle for clarity of direction.** One day you find yourself at a crossroads because you feel that you've "tried everything" and "nothing" seems to be working! You start that internal conversation, "maybe I'm not meant to have the same lifestyle I did before." "Maybe I'm not as good as I think I am." "Are people really going to pay for that?" These self-limiting conversations leave the entrepreneur **stuck more than a horse in a mud pit**. (And if you've ever seen a horse in a mud pit, you know what I'm talking about.)

**One thing is certain, each small business owner has a present and a future.** Everything in between is the process. So even though your present situation may not be where you want it to be, there's good news. There's a way out of the stuck place of apathy and you can change that feeling of "I don't care anymore."

**A small business owner can move from apathy to accomplishment by taking four simple steps:**

### 1. Embrace Powerful Choices

As mentioned in [Me, Myself, and Why? The Secrets to Navigating Change](#), "We make choices every day about what will inspire us and what we will allow to get us down. We have a choice to move ahead or allow ourselves to stay stuck in a rut." I have noticed that effective business owners make good choices, and their choices are enhanced by their level of awareness about themselves. Awareness pushes a small business owner beyond any self-limiting comfort zones. The most powerful is the choice of whether or not you will choose to have PAAR (power, accountability, authority and responsibility) over the results you intend to achieve and the life you want to lead.

If you don't think you have a choice, (and think you lack personal power to change your circumstances) your self-limiting actions will follow. Successful entrepreneurs choose and use their personal PAAR to move beyond any feelings of powerlessness or apathy.

### 2. Create Your Vision

The most successful leaders even in the most desperate times created a vision for the future. They spoke that vision and engendered that vision in others. This creative power of vision overcomes apathy when you can imagine an ideal future. When you start imagining your ideal future, you can use your imagination to build on your innate strengths and motivations



that overcome often irrational fears. If it were not for my own vision, I might have quit in just my first two years of business. I've observed that small business owners who have not committed to a vision, burnout, quit, or live with unsatisfying outcomes.

**Overcome apathy by creating and sharing your own vision statement**, identifying solid goals, and writing down your list of those things you intend to attract into your life.

### **3. Recognize the Power of Positive Thought**

Have you ever known someone who sapped your energy? Conversely, have you known someone was an energizer and made you feel good when you were around them? Chances are, the energizer had a positive outlook and was often focused on the strengths of others or made it a point to help others. But if you're in apathy, you're likely focused on yourself and your own problems.

**When you shift to positive thought, several things will happen:**

- **It Boosts your Self Confidence.** Self-confidence makes doing business with you attractive.
- **You Attract Your Ideal.** When you're focused on what it is you do intend to attract, you'll invite more of it into your life and your business.
- **You Attract More Business.** When you focus on the strengths of others, helping others, and display a positive self-image, it counterbalances any force of apathy. People enjoy being around people who generate creative ideas, not only for themselves, but for others around them. You become a trusted source and people send others they know to you.

### **4. Choose Courage**

To offset apathy, choose courage even in the face of adversity. David Byrd, author of *The Tipping Point*, writes that the most important type of courage is emotional courage. "Emotional courage is your personal, conditioned capacity to respond with positive actions rather than negative beliefs to all life events." For many people, their positions have been downsized and they are choosing to start new businesses. While this career shift may be emotionally difficult for some people, this choice of responding with positive actions rather than negative beliefs about self or the future, is part of developing that emotional courage.

**Byrd suggests exercising your emotional courage by:**

- **Believing in Your Potential** – Make a list of your top strengths and build on them.



- **Develop a Healthy Attitude Toward Mistakes, Failures, and Negative Outcomes** – Take imperfect action. The more you take, the more you build up your capacity. “...start with a healthy attitude toward all life events, the good and the bad,” states Byrd.
- **Break out of your Negative Past Conditioning by Exercising your Power of Choice** - Consciously choose to act courageously.
- **Redesign your Attitudes by Displacement** - The fear of failure causes many small business owners to blame or procrastinate then rationalize those excuses. After all, you can’t lose a game you never play. So entrepreneurs remove themselves from ever playing. To develop emotional courage, shift your rationalization. Instead of talking yourself out of not playing next time, redesign your attitude, and, in its place, define what you can do, rather than rationalizing what you can’t do.

**The next time you feel the weight of apathy enveloping you, cancel it.** Choose to believe that you have the power to let go of what weighs you down, the power to change your reality and the power to be: be all of who you were designed to be.

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