



How to Make Big Changes in Your Small Business

For years, I've noticed that when my clients would start making big changes to their businesses and lives, there were times when they wanted to go back to where it was comfortable even though they started to create significant momentum and weren't all that happy in that other place. Just as they started making changes, they would go back to what was known (and comfortable) and, by not moving ahead, were actually eliminating growth opportunities. That's EGO for short. This EGO gets in the way of making and sustaining a big change.



But some entrepreneurs take the same approach to making changes to their business like a New Year's Resolution. You've been there on New Year's Day as you start reading the latest books about food and diets. You get pumped up about your new exercise routine. About one day later, you start to complain about how your muscles hurt. A week later, you justify eating that pint of Premium Hot-Fudge-and-Mocha-Mocha-Double-Dutch-Supreme Chocolate Chip Ice Cream and promise to exercise it off. The next thing you know, you're in the store blaming the jean company for putting the wrong size tag on the jeans you can't zip up.

Ego gets in the way, you start looking at external things, make excuses, and try to make yourself feel better. These are some things I've heard from clients who were making really big changes to their business and started to go back to what was:

"It wasn't so bad where I was."

"I don't think I have what it takes."

"It's too difficult."

"It's not worth it."

"I'll never do it!"

So here's this ego wanting you to stay small. It distorts reality and creates one that fits what it wants, justifying your self-limiting actions.

But successful entrepreneurs recognize that when they start that "stinkin' thinkin'" or start blaming or criticizing external issues (like the economy), they turn to their inner entrepreneur and set their inner entrepreneur straight.

As you learn new things and EGO starts getting in the way of making a positive change, consider these tips to keep yourself moving ahead:

Get Clear. Take the new information you've learned and get really clear on your goals. Create a realistic plan and tackle a new step each month. You can focus more and won't be getting into the vicious cycle of trying to do everything all at once then getting disappointed because you haven't finished anything. Better yet, surround yourself with a team to help you make your vision a reality. Even if you get assistance for just 1 hour a week, you'll find yourself making greater strides than if you tried to do it alone.

Remember, It's A Process. When you've committed to taking your business to a new level, there will be new processes and thought patterns you need to adopt. For a time it may feel like you're swimming upstream in mud. Keep swimming anyway! As you put things in place, before you know it, you'll start noticing you're swimming with the current and there's a much better flow.

Don't Try to Achieve Perfection the First Time. As you learn new things, allow yourself to implement something that is less than perfect with the intention of improving it over time. By taking this approach, you'll find yourself getting used to taking risks and will accomplish more in no time.

Set Yourself Up to Succeed. Set attainable objectives and add new ones as you complete each one. This way, you gradually work your way over to the results you want to achieve and the life you want to lead.

Get Into A Groove. Pay attention to the triggers that keep you in old patterns and start new ones. If you consistently beat yourself up by not finishing all of your tasks, get into the habit of acknowledging all of those things you have achieved each day.

Above all, remember that you have a choice every day about what will inspire you and what you will allow to get you down. A cup of tenacity, a quart of faith, and a generous heaping spoonful of gratitude is a great recipe for sustaining big changes for your small business. Of course, the Hot-Fudge-and-Mocha-Mocha-Double-Dutch-Supreme Chocolate Chip Ice Cream sounds good, too! Oh yeah, and don't forget to have a sense of humor! Life will always bring something to laugh about.