

Being in business can seem like a long lonely journey... but does it have to be?

by David Cohen

Here are some sure fire success tips for you to take to your business.

Tip One:

It's been about 6 years this month since I started my business. It came as a result of a job loss...and it started from nothing. I lost my job on April 19th 2002. I didn't have one client, few contacts and no money coming in. That's a lonely feeling...sometimes sinking. So what kept me going you might ask? Go ahead...ask...what kept you going?

As I reflect on life back then what kept me going was a burning desire to succeed. I remember one day about 2 months into launching my new venture and working for a private client as her coach, actually walking around Toronto by foot, making a list of contacts for her...you see she wanted to market a "Singles" event and we suggested she market to local Toronto Psychotherapists. The logic there is that they would promote her event to their clients seeking to be in relationship. So I walked around to all the medical buildings in downtown Toronto and got names, contacts and made sure I got an accurate contact list to her. I wanted to be my word...

Take the long Canada Day weekend 6 years ago when I got a training contract from a client too...my computer "Blue Screened" on me on the Friday of the Canada Day long weekend...I had a week of sessions to do on the Tuesday. I was teaching a group of Women entrepreneurs at Rexdale Microskills and I had to be ready, I had to be prepared and give them my best. But I lost all my material...never to be retrieved again. I recall taking the TTC (I had no car then) at 7:30 am on Canada Day to my sisters house to work there all day long preparing my seminars for the client. I thought to myself, "I am either insane to do this on a holiday (and the day was gorgeous out too) or I am committed to my success and my clients success)...I smiled to myself as I rode the TTC and pondered which of the two I was...and I found contentment in knowing I was a bit of both...

We did a bang up job that week...the material I created from scratch was good and the women that attended that week of my marketing workshops got a lot out of it. ***So...as I look at the lonely road of being in business I believe it starts with having a burning desire to succeed. Sometimes you have to go to where no one else will.***

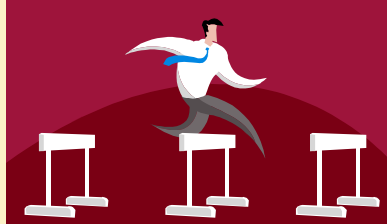
Tip Two:

The other aspect of starting a business is having a no quit attitude even when others say you're wrong. As I started my consulting business 6 years ago, I developed my practice through another organization, the owner of that consulting group wanted me to give up doing the radio show that I was getting off the ground then too. My gut said "no way"!!! Why you ask? Go ahead, ask me why? Well...the reason I didn't give up on

doing the radio show was because I worked too hard to get it going. I wasn't about to walk away from something that brought so much joy...no way...even though my work with this consulting group may have depended on it...I felt in my heart of hearts that the radio show was a joy and after putting that energy and sweat equity into it...I wasn't walking away that easily. So...success tip number 2...is to have a **No quit attitude no matter what they say about you.**

Tip Three:

My next success tip is to go around obstacles. If you focus on the obstacle you'll only see it in front of you. But if you see beyond the obstacles and look beyond it you will only see opportunity and options you never knew existed. So you ask, why see beyond the obstacles in your way? Go ahead...ask me...Why see beyond the obstacles in your way? Well, you will remain painfully stuck if you don't. Didn't Einstein once say..."The definition of craziness is doing things the same



way, over and over and expecting a different result". My friends, you have to look at options each time an obstacle comes to you. I remember doing the show in the first year...and I didn't have or own a car. I had just been working with a non-profit agency and the pay there wasn't enough for me to have a car. I loved the work, it was a solid job, but it didn't afford me the chance to own a car. So...get this...I live in North York and did the show in Oshawa on Saturday mornings back then...how on earth do you get to Oshawa for 8:30 am every Saturday morning? One option I ruled out was taking the Go Bus...the station was too out of the way for that to have happen. So...I thought...mmm...my guests. They have cars, they can pick me up in exchange for being on the show with me. It worked...for the first 9 weeks of doing that show...I got a ride with my guests...So...success tip number 3 is...**look at options not obstacles.**

One way around obstacles is to play "What if". Look at a problem and ask yourself..."What if we could change it...what would that look like? What if is a great question to ask when you're stuck.

Tip Four:

Leverage your contacts...this is so key to success I can't even begin to tell you. I remember my early days in my business and I would work my own contacts first...getting them on board, or asking for referrals from people I knew. I had a connection with them and they would gladly refer me. So if your business is slow right now, I challenge you to call on people you know and ask them who they think might be a good contact for you or who would love and benefit from what you do? You'd be surprised what might happen from asking those you know...you just might get some awesome leads.

If you figure that you know at least 50 people and if you asked each one of them who they know that might be a good contact for you in your business venture...you will soon find that they know at least 2-3 people (on average each)...that means you will end up with about 100-150 warm prospects. **Success tip number 4 is to leverage your contacts and networks...**Why you ask? Go ahead ask me...The reason is it's better to

ask those you know then go cold to someone you've never met. It's easier on your psyche when you make that first call.

Tip Five:

That brings me to my next success tip. Believe...yup...sound kinda hocus pocus right? He's talking about G-d here right? Yup...I am. When I was cold calling potential advertisers for the show 6 years ago...I called on 130 of them. 125 said no to me. If I didn't believe in myself and in G-d...I would have surely stopped. Something kept me going...desire, hunger, belief. Belief is the trump card my friends...it really is. If you ain't "walking the talk" you're going to fall over when the waves of negativity come at you. **Believe. Believe. Believe.**

Still don't believe me? Well when I was cold calling a bunch of potential advertisers to get the radio show going 6 years ago...I remember getting rejected by a prospect...and they were rather rude in doing so too. I looked up to the heavens and yelled at G-d...and had a temper tantrum right in my own home office...I said to G-d, "Look buddy, I need your help here...if you want me to live my dreams and do good work...I need some clients and now"! (ed.note: I wasn't too demanding eh)?

Well...the next client I called on was the Dunbarton Fairport United Church, Reverend Glenn Brown...why a church you ask? Go ahead...ask why... Well Reverend Brown ran a business organization out of the Church called, "The Ethics Group" they did ethics training and their focus was Business-to-business. So after my temper tantrum and yelling to G-d...I called the Reverend...a man of G-d...and get this...he became a client...I laugh at this because at one minute I am yelling at G-d and the next I am doing business with him/her too...through the Dunbarton Fairport United Church...Go figure...Do you believe now? **The next success tip is to have a belief...be it in what you're doing and in G-d or a higher power.**

Tip Six:

Another success tip is to ask. Never stop asking for business, for help...keep asking. I have developed an attitude now that if I don't ask, I won't get. I don't care if they say no. The reason we don't ask, is based in our fear of rejection. But understand that when someone says no...it's not personal...it just means no. You put meaning into that word...trust me you do. I remember hearing "no" when I was cold calling 6 years ago...getting my show up off the ground and getting my consulting business going...and I heard my mom in my head when I heard "NO" from a client...oh man...she came in loud and clear and gave me this bit of career advice..."David...see...I told you radio wasn't meant for you". That voice in my head was my own inner critic...trying to trip me up...but I wasn't buying...I kept going...remembering that no...means no. Or at the very least when you hear someone say no to you...it's really about them not knowing enough about you for them to say "Yes".

So your job as a good little marketer is to get permission to continue to market and educate them on the benefits of what you do. Got it? No means no...or I don't know enough about you just in this moment to say yes to hire or retain your services...

The 6th tip is ***to ASK no matter what. If you don't ask you don't get. Plain and simple.***

Tip Seven:

My next success tip is to have balance. Hey, I know being in business can get away on you. There's so much to do in the early days...but whatever you do...make sure you schedule time for the other aspects in your life that are totally important. Family, health, your friends.



Just keep the schedule clear from your prime time working time. For me...from 8 am until 5 pm...I work...after or before I leave time for my workouts at the gym...and yes I go 3 times a week...make time for your family...or you will be living a lonely life if you ignore them in the equation and also make room for social time too...

Some ways to plan for balance include, scheduling things into your planner, chunk things down...a big project can be accomplished in bite sized pieces and also negotiate for time with your clients...often a deadline has some room to move. So success tip 7 is...***have balance...***

Tip Eight:

Lastly, look at your clients or potential clients not as sales...but as new and awesome people to have a great relationship with. Can you imagine if the service we got at a store...was based in this idea? That if the girl at the check out counter looked at all the customers as friends...as people to have a relationship with?

Look to build relationships...nurture your clients, add value, dine out with them once in a while, get to know them more personally and you will soon see that you have loyal clients referring business to you...

So my last tip is to build relationships with your prospects and customers...like you're own marriage...relationships take time...but can be so sweet.

Until the next issue I wish you all the success and joy that the season brings.

David Cohen is a business coach/facilitator and also hosts a weekly radio show for small business owners. The show airs in a location just east of Toronto, Canada.

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