

EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

EPISODE 176: HABITS MAKE THE BUSINESS

If you read any business book, it all comes down to the same things: your business is built from your beliefs, which affect your actions, and the most important of those actions need to become habits. Habits are what you consistently do day after day, and, as we talked about in last week's episode, those habits build up to create success (or failure).

I realized while writing last week's episode, that nearly every business book I've ever read comes back to HABITS. In the book [The Slight Edge](#), the author gives us 7 habits that lead towards success. In Tim Ferriss' book [Tools of Titans](#) he gives a few habits that high achievers do (like meditate, work out daily, and keep to-do lists). And of course there's the [7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#).

All these books about habits of people who reach their goal just reinforce what we talked about last week: It's habits that determine most of your actions, and your daily actions build into your life (and either success or failure). Now, I'm going to say the word success a lot, but keep in mind that I mean YOUR definition of success. I don't mean a certain amount of money or sales or notoriety. So before I go further, I want you to bring to mind your own definition of success: Is it time freedom? A certain amount of sales per month? Being published in a certain magazine? Sitting across from Oprah?

Here are the habits that I find in every successful maker, artist or entrepreneur I've ever worked with or talked to. These are the habits listed in *The Slight Edge*, but they're also the stuff that comes up again and again as I work with passionate people to build a business

1. Show up.

Just decide to do it, then show up for it over and over.

This is absolutely the first step, until you decide to GO ALL IN, it will never just magically work out for you.

"Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: you don't give up."

-Anne Lamotte

2. Be Consistent

Show up every day. Again and again.

This is the advice for growing your IG audience, for increasing your email list, for getting more clients, for getting accepted to craft shows, for selling any product, for getting invited to do cool stuff.

I talk about consistency ALL THE TIME.

At the beginning of this year, in [episode 137](#), I suggested that we make 2017 the year of consistency and lots of you decided that would be your focus for the year. I also go into how consistency can transform your business in [episode 141](#) and [episode 113](#).

So how's that going?

And if you haven't thought about consistency, now's the time!

Make a list of actions that if you did them EVERY DAY, the difference would change your business over 6-12 months.

3. Be aware of what you're looking for.

Like we talked about last week, your brain seeks to prove its own predictions all the time. You are filtering your environment at all times - so the important question is: what is your filter?

Are you looking for examples of times you've messed up, failed, been a doofus? Are you looking for other people to let you down, disappoint you, or be dishonest?

Or are you looking for examples of succeeding, reaching goals, and celebrating?

Become aware of what you're looking for by noticing what you KEEP seeing or remembering. If you're nervous to go to that craft show or networking event, are you remembering all the times you babbled incoherently or got spinach stuck in your teeth? Or are you remembering all the times you made someone laugh or met your best customer?

You're going to find more of whatever you focus on. So shift your focus to what you WANT to find more of.

4. Be committed for the long haul.

Success (however you define it) is not going to happen in one day. You're not going to build an audience, build a sustainable business, or create a great relationship in one day, or even one month. You know this, right? But do you really really believe it in your bones? Until you do, you'll be constantly frustrated that it's not all happening *rightthisminute*.

Decide today that you're in it for the long haul (or not), and you'll have an easier time being consistent (because you won't be disappointed to not get immediate results) which will lead to better results.

We're all familiar with Malcolm Gladwell's writing about the 10,000 hour rule, right? Studies have shown that to become truly world class at anything, it takes approximately 10,000 hours of practice. That's 40 hours a week, for 50 weeks, for 5 years.

Now, you may not need to be "world class" at the stuff of your business, but you certainly wanna get better, right? So stop expecting you'll be good or even great in year two. (Also, be realistic with yourself, did you really start showing up back when you started? When did you TRULY commit and start showing up?)

5. *The Slight Edge* calls this habit "Burning desire backed by faith" - I like that phrase a lot. It basically means, WANT IT and believe it'll happen. If you want something realllllly bad, but you believe that you're not the kid of person who can do it... it's not gonna happen. You have to actually believe that it's within the realm of reality or you're never going to do the work.

What should you do if you want it, but you don't really believe it's possible?

- ★ Shift your belief - find other people who have done it, read up on what it takes, commit to doing it.
- ★ Change your goal to something that DOES seem doable. Yeah, this is the less-sexy option, but you'll work harder at something you believe is possible.

6. Be willing to do the work.

Guys, it's going to be a lot of work. You gotta be willing to do it.

7. Integrity

I think of integrity as being in a situation where your actions line up with what you say. If you say you believe in fair trade, source fair trade supplies. If you say you wanna support local farmers, support local farmers.

When you become a business owner, you become a public figure. What you do and say has to be in alignment or people will know. And when you fall out of alignment, people will notice and it will hurt your business.

That said, it happens to all of us. Just be honest when it does and your customers will be forgiving. For example, I talk about being consistent on Instagram, but I haven't been lately. So when it comes up, I say "hey, this is how you'll grow your instagram audience, but I haven't been doing it lately."

After a decade of watching a looooot of small businesses come and go, I can tell you with confidence: If you don't have integrity between what you present online and what you promise to customers with what you DO, it will all fall apart. And it will be miserable.

So create a happy business and don't over-promise and don't act like you've got it figured out when you don't yet.

So that's it - 7 things that if you start applying right now, your business is going to improve (not immediately, over the long haul).

Let me know which of these you are focused on right now (or need the most help with!) by posting a photo on Instagram with the hashtag #exploreyoureenthusiasm.

Thanks so much for listening and have a fantastic day!