

Inspiration – is it part of your business plan?

by Donna Messer

This is not one of your usual business plan articles. This is taking the word inspiration and turning it into a valuable tool for the creation of profitable small business ventures.

Many people are becoming self-employed, choosing to leave the corporate world and take charge of their own destiny. They are tired of the uncertainty, the stress, and the pace that life in the corporate world demands. They have chosen to become small business owners. While it sounds easy enough, just what do they have to do to become successful small business owners?

Most believe in the beginning, that all they have to do is use their existing talents and set up shop. If only it were that easy. What they soon find out is that they need a little something extra – they need inspiration. That inspiration can come from a company they hire, from a friend, from a support group or from a training program. But, they need that inspiration!

While it sounds a little hard to believe, we achieve when others believe we can do it.

This article is about the need to put inspiration into your business plan.

When we make the decision, or it is made for us, that we need to change our way of life and become self employed – our first thoughts are of confusion, our next thoughts are the need to take action. What do we do and how do we make sure that we will be successful in becoming self-employed and small business owners?

You need a little inspiration...

INSPIRATION

➤ I – investigate your market – is it saturated, does the world need another

computer programmer, graphic designer, or IT engineer? Think laterally, how can your skills be used in another field?

➤ N – network, don't discount your hobbies, special interest and charities as potential networking opportunities. It's a great place to begin to grow that new business.

➤ S – streamline your data base, start re-connecting with everyone – who do you know? Don't abuse them, share positive opportunities for them with your new business. They are your best source of referrals.

➤ P – prepare your infomercial – always begin your introduction with your name and "How can I help you?" Make sure the other person wants your card – offer them the gift of someone or something you know that will benefit them.

➤ I – improve your bio, bring it up to date – make it exciting! Pay attention to what's in the news and become an expert – get your name out there!

➤ R – revise your list of skills, ask your colleagues – are you missing something? We seem to take for granted the skills that are easiest for us and they never appear as potential business opportunities.

➤ A – analyse your needs. Ask for help, but make sure you offer your help first. Where are your strengths? What do you lack – and is it something you can trade off with another company or person?

➤ T – test the waters – volunteer for a project that will give your new company credibility. It's always easier to be involved with something we enjoy – make it a project that's fun!

➤ I – identify media opportuni-

ties – sponsor events that target your market. Read the papers and the newsletters in your identified market, become an expert. Write!

➤ O – organize yourself – design an action plan for your new life. Make sure that life includes time for family, friends, and fun – not just work. Balance is important to your success.

➤ N – negotiate with colleagues. Buy their strengths and sell them yours. Barter, trade, form strategic alliances – together you can be stronger and you have a broader base of potential clients.

Use a little inspiration and become a profitable small business. Many people go through programs sponsored by HRDC. These programs provide an amazing opportunity to learn all of the skills necessary for self-employment. For details on existing programs, go to your local Employment Insurance office. If self-employment is in your future – look for inspiration now...it's worth it! **SBCM**

Donna Messer is the founder of ConnectUs, a company that provides the inspiration you need to succeed. The author of Effective Networking Strategies, she uses a strategy, which includes assessment, evaluation, an action plan, and a series of events to provide the opportunity to practice what you learn. At ConnectUs: "If you can conceive it, you can believe it – and with a little help, you can achieve it!" A goal is just a dream with a destination! Connect with Donna.



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