

**Have you ever  
thought about...**

**...fear of failure**

**WHEN IT COMES TO THE CRUNCH**, there is one factor that stands in the way of almost all small business owners at some point, which quite often will limit and in some cases completely derail their plans to do what they really want with their enterprise.

You're probably thinking that it's lack of access to start up capital, or lack of business skills/training needed to run a small business on a day-to-day basis.

And yes, you would be right about those particular factors, as they are genuine problems which impede a great many small firms. But even those owner managers who have started up knee-deep in cash, been on every training course and read every business book under the sun still find they are hampered in their ability to make the real breakthroughs they want due to one troublesome factor: fear.

Fear of the unknown, fear of looking stupid, fear of upsetting people, fear of doing something new and getting it wrong, fear of ... whatever.

This is what it's like in the real world of small-business ownership. Most owner-managers suffer from fear to some extent, especially in the early stages and success or failure often comes down to their ability to overcome it.

Enterprise and entrepreneurship is all about doing something new, often things that you don't like doing, and about having the balls or bottle to take calculated but frequently very risky decisions.

Yes it's fun, yes it's scary and yes it's risky, but this is probably what ultimately drives us to do it and keep on doing it. It's not just the fear but also the challenge of tackling the unknown that is the motivator for many people.

But perhaps the biggest area of all where the fear factor comes into play and limits an owner manager's chances of success, or even brings about their downfall, is the fear of selling.

The problem is that it is very difficult to teach people to sell as it's a skill or a 'business sense' that most people will only learn by doing, by making mistakes and by learning those streetwise tricks that you eventually pick up over time.

The problem — the fear that people have — is they're afraid that selling is seen as intruding or imposing on someone who doesn't want you there in the first place, and so they feel daunted by the potential for rejection or failure.

You should also remember the old adage that selling isn't about being pushy, it's about being persuasive, patient and persistent. That's what ultimately pays off and what gets you over the fear factor. ■

SOURCENOTE: "Harley Shifts Gears," Fast Company,

**BUSINESS**

# ALERT!

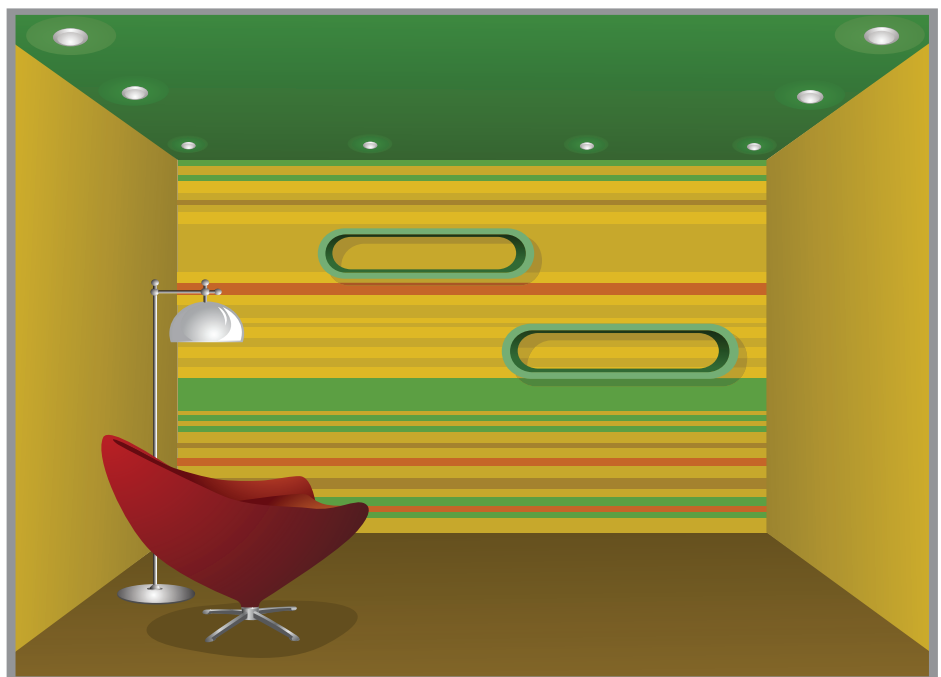
Hands-on help that works Vol 12 No 3

**Lifestyle**

## Don't *PARK* in the comfort zone!

*"Minds, like bodies, will fall into a pimpled, ill-conditioned state from mere excess of comfort."— Charles Dickens*

by Gary Lockwood



**MOST OF US have a thermostat that regulates the temperature in our house.**

When it gets a bit too warm, the air conditioning kicks on to bring the temperature down to an acceptable range. When the temperature drops below a comfortable point, the heater comes on to bring the room temperature up to a more comfortable level.

**The "comfort zone" is the range of temperature that is not too hot and not too cold; just comfortable.**

Your personal "comfort zone" is where you are comfortable in what you are doing in your job, your life and your experiences.

It is when you have no feelings of risk or anxiety. Some call it "being comfortable". Some would call it "a rut".

You have your own personal comfort zone. Your built-in "thermostat" regulates your level of anxiety, fear and discomfort. When you step outside your normal, existing boundaries in the areas of your

knowledge, skills, habits and attitude, you begin to feel a bit anxious. The natural tendency is to pull back.

**Try this: fold your arms. Now, fold them the other way.**

How did that make you feel? Felt a bit unnatural, didn't it? That's why you usually stay within your comfort zone. When you try something new, you often feel uneasy about it, and frequently pull back.

**The security feels good**

The downside of all this is that always staying in your comfort zone can be very limiting.

The world passes us by as we stagnate. Complacency, in our fast-paced competitive world, can be fatal to business and severely limit personal and professional growth. If you are not learning, trying new things and growing, your job or business may be deteriorating.

*Concluded on page 2*

**Business Alert** is published quarterly by Syntony Corporation 301.365.7824

**THIS WEEK**, I was reminded of a quote from one of my mentors, Thomas Leonard, who observed that, "People love to buy things, but almost no one wants to be sold."

Thousands of people are eager to buy what you sell. They want the benefits, the convenience, the comfort or prestige that you can provide. Human beings are an "acquisitive" bunch. We want stuff!

Of course, consumerism can be abused, but buying and selling is the process that creates the life (and the lifestyle) we all want. The "desire to acquire" goes deep, and it's a good thing.

So, if you aren't making as many sales as you would like, let me suggest that the problem is not with your customers, but with you. The problem is likely one of the following:

1. Not enough potential customers know about you or that your product could enrich their lives. This is a marketing problem and, as a business leader it is your job to solve it. Let people know! Get out there and get in the game!
2. Or, the other possibility, is that you're trying too hard to "sell."

Personally, I have a deep-seated aversion to being "sold" anything. But people are eager to buy benefits!

They buy solutions to their problems. They buy things that make their lives better, easier, simpler, healthier or more comfortable.

They buy stuff that makes them happy. And they buy from people they know and like and trust.

If enough people "know and like and trust" you, they will listen when you offer a product or service that will make their lives better.

If they "know and like and trust" you, they will flock to your door and you'll make all the sales you need. ■



Michael Akbar

## The way I see it...

All you have to do is believe and ask

**WHEN TULANE UNIVERSITY Professor Jeffrey Barach ran for a seat in the U.S. Congress, he asked a noted political consultant what it took to run a successful campaign.**

The consultant replied, "One word: ask!"

Candidates must have the ability to ask for money, votes and help.

"So also with leadership," adds Barach. "Commanding is a form of asking. When a leader personalizes a vision, he or she is asking others to share it."

Yet asking is hard for many people. For example, some salespeople fear asking for an order.

How is the fear of asking overcome?

A successful college fund-raiser once advised Barach that people cannot ask for donations if they think the would-be donors are doing them a favor.

Of course, in a sense they are, and fund-raisers should be grateful and solicitous. But they also should recognize they're offering donors an opportunity to do something for

themselves.

"The solicitor has to believe that the donors' gift solves a problem for them," Barach maintains, "or the tone of voice will not be right."

The same principle applies to selling anything. A student in one of Barach's summer courses sold knives, mostly to college girls as part of their hope chest.

His classmates criticized him for hawking expensive knives to young women with low incomes.

He countered that they were great knives, and the smaller sets were a good value, although he agreed that he shouldn't sell them his big ticket (\$200) sets.

Later in the summer, however, that student told the class that he had come to believe that the larger sets of knives also were a good value, that his customers would appreciate them in the long run.

What amazed him, he added was that, as soon as he came to that conviction, his sales of the larger sets increased radically. ■

---

### DON'T PARK IN THE COMFORT ZONE —

*Concluded from page one*

#### How do you <— e x p a n d —> your comfort zone?

Before you just throw all caution to the wind, try some simple things.

- Drive home by a different route.
- Shop at a different grocery store.
- Order something from the menu that you've never tried before.
- Sleep on the other side of the bed.
- Make a conscious effort to experiment.
- Let yourself feel the adrenaline level rise a bit. Allow your anxiety level to increase. Feel your heart rate and breathing going faster.

The adrenaline is your body's natural drug that, in moderation, makes you sharp, creative and quick. It creates the feeling of excitement and exhilaration that comes from trying something new.

Recognize that it also can be scary and stressful. Some stress is useful. Too much can be harmful. Some stress provides energy. Too much stress causes distress and can lead to burnout if done to extreme.

#### Why would you want to give yourself the stress of stepping outside your comfort zone?

Because that's where growth takes place.

Just like a muscle gets stronger when you exercise it outside its normal range of use, you get stronger when you get out of your rut. And just like your muscles, once you stretch beyond your current capabilities, you don't

ever go back to your original dimensions.

As you try new things, you gain confidence. Confidence makes you feel powerful and good. And when you are confident that you can survive new ideas, you allow yourself to try even more new things.

#### What's the limit?

Obviously, you need to be realistic in your risk management. Most successful people think through the possible outcomes of taking a risk. Then they prepare for how they would deal with each potential outcome. Successful people take risks, but they are not foolhardy or stupid.

What are some higher-level activities that could add to your personal and professional growth?

Here's my challenge to you.

Make a list of 50 things that, if you really were successful in doing them, you would be a better person or have a better company.

Things like:

- Give a speech (oh no!),
- Write and publish an article,
- Start an exercise program,
- Volunteer,
- And so on.

Then choose one or two that you are willing to do within the next 90 days. Schedule those new activities and then go for it.

Afterward, choose one or two more and do it again. Make personal and professional growth a lifelong habit.

Don't stay PARKED in the comfort zone. ■

SOURCENOTE: Gary Lockwood is Increasing the effectiveness and enhancing the Lives of CEOs, business owners and professionals.  
Email: [mailto:Gary@CEOSuccess.com](mailto:mailto:Gary@CEOSuccess.com) Web: <http://www.CEOSuccess.com>

# Risk-taking

PEOPLE'S APPETITE for risk-taking in the workplace is likely to increase if the economy enters a recession according to research released by international leadership development organisation Common Purpose.

Over half of all working adults surveyed already consider themselves to be risk-takers and 43% think it will be important to take more risks to help their organization survive through a recession.

It also found that only 13% of people avoid risk at all costs in their jobs. Common Purpose added that taking calculated risks is very different to acting rashly, that risk is an inseparable part of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Through their programs, Common Purpose has found that senior managers from the private, public and voluntary sectors can effectively come together to use the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences to fertilize each other's ideas to avoid pitfalls and to inform their understanding of risk.

In today's complex and rapidly-shifting context, it seems that being paralyzed by fear into inaction is the biggest risk.

As Julia Middleton, Chief Executive of Common Purpose says: "An economic downturn is not the time to shy away from risks.

Leaders need to be brave and bold, and to look in new places to capture the opportunities for growth and innovation.

Looking into other peoples' worlds is a good place to start."

Top tips for taking risks during a recession

- **Be brave.** Take a step into the unknown, within or beyond your existing role, takes courage — courage to start and courage to continue.

- **Taking risks** is not as simple as jumping over a hedge without looking first. It involves building an understanding of the issues, challenges, risks and the other stakeholders involved.

- **Don't focus** on your area of specialism to the exclusion of all else.

Losing sight of the broader context leaves you open to being blind-sided.

- **Build a diverse network** of people and use them to help you formulate your plans. ■

## Personal motivation

# 4 Steps to overcoming procrastination

*I have learned that most regrets come from the things I DIDN'T do. I have learned that regret lasts forever. Simply Brilliant.*

by Beth A Tabak

**PROCRASTINATION — putting off what you can do today until tomorrow...7 years, 5 months, and 2 days later you're wondering why you never started that book. It would have been done by now and you would be reaping the rewards. Writing would be your full-time pleasure now.**

You can see yourself sitting on the garden patio of your dream home surrounded by towering palm trees and luxurious flowers. You look across the Pacific as the ocean air gently blows across your face. The phone rings. Your latest book made the Best Seller List.

Funny how, in regret, the picture is always bright and sunny, and in procrastination its doom and gloom. "No one will ever want to read my book. No one will ever publish my book."

What if you could switch that picture so you are pulled to the vision like it was a magnet. The vision will be there.

Why not make it sooner rather than later. Procrastination results in stress, poor health, and regrets that last a lifetime. Taking action leads to fulfillment, life experience, and wisdom. So read on to discover how to break through procrastination, take action and make things happen.

**Step 1** — Where in your life are you procrastinating? Is it the appropriate decision to delay or irrational postponement? Choose one project that you want to stop procrastinating on.

**Step 2** — Discover the source in order to create a solution. Consider, when your car doesn't start. You look for the source of the problem. When you find the source it is easy to take action to make the repair. Look behind procrastination to find what is stopping you. It may be an unpleasant task, lack of interest, someone else's goal, a large overwhelming project, fear, poor time management or indecision. When you discover the source you are one step closer to making a change.

**Congratulations!**

**Step 3** — Based on the source, decide if this is a goal you want to keep. If so, choose a strategy that makes you more comfortable. Below are some examples to get your creativity flowing. However, choose what is right for you. You will have to develop new habits.

Best to create habits you want vs. what someone else wants for you. Discover the source and set the strategy up in a way that you know you will take action.

- **An Unpleasant Task/ Lack of Interest.**

Schedule it at the beginning of the day so it is not hanging over your head all day long. Think of how great you will feel to have it done. Reward yourself when you follow through.

- **Someone Else's Goal** — Set a boundary...

say **no** or accept only the part of the job that you feel good about. If you can not say no (ex. employment situation) then you may choose to follow the above solution.

- **A Large Overwhelming Project** — Break it down into small manageable tasks. What part can you do? What part can you delegate? What is the first small step you know you can do right now?

- **Lack of Focus Due to Multiple Projects** — Prioritize the projects then break them down into small manageable tasks as in the step above. Focus on completion of one project at a time.

- **Fear** — What is the fear telling you? Is it legitimate or the product of an irrational assumption. Usually, what we think may happen never does. If you need to stand up to your fear, then visualize a positive end result.

Use affirmations and visualization to break through the fear. Focus on how great you will feel simply for having the courage to try. You gain strength, wisdom and confidence from each experience.

- **Poor Time Management** — Schedule a block of time daily or weekly to work specifically on this project. Keep these appointments. Begin with small blocks of time (an amount of time you can commit) until you are consistently keeping your appointments. Then you can add more time.

- **Indecision** — When you don't know what to do, set a deadline to make up your mind. Then get whatever support and information you need to be able to make an educated decision.

**Step 4** — Come from a positive place. Think of that picture you will have if you don't follow through and allow that picture to pull you towards it now. Know that you are an amazing person who is completely capable when you prepare, get the help you need and use the resources available to you.

Focus on how great you will feel for having followed through step by step no matter what the result. After all...it is through the expedition that many great and memorable moments occur!

What action will you take? Starting Now! ■

SOURCENOTE: Beth A. Tabak, All rights reserved.



## WORDS OF WISDOM

**"A dying monarchy is always one that has too much power, not too little; a dying religion always interferes more than it ought, not less."** — G. K. Chesterton, *In the Daily News*, 11 Mar. 1911

## The Institute for Independent Business

FOUNDED IN 1984 in the UK, the Institute for Independent Business (IIB) is now one of the world's largest international networks of business advice providers.

As of February 2011, nearly 6,000 carefully-selected men and women have been accredited worldwide as IIB Associates.

### Experienced professionals

Experienced senior business people in their own right, who have elected to become self-employed business advisers, Associates and Fellows of the IIB have received additional training to enable them to focus accurately and cost-effectively on the needs of clients and prospects.

This ensures that Associates' clients receive the "practical advice that works"—the Institute's motto in every country in which the Institute operates. ■

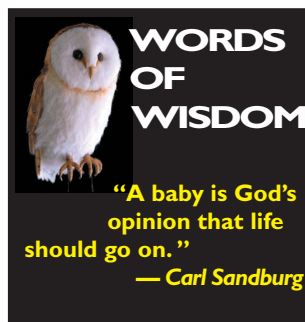
### BUSINESS ALERT

All recipients of **BUSINESS ALERT** are included on our free subscription private database to ensure continuity of ongoing editions.

This being a private list, their names are not and will not be used for any other purpose or in any other way.

Please advise me if you wish to be delisted and no further copies of **BUSINESS ALERT** will be provided to you.

Copyright © 2008 The Centre for Business Development. Printed and distributed under license.



## Selling

# Proven ways to better sales

*When selling, it is your job to make the customer aware of her needs and to reinforce the desire to make the decision to purchase from you!*

by Brenda Spiller

**TO FIND OUT WANTS; this is the requirement (probing). Match what you are offering to the requirement (presentation).**

### Selling is a procedure!

Selling is a procedure and, therefore, it's a discipline that any small business owner can master. Learn and practice the following steps, and will help you on the way to being a better salesperson;

**Preparation:** (Unsuccessful selling is generally the result of too little thinking and planning)

- Always prepare, including mental/emotional preparation

- List points and questions that need to be asked to identify:

- Right people, decision-makers/influencers/ buying process;
- Business problem/opportunity;
- The decision-making process;
- Opposition/competition

**Attention:** always check before you start the selling process that you are presenting to the right person i.e. one who can make the decision to buy,

or influence the decision in some way.

**Interest:** establish needs by asking open and probing questions - how, what, why, where, when, who.

**Desire:** heighten the prospect's reason to buy based on the need, give benefits and gain agreement on each.

**Action:** firm close on a next action; or order, price and delivery.

**Handling resistance:** objections do not always mean 'No'. An objection is an opportunity to sell. Is it an objection or an excuse? If an objection arises:

- **Question it** e.g. "I'm sure you have a very good reason for saying that. Do you mind if I ask you what it is?"

- **Confirm** it is the only objection.

- **If it is true** — he will restate and clarify it.

- **He may even** answer it himself.

- **When you have** the true objection, commit to the way forward. ■

SOURCENOTE: Brenda Spiller is the author of, Perfecting The Art Of Telesales Spiced With Magic of Neuro-Linguistic Programming — A Practical Guide To The Art of Objection Handling

## Have you written or updated your business plan yet?

**OR ARE YOU** in the process of getting it worked out, or working out what to make of the advice you've received or have downloaded and read about what should be included in it?

Here's a little story this week to help you focus your thoughts.

A bull and a turkey sat in a field talking. The turkey sighed miserably. "I want to get to the top of that tree but haven't got the strength, as I've been on my feet non-stop for more than a week."

The bull looked wisely down at the turkey and replied, "Why don't you try eating some of my dung? It's full of vitamins, minerals and nutrients and will give you the strength you need."

The turkey nibbled away experimentally at the dung and after a few minutes managed to reach the first branches of the tree. Later on, the turkey ate some more and found enough strength to get halfway up the tree.

The next morning, after gorging itself on a dung breakfast, the turkey reached the highest branch of the tree and perched there with a very satisfied look on its face.

Later that day a farmer came along, spotted the turkey and promptly shot it down with his gun.

**The lesson to be learned?** Bullsh\*t can quickly get you to where you want to be, but you won't stay there for long.

**NOW — back to your business plan! ■**

## Have your say!



**Add your voice to those of other business people on important business issues. Each issue of Business Alert will feature a statement on which you can voice an opinion. Simply select the view that reflects your opinion and email it to me. Your opinion will be submitted to the Institute for Independent Business for inclusion in its continuing business research.**

### The Statement:

**"The biggest problem I face is finding qualified staff."**

Please email me with the letter (A-E) expressing your opinion from the following choices:

- A.** Strongly agree
- B.** Agree
- C.** Unsure
- D.** Disagree
- E.** Strongly disagree

**MY EMAIL ADDRESS IS:**  
mvakbar@syntony.com

For more information, please phone Michael Akbar at 301.365.7824