5 Signs That Your Ambition Is Getting in Your Way



Sometimes there’s a disconnect between your ambition and your mindset.

August 15, 2021 4 min read

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For many, ambition is about going after what you want. The problem is, the behavior of ambition and some accompanying mindsets could actually be preventing you from actually getting what you want.

How so, you might wonder?

You’re going after what you want, but you think you have to do everything yourself.

In typical entrepreneurial style, you want things done right. You may think it’s faster to just do it yourself rather than take the time to explain the task to someone else. Then, of course, there’s quality. In one way or another, your name is on it and you don’t want to accept anything less than perfect. So, you just do it yourself.

But if you think you have to do everything yourself – which of course you can’t– you don’t delegate and you can’t scale. You’re also missing the opportunity for innovation and expansion by not relying on others. If you think you have to do everything yourself, you are limited by your own capabilities.

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You’re going after what you want, but you’re not seeing what’s in front of you.

With your eyes intently on what you’re going after, could there be better opportunities right in front of you that you’re not seeing? Blind ambition is a thing. A colleague of mine, at the peak of his career and summit of his ambition, expressed his concern that with all that he had accomplished, could he have accomplished more? It’s sort of like arriving at your destination after a routine drive and not recalling whether you stopped for a red light or stop sign. You reached your destination, but ambition had blocked your consciousness.

You’re going after what you want, but you’re not coming across authentically.

Ambition can lead you to buy into the “fake it until you make it” mentality, but at what cost? Possibly the cost of coming across for who you really are. Bestselling *Wall Street Journal* author, Leslie Ehm, says in her book, *Swagger*, “For ambition to be legit, it should never come at the cost of your authenticity. That’s too big of a trade-off. Being perfect is not the gateway to accomplishment; being human is.”

We’ve all met them: the super ambitious person that makes you wonder if there’s anything real going on in there. Don’t be that person. There can be a fine line between ambition and aggressiveness. How people feel about you and whether you’re being authentic is more important now than ever. Make sure your ambition isn’t preventing the best side of you from coming forward.

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You’re going after what you want, but you feel like you’re in a constant chase.

Like overt confidence, the root of being overly ambitious can be insecurity. Sometimes we are overly ambitious in order to beat rejection to the punch. If you always push yourself to the front of the line first, you don’t have to deal as much with how it feels to not be chosen. The problem is when this ambition becomes a loop. If you’re not willing to deal with the emotions of not being chosen or not pushing yourself forward, you’ll never know the feeling of getting what you want without working so hard. This is like ambition with the

brakes on. You’re pushing hard and going for it, but the insecure emotions inside are keeping you in constant friction that you may as well have your foot on the brakes at all times. The best way to get what you want may be to loosen the grip of what you’re going after and see what comes to you.

You’re going after what you want, but you feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders.

No matter how ambitious you are and how grandiose the dream may be, if your ambition causes you to feel like it’s all up to you, your success will be limited by what you can carry. Share your abundance of ambition with the people around you and you’ll gain a support system that can carry some of the load. It will more than likely get you what you set out for.

Maybe even more than you ambitiously ever thought possible.

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