5 Steps to Maximizing Business Success

Learn all that you can about your industry, people and the world at large.

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There’s a saying that goes “Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” As it turns out, this adage provides sage wisdom for advancement in business, too.

It’s a simple fact: you’ll never get ahead in business or as an entrepreneur if you don’t develop the ability to think for yourself. If you’re always following others, you’ll never be able to make intelligent decisions for yourself, which will limit your potential for growth.

So how can you begin to develop a sense of self sufficiency? Here are seven tips for how to think for yourself in business:

1. Develop a mission statement.

If you want to learn how to think for yourself, this is a great starting point. Ask yourself this: what do you really want out of life and your career?

Take some time to consider what you want to achieve through your work. Along with personal goals, this can give you not only motivation, but direction as well. Your mission statement is basically an encapsulation of your overarching career

goals. For instance, I’m a professional trader and teacher, so my mission statement might include the desire to teach others how to trade in a no-nonsense and practical way.

Your mission statement can be like your north star when it comes to career decisions, because you can always ask yourself if going in one direction or another is really aligned with your long term goals. This often can make decisions easier and can help you remain consistent as a professional.

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2. Educate yourself.

When it comes to learning to think independently, education is key. It’s only when you’ve amassed your own encyclopedia of knowledge that you have data to filter back through and use to help inform your future direction. The more you know, the more you’re able to make educated decisions about all sorts of things. This means that you’ll be better able to take risks, try new things, and develop a sense of entrepreneurialism.

Dedicate yourself to learning all that you can – not just about your career sector, but about people, the world, and life at large. It will serve you in ways you can’t even know.

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3. Get a network.

Let’s get one thing straight. Thinking for yourself doesn’t mean that you’re a lone wolf doing everything all the time. In fact, seeking connection and even advice from others can help give you direction and guidance that can help you develop a better sense of self in business.

A mentor can be invaluable in this regard. By consulting with a mentor or someone further along in your field than you, you can learn a lot about the process of growing in your field and receive relevant, sound advice that can point you in the right directions.

Networking with your peers can also be invaluable. By seeking connection with others in your field, you can observe what others are doing, which can be very informative. For instance, it can help you adopt the good habits of successful people, and also help you avoid certain behaviors that you recognize as counterproductive in others. By learning from and observing others, you can further develop a strong sense of self possession.

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4. Step outside of your comfort zone.

By definition, it will be uncomfortable to step outside of your comfort zone.

For example, if your goal is to open a business, it might require that you reach out to potential investors. That might feel uncomfortable to you, but it’s only by stepping out of your comfort zone and doing this that you’ll actually be able to get your project off the ground.

Taking risks and trying new things can be defining. These moments tell you a lot about yourself, including areas where you might be stronger than you think and reveal areas where you could use some help strengthening your weaknesses. By continuing to work on yourself, you’ll be better able to think for yourself in business.

5. Learn from your mistakes.

Mistakes are inevitable. But that doesn’t mean you should throw up your hands and give up on the whole enterprise. Actually, mistakes can be hugely helpful to your career…if you learn from them, that is.

Making a mistake gives you direction for how you shouldn’t proceed in the future. This can be helpful in the future, because you can avoid going down similar roads that can hinder your progress. Take a step back and learn from your mistakes. Over time, this allows you to independently navigate the waters of business with more confidence, because you’ll get stronger over time.

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