

Overcoming Perfectionism

Perfectionism can get in the way of building or marketing a successful business. It can prevent us from moving ahead quickly or from taking advantage of business opportunities. We set ourselves up with unrealistic expectations or goals, which can be damaging to us personally or professionally.

Striving for perfection can damage our self-esteem because we never feel like we are good enough. Instead, consider adopting an attitude of striving for excellence. Look at failure as just another teacher. Let's explore how being less than perfect can move you ahead in your business!

1. Get into action.

One of the best ways to overcome perfectionism is to get into action and do something. In the case of your marketing, put yourself out there. Show the world who you are through your website, business cards, brochures, or through giving a speech. Don't wait until you get all of these things perfected. The truth is that they never will be. Everything you do is a work in progress. Do something now. Get feedback, and then make corrections as you move forward.

2. Say 'no' to unreasonably high demands.

We often set high standards of performance for ourselves that would be difficult, if not impossible, to meet even under the best of circumstances. Learn how to say 'no' to yourself. We always set much higher standards for ourselves than anyone else would and in the big picture, it really means nothing.

You would be surprised at how satisfied most people would be with average performance on your part. I'm not saying that you should sacrifice quality in what you do, but what you'll incrementally gain for large expenditures of your personal energy is certainly not productive. Trying to be perfect in your marketing will only delay getting your message out to those who need to hear it most.

3. Set realistic goals.

Unreasonably high demands go hand in hand with setting unrealistic goals. You cannot expect to do everything at once or even at the same level of quality. Creating a plan of what needs to be done in your business is a top priority. For each major project or item that you need to accomplish, break it down into a number of goals that are easily doable. A goal of creating your website can be daunting.

However, breaking it into a number of other goals including drafting a plan for your site, obtaining your domain name, and interviewing three web developers makes it much easier to accomplish.

4. Find support.

Find others who will support you in the things you are doing. You might consider asking friends, colleagues, or family members to give their sign-off of approval on some of the projects that you are working on.

While you might not think that something is perfect enough, the people on your support team can provide you with much a much less biased opinion. Sometimes we get so caught up in what we are doing, we cannot see that it is perfect just as it is. Recruit a supportive team to help you determine when enough is enough.

5. Perfect as it is.

Consider adopting a mindset that whatever you do is the right thing to do and the best thing to do. This powerful attitude can make all the difference in creating a successful business. Not only will potential clients find your sense of personal strength attractive, but you will also have more confidence to make things happen and to make them happen quickly. You'll take more risks, ask more confidently for business, and work more effectively at everything you do.

6. Failure is my friend.

Redefine how you look at failure. Failure is a natural part of life and will inevitably impact your business to varying degrees. Failure is not the end of anything, nor does it mean that you are incompetent. Realize that failure is a teacher and that it can help you innovate in your business. It provides you with valuable information that you're doing something or going in a direction that isn't providing the results that you want. The sooner you understand that, the sooner you can re-orient yourself in another direction, which can lead to your success.

7. Reframe your attitudes.

Perfection is defined as freedom from fault or defect, or the quality or state of being saintly. What does it mean to you? The words we use to describe what we do or who we are, make a tremendous difference in the success we achieve. How would you define perfection for yourself? What about adopting an attitude that you are perfect the way you are? That you are enough. Write down what perfection means to you and post it in a place where you can read it daily.

8. Make lemons out of lemonade.

You might be surprised that when you're not trying to be perfect, you may actually find the perfect opportunity. For example, you might not be dressed appropriately for a networking event and you don't feel like you're perfect enough to talk to anyone. But, you take the opportunity to chat with someone standing next to the hors d'oeuvre table

and the next thing you know you've created a potential for new business. Opportunities are everywhere. In fact, take a look at the last few things you did which you didn't think were perfect or which didn't meet your high standards. What were the results of what you did? What other exciting things blossomed as a result?

9. Making it happen is more important than perfection.

Doing things, putting yourself into action, telling people about what you can do for them all of these things are much more important than spending another hour or another dollar trying to make something perfect in hopes that it will buy you some increased level of success.

People aren't attracted to perfection, they're attracted to people that make things happen. If you're at the office trying to perfect anything in your business, the trade-off is that you aren't somewhere where you can be making valuable business contacts.

It is important to surround yourself with people who like to take action. Not only will they motivate you to do the same, but you'll also be able to witness, firsthand, the results they are having by getting out there.

10. Be kind to yourself. Perfectionists often feel down on themselves for not achieving well, perfection. Perfection is an ideal, not a reality; it is humanely impossible to achieve. Learn how to forgive yourself when you do something you don't think is good enough or perfect.

Love yourself for being you and know that everything you do in your business possesses your personal spin. Potential clients won't be attracted to you because of your business card or website. They will be attracted to you because of who you are.