

Developing the *discipline muscle*

IF YOU'RE IN BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF, TANYA UNKOVICH OFFERS EIGHT STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU DEVELOP A STRONGER PERSONAL DISCIPLINE.

You're lying in bed listening to the comforting sound of the heavy rain on your roof. It was blissful until you were interrupted by the buzz of your new iPhone. "I hate that new tune", you say to yourself, when actually what you really mean is "I don't want to get up".

The inner bargaining commences as to why it would be considerably nicer to roll over and spoon the cat, instead of going to the gym. You remind yourself about how productive and energized you feel once you have exercised, so you quickly throw back the sheets before any more excuses appear.

For those of us who are self-employed, personal discipline is vital as we juggle working in the business, working on the business, and working on ourselves. Commitment, motivation and accountability all play a part in the process of working towards our goals. To achieve sustainable positive results may mean replacing "I should do it", with "I must do it".

Here are eight strategies to help you develop a stronger personal discipline:

1. Revisiting your 'why'.

Are you still excited and passionate about what you do? During the early days of being in business motivation is usually not a problem. You are excited, the adrenalin's pumping and you're determined to make this new venture work.

To regularly revisit the 'why' you went into business is an effective way of maintaining (or reigniting) your passion and drive when you need to.

2. Write your next day's 'to do' list the night before.

Having a 'to do' list may be helpful during the day if your motivation is low or when other more attractive options are presented to you. Continue to remember how good it feels to complete a task and cross it off the list.

3. Stay out of your track pants.

Whilst wearing heels under your home office desk is not necessary, being clean and tidy is an essential habit that can positively affect self-esteem and productivity.

4. Fear not the financials.

Do you have a tendency to procrastinate when it comes to your administration and financial paperwork? Removing any fear and mental blocks around these tasks will make them considerably less awful. Small manageable daily chunks are far less stressful than leaving it all to month's end. Fifteen minutes per day can easily add up to a sizeable amount of work.

Never forget that you are the business and how the money

ultimately gets into the tin. Mindfulness and becoming financially aware are a proven way to ensure that money is spent wisely. Once mastered, the financials may not be as scary as you think.

5. Managing your time.

If household chores, checking social media or child pickups are part of your day, then simply schedule them in. Hanging out the laundry is great for clearing the mind and moving the body.

6. Get yourself out of the mud.

Without realising it, self-sabotage can play a part in your current personal or professional struggles. Standing in a warm puddle of muddy sludge may feel safe and comfortable, however, moving forward will be difficult. If you need support and ongoing accountability to assist you in creating change, choose someone who inspires you and will challenge you to finally step out.

7. Continue to challenge yourself and grow.

Once you have stepped out and are moving, keep moving. Every day do something towards your personal growth. Read something useful, get out of your home office and network, or help another person.

8. Never forget about your number one customer.

No matter what your definition of success, never underestimate the importance of having a feeling of personal significance and self worth when it comes to achieving your goals.

Invest in doing whatever it takes to bring your best self to work. Move the body, declutter the mind; deal with emotional garbage that may affect your productivity or decision-making.

We all have what it takes to be successful. Like a muscle, motivation and discipline can be developed and grown. Believe you can, follow your intuition. Do what you know you must, and allow the growth to happen.



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