

PUT ON A HAPPY FACE: Confidence is the Key!

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By Alvin Apple

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Every time you turn on a radio or TV these days, you hear doom-and-gloom news about the US economy. As a businessperson, it's hard NOT to get discouraged. However, we need to do exactly that if we want to keep our businesses thriving.

Even if you have been hard hit by recent events (and who hasn't, one way or another?), it is still important that you put forth a confident image to your customers. In fact, it is part of our job as business owners to make sure that our customers don't lose hope. If you are confident in your business, your customers will follow suit.

The first step to creating confidence in your customers is to be confident yourself and focus on the positive. Don't dwell on the problems you might have — you can talk about your problems, but think of them as obstacles that have been overcome, rather than as disasters. For instance, don't say to your customers, "Slow sales have caused us to discontinue some of our items." Instead, say, "Recent events have given us the opportunity to reevaluate our product line and focus on the products that are the most important to you." Look at the opportunities that a situation provides, rather than the problems it causes.

You can also help reassure nervous customers by giving them concrete examples of success. For some reason, real-life examples are MUCH more reassuring than just giving hypothetical "here's what you COULD do" examples. That means that you should not skimp on your real-life testimonials. Give your customers plenty of stories of people who love your product or who succeeded after

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joining your opportunity. If possible, give the customers a way of contacting one or two of your satisfied customers -- talking to a real "success story" will do a great job of calming shaky nerves.

A third way to create customer confidence is to simply "be there" for them. Here's a little story to illustrate my point: I used to be afraid to go into my grandparents' basement alone, but if I was with someone, I was fine. Having someone else with me reduced my nervousness.

You should try to be that person for your customers. By providing

good customer service, keeping in touch with your clients, or providing community building services like newsletters or discussion boards, your customers will know that they are not alone in their purchase -- they have someone to turn to if they have concerns or questions. This is VERY reassuring.

Just remember that your customers are people -- which means that will get scared from time to time. What we have to do is remain calm and try our best to pass that feeling of calm along to our customers. If we can do that, then, in no time at all, we will all realize that the problems weren't nearly as bad as they seemed.

Alvin Apple helps everyday people start businesses they will enjoy. Then he teaches them how to succeed. Read all his helpful strategies, including his latest article, "The 7 Deadly Marketing Sins" at <http://AlvinApple.com>. Reach Alvin at 801-328-9006 or alvin@drnunley.com.

Discover the Key to Self-confidence

By Colin Dunbar

"One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation" – Arthur Ashe

Self-confidence is necessary for success

As Arthur Ashe says preparation is an important key to self-confidence. And preparation can be achieved by using the goal setting tool of questions. Asking questions, that is, doing research, can enable you to become proficient in whatever subject or area you want you to.

Self-confidence is necessary not only to achieve success with our goals, but also to live a happier and

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contented life. When we have self–confidence, we can overcome many of life's obstacles easier. How then do we find the key to self–confidence?

Identify the obstacle

Before you can work on gaining more self–confidence, you need to clearly identify the area that is an obstacle for you not having self–confidence. When you have identified the obstacle, you can use a variety of goal setting tools to solve it. And yes, you should undertake your development of self–confidence as a goal. This way you can make positive progress, and have eventual success.

Can I share the following true story with you...

Having had over eight years experience in technical writing, but lacking the industry software skills, I turned down positions as result of a lack of self–confidence. It did not take any rocket science for me to realize that I needed to become skilled in the software that was being used in the industry.

The industry standards at the time were Microsoft Word and CorelDRAW. If you are familiar with these software packages, you know there are a myriad of features, and in technical writing, many of these are used.

There was only one way I could master this software...

Use a step–by–step approach

Adopting a step–by–step approach is a practical tool for reaching your goal, and a key to gaining self–confidence.

Before starting, you should determine as accurately as possible as to what the steps are. This forms part of your preparation, or research, in many cases. Become familiar with the subject matter.

For me, the starting point was finding out what the most used features were in producing technical

documentation. Armed with this knowledge, I could begin my step–by–step approach.

Using this approach I began with one or two features only, and I would practice these until I could do it almost blindfolded. And from there I would move onto the next feature or two.

This is similar if you want more self–confidence for public speaking, starting your own business, or whatever other area in your life.

Self–confidence will come

Using the one goal setting tool of a step–by–step approach, you will become more knowledgeable, and as a result your level of self–confidence will rise.

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In using this tool, my self-confidence rose to the level where I eventually lectured freelance at a leading computer training school.

For the effective attainment of your goals, no single goal setting tool should be used in isolation.

Make it your goal to...

Identify the obstacle or obstacles that are preventing you from having self-confidence. Do your research, and begin as soon as possible to use the goal setting tool of a step-by-step approach. Follow Arthur's advice of the key to self-confidence.

Colin Dunbar's eaziGOAL offers you 12 practical and proven goal setting tools to enable you to get what you want. Manual, workbook with goal setting worksheets PLUS companion software. FREE newsletter. New articles every week.

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