

How to stay sane when you are female and run your own business



Running your own business can be one of the most satisfying experiences of your life. If self employment is right for you then you know it's worth the long hours and sacrifices but that doesn't mean you don't have moments of doubt and times when you get exhausted. The secret is to find a way to keep your energy levels up, particularly if you are guilty of the female preoccupation of trying to do it all and have it all.

We've all experienced the situation when we find ourselves questioning the decision to run our own business. It usually comes about as a result of feeling S.T.A.L.E.:

Stressed, Tired and Lacking Energy

What's really happening here is an imbalance in our skills to attitude ratio. So what happens when these two important factors are not in harmony?



Green

When most of us start a new business (even if we have prior experience elsewhere) we have lots of enthusiasm but lack the skills to do be fully functioning. The early energy of a start up business owner is vital to get the project off the ground.

Keen

As we develop the necessary skills we move towards the ideal combination of ability and enthusiasm . . . I love what I do and I know how to do it. This doesn't mean that it is all smooth sailing. Being in business is full of ups and downs but that is part of why you do it!

Mean

We still have the necessary skills but not the enthusiasm for the business. This could be a temporary situation caused by economic or personal circumstances or something more permanent. Mean not only represents your attitude it also can signify that your performance

has reached the mean or average of those around you. This is when we can start to take our customers for granted and maybe think our business can run itself without too much effort on our part.

Has Been

Spend too long in “Mean” and risk entering the final phase when not only is your enthusiasm long gone, but now your skills have slipped due to a lack of interest in staying up to date. This is the business owner who is always blaming everyone but themselves for their poor performance.

So what is it you can do to help to keep yourself Keen as you deal with the stresses and strains of running your own business? You need to find a way to stay F.R.E.S.H., which stands for:

Forward thinking

You can be a forward thinker when you are stuck in the past so start by letting go whether it is literally (by cleaning out and getting rid of things that are holding you back) or symbolically by letting go of self limiting beliefs. Then develop a clear vision of the future you want to create. This will allow you to recognise opportunities when they come along and to share your vision with others who may be able to help you make it a reality.



Resilient

Anyone in business knows that the ability to bounce back from the ups and downs is vital. Avoid becoming an emotional yo-yo by understanding how to separate what happens to you from who you are as a person. This is easier when you can answer the 3 important questions of:



Who am I? Learn to recognise your strengths and weaknesses
What do I believe? Be clear on your values
Where am I going? Have specific goals

Enthusiastic

Nothing worthwhile can be achieved without enthusiasm. Tapping into the passion that lies within all of us is the key to maintaining high levels of enthusiasm. Don't get so caught up in running your business that you forget to spend time pursuing your passions. Look at the list of things you “used to do” and make an effort to get back into some of them. The passion will spill over into your business.





Stretching

Get out of your comfort zone and experience the freedom that comes with it. It might be attending new networking functions, trying different marketing methods or reaching out to connect with a competitor. Sometimes you will take on something new that feels too big but that is just a sign that you are really stretching yourself.



Holistic

Keeping it all in balance will ensure your ongoing success. Learn to recognise the dangers signs when you are out of balance in the 6 key areas of life . . . career, finances, relationships, health, mind and leisure. Make a plan for getting your life back into balance which can be as simple as making one change that impacts on all areas.

Karen Schmidt from Let's Grow! describes herself as a workplace gardener who can help your business bloom by growing your managers into engaging leaders. To book Karen for your next conference or professional development event contact her on 0411 745 430 or visit www.letsgrow.com.au.

