



Happy New Year from the HNI Family

Banish These 4 Success Barriers in 2015

The start of a New Year has long symbolised a time for new beginnings and hope of opportunities new. We've all seen, and maybe even succumbed to, the 'New Year, New You' ad campaigns penned by Marketers who want to capitalise on your aspirational frame of mind in the month of January. The New Year is a time of reflection and people naturally want to correct or improve elements of their lives that could be better: a promotion, improved performance and achieving success are among the most common goals set at the start of a New Year.

However, a renewed positivity and an 'out with the old and in with the new' mindset doesn't guarantee success when it comes to achieving business goals or resolutions. Authors of the 'Book of Odds', Louise Firth Campbell and Amram Shapiro, say that of the 45% of people who set New Year goals in the USA, only 8% are successful in achieving them. What's more pertinent than setting new goals is to analyse why you haven't achieved previous ones. Perhaps plans to earn a promotion, surpass sales targets or secure an important client for the company didn't quite work out. Before you think up new goals or even become despondent at your overall lack of progress, consider these intangible barriers and behaviours that could be hindering your progress.

Don't Doubt it

From time to time confidence can dwindle when things aren't going right in business and self doubt creeps in. Perhaps you didn't clinch a deal you had been working on for months or overlooked an opportunity that a competitor jumped on and prospered from. Many factors can play a part, but it is all a matter of perspective, acknowledges Christine Riordan, the dean and a professor of management at the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver. She agrees that self doubt can make you sabotage your own chances of success and that you should counter negative thoughts with positive ones. Acknowledge that the occasional disappointment is woven into the tapestry of business and can't be avoided - it's not personal.

Don't Delay the Inevitable

Poet and businessman Olin Miller once said: 'If you want to make an easy job seem mighty hard, just keep putting off doing it' and this couldn't be any more prevalent than in the workplace. Most of us have been guilty of pondering business decisions for a bit too long or putting off difficult tasks. Martin Luther King Jr once said: 'How soon "not now" becomes "never,"' acknowledging that the longer you delay doing something, the more insurmountable it becomes. However, procrastination or leaving things to the last minute is counterproductive and negatively impacts progress. So, to banish procrastination in favour of being decisive, it's important to be aware of when you are doing it and to be honest with yourself. One way to prioritise tasks when your mind has given up is to give yourself one minute to write down the most important tasks that pop into your head. Then organise them with the hardest first and start working through the list. This can work for both day-to-day tasks as well as more overarching career aspirations.

Presentation for Preservation

Presentation is about a lot more than just presentation. Yes, it is important to dress appropriately for a business environment but how you present yourself as a person is more crucial. In order to win the trust of clients, convey credibility and be professional you must exhibit certain behaviours and strike the correct tone for each business engagement. Being confident, without being boastful; being strong willed without being arrogant; being engaging, without being too intense; being decisive, without overlooking suggestions from your team; being knowledgeable, without coming across as a know-it-all; these are all fine balancing acts and if you manage to find the equilibrium on each then the road to success will be a shorter one than for your counterparts.

In Good Company?

It may sound unconventional but it is a possibility that the company you work for is preventing you from achieving personal success, especially if it doesn't realise the potential of its employees. White Paper 'Developing a Leadership Strategy: A Critical Ingredient for Organisational Success' by William Pasmore (2009) acknowledges that Business Strategy is intrinsically linked to Leadership Strategy, which is essentially identifying and harnessing the key skills of individual staff that are conducive to achieving company objectives and empowering individuals in positions where they can impact company strategy. A company that fails to implement a Leadership Strategy and, in turn, fails to recognise and invest in talent, will struggle to retain quality staff and the road to success will undoubtedly be longer. If you feel continually overlooked by your employer despite having a good case for promotion then this could be the reason.



If this article has motivated you to identify and break down the barriers between you and personal success in 2015, then these best-selling HNI courses can help you achieve this goal:

Achieving Business Success | Managing Yourself for Future Success and Achievement



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Hanan Nagi is an International Trainer, Executive Coach, Personal Development Expert, Writer and Inspirational Speaker. She is the producer and presenter of the first coaching and human development TV show, 'Develop your Life', on DMTV. With more than 16 years of corporate experience in the corporate world in various industries, she has been helping organisations achieve their goals through their people, using training and coaching programs. She has been recognised for her contribution to excellence and achievement in the people's field by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, when she won the Dubai Government Excellence Award.