

# STAY POSITIVE, even when the going is tough

It's great when our business is on a roll and one success leads to another. But how do we manage when this is not the case?



Your business is experiencing cash-flow problems, you have staff issues, you have a dissatisfied client or you are struggling to attract sales. How do you maintain the positive attitude that is vital in helping you turn around these situations? You don't have the luxury of being able to phone in and take a day's sick leave. You have to face the day and keep yourself motivated.

**A positive focus:** It's important you find a way that resonates with you to inspire yourself. You need to continually believe that you can make your business dreams real and that you have the courage to stay the course.

Inspirational speaker, Robin Banks has been mentored by Canadian motivational guru and bestselling author, John Kehoe. He now teaches Kehoe's *Mind Power* techniques internationally. "Being an entrepreneur is tough. You must have a vision of what you want to achieve and continually focus on it. When you are at your lowest, it's very important to be positive. If you keep your mind on your desired outcome rather than your current circumstances, you will find a way to make it happen."

Banks subscribes to the view that anyone who achieves success has to go over, around and sometimes through hurdles and obstacles. He recommends that once entrepreneurs know what they want, they should create an affirmation to help them achieve it. This must be short, rhythmic, positive, and should be frequently repeated.

**Start the day right:** Modern medicine has made us aware of the benefits of regular exercise and that the endorphins it releases triggers a positive feeling. Getting into the

habit of starting your working day with exercise—it can even be a gentle walk—is a great way to begin on a positive note. It also provides an opportunity to repeat your affirmations over and over again in your mind as you exercise.

During the periods when I have not had any business, this technique has definitely assisted me, as my fears have been particularly evident no matter the size of the financial cushion I've had in the bank.

At times like these, it's important for me to start the day right, and, equally essential, that I put on my business attire and show up at my desk to search for new projects. This is a sign to your unconscious mind that you are serious about finding new opportunities and using the fear you are feeling to galvanise you into taking the right action.

"The fear factor can actually be a huge motivator for business owners if correctly channelled," comments William Fullard from attorneys Fullard, Mayer and Morrison. "As a result of circumstances beyond our control, the three of us started our practice in November 1999. No one makes payment at that time of the year and for the first three months we did not receive a cent of income. We had to fund the business from our limited savings. The fear propelled us forward."

**Reward yourself:** Celebrate your successes when you're running your own business. It's all part of keeping that positive momentum on the boil and will make your disappointments and times of difficulty more bearable.

Set a goal for yourself. Perhaps it's a profit target, plus an incentive to motivate you to achieve it. The incentive doesn't need to be a large one, but try and make it something special that you would not normally do or buy. If you have a team of people, set a team goal with a team incentive and report regularly to your staff on the progress being made towards attaining the goal.

At the end of my first 12 months in business, I bought myself a Michel Herbelin watch as an acknowledgement that I had survived my first year. It was a great investment as, almost twenty years later, I'm still wearing it. What's important is to recognise your achievement and to believe that you will be able to repeat that success in the future. **YB**

This is an excerpt from Shirley Anthony's book, *The NEW Entrepreneur: A Practical Marketing Guide For Growing Your Business Now*. She can be contacted via [info@marbreak.co.za](mailto:info@marbreak.co.za) or [www.marbreak.co.za](http://www.marbreak.co.za).

