

How to be Mentally **Tough in the Modern** **BUSINESS WORLD**



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Introduction

When you are into sports I assume that you are already familiar with the term *mental toughness*. Mental toughness is defined as having the psychological advantage that enables you to contend against difficulties compared to your opponents, given the stressful demands that sports places on the player such as training and following a strict lifestyle.

It means that despite the struggles, when a performer is mentally tough he or she can withstand the pressure, maintain the confidence and have the focus and determination needed to do the job no matter how difficult the situation may seem.

Tiger Woods, for instance, dominated golf for decades but it wasn't because of his impeccable skill that made him legendary. Tiger Woods became one of the best golfers in the world because of the mental toughness he exuded in every competition. Do you want to know how this happened? Well, his dad, who happened to have a background in psychology, taught him the importance of mental toughness. That was the secret to Tiger Woods' success. Of course, in sports you cannot discount skills but what makes you excel is when you master the mental game. This gives you the edge that will in turn bring you success.

Just recently, entrepreneurs discovered the association between mental toughness and peak performance in business. Even though sports and business are unrelated, if you take out two top performers in both fields and study them closely you will learn that they do share a common denominator, both performers share the same psychological profile. What separated these top performers from their peers are their psychological skills.

The great thing about this is that psychological skills can be learned. Contrary to popular belief, the best performers out there are not born to be great; they are made. One of the most important and invaluable psychological skills that put you in an advantage is mental toughness.

Despite having heard of the term mental toughness time and time again, many of us still do not understand what it means to be mentally tough especially the people within the business industry. While those who have truly understood the importance of mental toughness see it as a desirable quality, there are some business people who find it hard to define what mental toughness is and so they usually assume that a person who is considered 'mentally tough' has an uncompromising and hard attitude. These behaviors are totally the opposite of mental toughness. As a matter of fact, these attributes are indicative of mental weakness as well as the lack of self-awareness.

What is Mental Toughness?

This brings us to question, what really is mental toughness? To define mental toughness in the simplest terms, it is the combination of skills that will result to peak performance highlighting a person's ability to cope well under pressure.

A person who is mentally tough is able to consistently achieve excellent performances even if he or she is bombarded with negativity and circumstances. This person is mentally equipped to handle distractions and he or she is able to maintain a positive outlook even if placed in the middle of a difficult situation.

Based on the definition of mental toughness, it's obvious that we need it especially for entrepreneurs who are exposed to a barrage of stress on a regular basis. Needless to say, entrepreneurs have to toughen up so they can achieve success even in the midst of adversities.

At this point, the question we want to get straight and clear answers from is this:

How can you train yourself to become a mentally tough entrepreneur?

Since being mentally tough can be learned, I am going to share with you *5 habits* you need to practice to turn yourself into the kind of entrepreneur that can do almost anything.

1. Visualize

It is very important for entrepreneurs to be visionaries. They need to have a vision of what their goals are going to be so they know what direction they are going to take. Clarity is also as important. You need to have clarity around what your goals are and clarity around possible situations that may arise in the future. When you know how to visualize you can handle situations and challenges a lot better.

Visualization in business means having a clear picture of what you want your business to achieve. It also means having visions even on the smallest detail like how you want your team to look. Visualizing your goal conditions your mind to focus and with enough motivation you can work your way towards it. Without a vision, you'll be walking around in circles with no particular destination. Individuals who are mentally tough are visionaries. They know what they want and they find means to get it. Focusing on your vision gives you the motivation you need to take action so your business will end up in the direction you envisioned in your mind.

2. Be Positive

Realistically speaking, it can be difficult to maintain a positive outlook when you are overwhelmed with a constant tide of negativity. It is true what they say it's easier said than done. It's a daunting challenge that many entrepreneurs experience today. How can you stay positive, they ask, when your business isn't generating profit? How can you maintain a positive outlook when your staff's performance does not measure up to your expectations?

Being positive can be tricky and it requires you to make a conscious effort everyday to develop a positive attitude. They say people who have acquired success in life are those who stay positive no matter what circumstances they face. I totally agree with this. Why? It's because your attitude has an effect on your customers, your clients, your suppliers, your staff, your investors and basically everyone you affiliate with.

Your attitude will infect those around you so you have a choice, whether to emit negative energy or positive energy to those people. Clearly, negative energy does not result to success and it does the opposite. So the choice is up to you. When you radiate positivity it is going to be infectious and those around you will feel it. Your customers will want to buy from you; your staff will want to work doubly hard because with your positivity, you are subtly motivating them to do their jobs correctly. All these will lead to a better performance in your business.

Likewise, maintaining a negative attitude has a detrimental effect on your business. People wouldn't want to be around you, clients wouldn't want to buy from you and even your staff will feel discouraged. The results will definitely not put a smile on your face, that's for sure.

When you develop a positive outlook you will move forward a lot easier and you are able to handle circumstances in your business fairly easier instead of wallowing in negativity. When you are positive you will feel more confident about yourself and your performance and you'll feel that you are better in control. Meanwhile, a negative outlook can destroy your confidence; damage your business performance and it can have a negative effect on your health.

So choose to be positive and exercise positivity in your life on a regular basis. Do it for your sake and for the sake of your business' success.

3. Celebrate Small Victories

As we go on ticking off task after task and goal after goal from our list, let us not forget to celebrate our small victories. As entrepreneurs, we find ourselves eager to work on our next goal that sometimes we forget to give ourselves a pat on the back. Remember that a huge part of your success relies on your current state of mind. Basically, it is all about having the right mindset particularly a success mindset. However, acquiring a success mindset necessitates cultivation. Yes, sadly you don't wake up in the morning with a success mindset. You need to work for it. Although visualization and affirmations do play a part in nurturing a success mindset, aside from these one of the ways to acquire a success mindset is to celebrate your small victories.

Look at all the things you have accomplished so far instead of focusing all of your energy on the long list of things you need to take care of. Do not forget to celebrate even the littlest form of success you and your team have accomplished because these seemingly trivial successes are stepping stones that will lead you to acquire your major goal. Cultivating a success mindset is my secret and so far the results have been nothing short of amazing.

When you begin to pay attention to your successes no matter how small they are, you'll start seeing yourself as a successful person, someone who is capable of achieving even bigger successes. When you celebrate you'll feel good about yourself and little by little it will build up the momentum. One way of not losing that momentum is to celebrate small victories. No, it doesn't necessarily have to be a big celebration like throwing a party and inviting everyone over. Celebrating small victories could mean popping a bottle of champagne or treating yourself to your favorite restaurant or ordering pizza for everyone in the office as a way of showing your gratitude towards your team.

4. Control Your Emotions

Anyone who's in business knows that it's not all roses; challenges, frustrations and disappointments will always be there. A wise businessman knows that once you're in business you should learn how to control your emotions especially during times when you're required to make major decisions.

It's true that emotions are indeed part of who we are and it's okay to express them when we get angry, frustrated or tired with how our business is going. But it is also important to know that when you are placed in a situation that demands you to make tough business decisions, making decisions at the height of your emotions can do more harm than good. I personally wouldn't recommend that you make decisions especially major ones that will have a huge impact on your business.

When you are in a highly emotional state, do not ever react or make hasty decisions whether it's highly positive or highly negative. You simply cannot make logical and strategic decisions in your business when you are highly emotional. I suggest you take the time off to clear your mind and tame your emotions before you come up with decisions. You might need to sleep it off or go out for walk so when you come back you've already found clarity. Sometimes we need to take ourselves out of the situation for a while so we can objectively and logically evaluate the situation. Don't entangle your emotions with your business because this is a surefire way to bring damage to your business.

5. Get Good People Around You

Being mentally tough is a learned attribute. You don't wake up one day and say, "Oh wow, today I choose to be mentally tough." You don't get to decide that. You can however practice certain habits that will hone you to be mentally tough. One of the habits you need to practice is to get good people around you. Examples of good people are your mentors, business coaches, business consultants or even people who inspire you in your particular industry. These are the people who have already achieved what you want to achieve for yourself and for your business.

Why is this an advantage on your part? Well, when you keep their company you get to hear what they have done and learn about the mistakes they made in their business. So you learn a lot quicker from these people rather than yourself. It's nice to hear stories from actual people rather than read about them in text because it will appear more real to you and you can relate to them better. These people particularly business coaches will make you accountable for your business strategies. Some services are free while others come with a fee. But you know what they say, once you are in business, you need to make certain investments to make your business grow.

Conclusion

If you want to succeed in your business you need to train yourself to become mentally tough. Mental toughness is what separates the achievers from the less successful ones. Being mentally tough means you have full control over your feelings, attitudes and thoughts while under pressure.

In business, you cannot escape from pressure especially if you are striving for success. Success and stress always work hand in hand. And so if you want to achieve the former you need to learn how to deal and handle the latter and one way of doing that is mentally equipping yourself so you can scale the ladder of success no matter the circumstance.

Sure, it's not easy and it's going to get harder and harder along the way. But the good news is, if you train yourself by following these habits early on, over time you'll realize that it's not that difficult after all. By visualizing, by staying positive, by celebrating your small victories, by learning how to control your emotions in the workplace and by keeping the company of good people, you are already training yourself for mental toughness.