

10 tips to fire up your enthusiasm for business once again.

1. Are you overwhelming yourself with too many to-do's? This is one of the easiest ways to suck the energy right out of your day. If your to-do list looks like a never-ending novel, then you will feel overwhelmed before you even begin! Instead, list 8 goals - one for every hour. That gives you enough time to complete each assignment and if you finish early, you can revel in the satisfaction of a job well done -- and then get a head start on the next gig.

2. Visualize yourself achieving your goals. Whether it's winning an award, finishing that dreaded project or an actual work-free vacation by the ocean-side, you can mentally recharge by envisioning yourself achieving what you want more than anything.

3. Take a break and focus on yourself. By not taking care of yourself you are committing vocational suicide. YOU are the boss. Without you, your business will fail. And you WILL fail if you refuse to take care of yourself. Studies have shown that you can increase your mental and physical stamina by getting healthy! Exercising, deep breathing, eating lots of fruits, vegetables and grains, giving up some of that coffee for water and sleeping (yes, I said sleeping) can only boost your business, your endurance and your mental energy. Try it for 8 weeks and see what happens!

4. Surround yourself with positive people. Optimism can be contagious. Gather up a team of happy-go-lucky, energetic people who will feed into your self-esteem and create some infectious positive energy. And if you can't afford new, or any, employees right now? Try for volunteers, interns and friends who are willing to help. Start a focus group, chat on the Internet, or join an organization of like business-oriented people. Search out these peppy people and soon you will be feeling the power of their creative vibrations.

5. Ask your employees how you can boost moral. Get some input. Is the entire office feeling this "blahness?" If so, brainstorm ways to boost their spirits. Offer parties, incentives, a suggestion box, monthly meetings, groovy music, brightly colored posters, casual (or hat) day, or "bring your kid to work day." Anything and everything to make the job fun! One business in my area keeps their employees motivated by giving away free exercise club passes, and then encouraging the staff to compete in small marathons, boating races and walking in parades.

6. Progress reports. Praise yourself and your employees with monthly progress reports. Do NOT focus on what you have NOT done -- it's all about what you HAVE done. Create a goal chart on the wall and as you reach each goal you can shade that area in with red. Once the goal chart is finished -- and on time (say - every quarter) -- do something fun and positive. A pizza lunch for the crew is a way to say "thank you." Have an employee of the quarter and send their name and picture to the newspaper. If you're working solo, take a day off to reflect and soak up the deliciousness of your achievements.

7. Inspirational reading. Do you have a successful mentor? Read all you can about their road to success. If it's possible, meet with them. Their insights and experiences will only inspire and feed your goals.

8. Chronicle your journey in a portfolio. Take a day to look back on what has brought you to your current position. Gather up photos of you in various stages of your career, any newspaper clippings, letters of achievement, awards, recognitions, profit sheets, and employees. Put this all together in a photo album and sit it on a shelf in your office. Also add new clippings into your portfolio, don't forget to look back at what you HAVE done and how far you have had to come to be where you are today.

9. Get busy on a new project or tackle a big obstacle. There's no better way to breath energy into a stale state than to start something new and exciting. If you're feeling stagnant right now it's probably because you are no longer creating and building -- you've reached a plateau and now it's time to climb another notch and see what's lying up above the next ridge. What do you want to do? Where do you want to go next? Create a business plan for your next adventure and go for it! Fuel your creative fire!

10. Lower your expectations. Are you a perfectionist? David Burns, M.D. once said "Perfection is man's ultimate illusion. It simply doesn't exist in the universe.... If you are a perfectionist, you are guaranteed to be a loser in whatever you do." Perfectionism is self-defeating, it lowers your self-esteem and is hauntingly pessimistic. Instead, lower your expectations to focus on progress only. So what if it isn't perfect? Nothing is. Gain experience with your imperfections. And if you don't believe me, listen to Bob Dylan who said "I have given up at making any attempt at perfection," yet he went on to win a Grammy Award for Lifetime Achievement. So if it works for him, it will work for you!