

# ..The SOHO club..



*“Before you can have a good day financially, you have to have a good day emotionally.”*

So “how are you today?” Do you ever get asked that question? I do, many times, and I always answer in the same way: “absolutely super, fantastic, great, brilliant, life couldn’t be any better, business is great”.

Now of course I don’t use all these statements in the same sentence, but I do use at least two or three of them when answering that question. I love seeing the look on their faces when I respond like that, for it completely takes them a-back as it is generally not what they were expecting.

## WHO’S ASKING ANYHOW?

Before I go into explaining why I always answer in that manner, it’s well worth asking; “Why do we get asked that question so many times, and what type of person asks it?”

Answering the second half of that question will provide us with the answer to the first half. It’s generally negative people that always ask that question, as they seek justification for being negative about themselves.

And no-where is this more prevalent than within the world of the SOHO entrepreneur.

Most people I meet from within the SOHO industry are generally of a negative disposition which is strange, really - for to get into business for oneself takes a tremendous amount of courage and fortitude. But somehow, somewhere along the way, that gets knocked out of them.

## GROWING PAINS

Attitudes are great when we first start



*Attitudes are great when we first start out with our dream enterprise, with our visions of grandeur and abundant success, driving that exclusive sports car, living in that dream home with our beautiful partner on our arm.*

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great as we ‘give birth’ to our project, ignoring the initial growing pains as the power of adrenalin flows through our veins at breakneck speed, ignoring the speed at which money flows out though

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our chequebooks even faster as we justify this as all being an investment for the future.

Our attitude says that it's OK that business might be slow at first because 'we have to establish ourselves first', 'we have to become known!' Our attitudes are great during these initial stages, but for how long will our attitudes accept that slow pace, and how do we portray ourselves as positive individuals during this period, these times of initial growing pains?

## SO-NEGATIVE SOHOS

You may recall in last month's article that I constantly referred to 'the development of YOU', and how you and your business grow and develop hand in hand. Nowhere is this development more important than during these early stages of establishment, but you need to concentrate and be strong. You need to have an attitude that is above and beyond reproach that protects you from all the negativity that is inevitably going to surround you and try to pull you down.

How many times have you heard, or even used these phrases yourself:

"Business is a bit slow at the moment but it will pick up soon."

"Once the weather picks up it will be fine."

"Once people know about us things will get better."

"We're not in a very good location."

"We started at the wrong time of the year."

"The recession is affecting us."

Or perhaps you have walked into a store, or business and overheard a conversation whereby some one asked, "how are things?" only to hear from the business owner, "Oh can't complain." followed by one of the phrases above?

This unintentional negativity amongst some SOHO Entrepreneurs is so common that it's frightening. You hear it in businesses every day, for little do these people realise that each time they use these phrases that they are driving another nail into their coffins and their

ultimate demise.

Negative SOHO operators seek out other negative operators so that they can jointly enjoy the comfort and security of not suffering alone, both wallowing in self-pity. It's so easy to say to your partner, spouse, or even SELF, "Oh well, it's not just me; it can't be my fault then, for they are finding it difficult as well".

## THROW YOURSELF A ROPE

These people believe that it is better to drown in the Titanic than as a lone yachtsman. I believe that it is better not to drown at all. As a SOHO Entrepreneurs we have to be survivors, fighters, and believers in ourselves. We have to live our dreams, live our beliefs and not allow anyone or anything to change that. We are in business for ourselves, and by ourselves. NOTHING affects our attitude!

The problem with this commonly shared negative and downtrodden attitude is that it is self-perpetuating, and what your mind believes, so your customers perceive. Business declines as your customers spread the word on your behalf leading you and your business towards a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Of course management and technical skills affect your business also, but the actual 'driving' force behind your success is YOU! How you feel, and more importantly what is implied by what you say determines your upward or downward spiral.

## UPBEAT BEATS 'EM ALL

Me? I'm a SOHO Entrepreneur and I face the identical challenges that you do, but no one knows that (until now through this article that is)!

I have rules that I enforce upon myself, upon all those that represent me and on all those that I meet. I never ask people how they are, or "How's business?" for that is only seeking out negative responses, and I do not want those in my life. I leave those sorts of questions to

negative people – there are enough of them around!

I always start my conversations with, "Isn't life great / great to see the sun shining / what a fabulous display...". It is always something positive; that confuses the competition!

If ever I get asked about business, asked how things are going, my responses are always the same: 'Brilliant / fantastic / marvellous / couldn't be better / business is booming'. I'm always upbeat, because UPBEAT BEATS THE COMPETITION. Upbeat spreads the word around the customer base that you're a winner, that you are a survivor, and that you are fun to do business with – people like spending money with people they like. Your upbeat attitude reinforces the negativity of your competitors thereby driving their customers in your direction.

## THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

By the same token, as a SOHO Entrepreneur, I always advise people to be wary of associations and commerce's and to investigate before joining them as to whether or not they are a driving force within the community with positive ideas for moving forward, or if they are continually concentrating on negative issues. You do not want to become embroiled by, or dragged down into, the problems of others.

Look for positive, forward thinking support groups whose attitude matches that of your own. Before you can have a good day financially, you have to have a good day emotionally.

So, there you have it: HOW ARE YOU TODAY? ■

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