Expert Tips & Tactics

Goals and the Law of Attraction

As I sit by the window that faces the lake and listen to the frogs tonight, it is the end of April. Maybe it's the college professor in me, but at this time of year, when I see my students graduating and beginning careers I start to think about how we go about goal setting. As I grade final exams and see the product of a semester's worth of work I also become sensitive to the messages that we send ourselves about our personal progress.

My own child entered the formal educational system this year, so there is also a part of me that is interested in how the interactions he has with his teachers are shaping his future. I can still put myself in his shoes and the shoes of his teachers…I've lived in both worlds.

In the last few months, it would be fair to say that things have been challenging for my son and his kindergarten teacher. When my kid messes up in school he sometimes gets lines to write, but I have the sense that they are not achieving the desired result. Let's look at a couple of examples of my son's lines: 'I will sit quietly in circle time' or 'I will raise my hand and wait to be called.'

So, I was looking at the lines my boy is expected to write and it doesn't take a rocket scientist or an expert in educational psychology to figure out why his teacher is not getting the desired result. Every sentence he writes begins with 'I will.'

The direct implication of 'I will' is that right now…'I don't.' On the surface of things it looks as though these are positive affirmations of desirable behavior. In reality they are reinforcing exactly the behavior the teacher does not want.

Oddly enough there's a lesson in here for us would-be business owners.

You have probably figured out where I'm going with this, haven't you?

I want you to dig out your most recent year's business goals list…you know the one you look at every day to make sure that you are reinforcing the behaviors and meeting the deadlines that will keep you on track for the goals you set for the end of the year.

Now let's look at the goals. Are they in the present tense and are they positive? If your goals are to have any value at all they must be positive and present. The Law of Attraction says that we bring into our lives the people, events and opportunities that are in conformity with our belief systems. If I keep writing goals like 'I will reach a goal of 250 clients by August 1st', I am in fact reinforcing the reality that I currently do not have 250 clients. Rather than reinforcing what I want, I am actually reinforcing what I don't want. Every time I read the goal, I'm reminding myself of what I don't have. My chances of reaching the goal are pretty slim.

It's not the superficial message that's important, it's the subtext. It's the subtext that is going to prevent you from reaching your goals. It's the subtext that your subconscious mind sees every time you step into your business.

O.K., maybe *if* you are one of those inspiring souls who sets goals out in the future, has hard-earned, results-based confidence in your ability to reach them, coupled with an unswerving tenacity and persistence, then you might make a set of future-positive goals work for you. Most of us, however, need to see something as already being here, if we are going to make it manifest in our lives.

It is my advice to you, therefore, that you write your goals as though you already have what it is you seek. The other trick to writing powerful goals is to make sure that there isn't some internal inconsistency in your goal set. It is critical that all of your goals are mutually supportive. Crunch the numbers. Do they work? Do the goals work logically? Do they support each other? Are the in the present and are they positive?

So how are we doing?

Hands up everyone who needs to rewrite their goals.

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