

Expert Tips & Tactics

Habit Energy

Have you ever walked into a room where two people have just been arguing? Could you feel the tension? Have you ever walked into a room where two people were having a good time and laughing? Could you feel the energy?

Now think about our businesses. Have you ever walked into a business that was alive? Have you ever walked into one that was dead? The same thing applies to business clinics and seminars; sometimes you come away feeling rejuvenated and motivated but at other times you come away vowing never to return to a similar event.

So what makes the difference? For sure, the expectations and energy that we bring to the event will directly impact what we get out of the experience, but I think that there is a lot more going on here.

We are all aware that the things we do on a regular basis (habits) can either leave us feeling energized and motivated or leave us feeling drained. We all have 'positive' and 'negative' habits. Some of our habits build us up; some of them drag us down. So is it any real stretch to think that the businesses we build will reflect our habits? If the answer to that question is 'no', then it should not come as a surprise to us that our businesses will also reflect the energy that our habits create.

As I have said before, our businesses develop into micro-cultures that attract people with similar attitudes and goals. As our businesses grow and mature, they will therefore acquire their own rituals and traditions. For example, at one martial arts school, practicing form can be invigorating, challenging and uplifting. At another school, practicing form might be an exercise in total frustration and criticism....I've been in both. If I'm honest, at some point in my career, I have probably *taught* both! This is where habit energy comes in.

Habit energy is the energy that we create when we fall into a routine in our teaching or in our approach to the growth of our businesses. Every thought, emotion, impulse and action generates its own energy, which will infect our students. Over time, those actions will translate into business *practices* and our businesses will begin to acquire energy levels that are commensurate with those practices.

When potential clients walk into your business they will get a sense of whether or not the school is place in which they would like to invest their resources of time and money. Whether or not you recognize it, they are picking up on the energy of the place. It is for these reasons that our businesses should be welcoming, clean, positive environments, filled with motivated, nurturing and caring office staff and employees who believe in what they are doing and who love doing it!

When I moved my business last summer, I thought deeply about the changes I wanted to make in my business practices and my business environment that would reflect more accurately what it is that we are about. I wanted to use the opportunity presented by the move to create a higher level of energy. After all, there is always room for improvement.

The point here is that as the owner/CEO/CFO/chief instructor/head janitor of my business I am responsible for the energy generated at the school and all my habitual actions will affect that energy. If I am not willing to look at what I am doing, why I am doing it or the results that I am creating, then I am going to be trapped where I am. If I am willing to face some difficult questions and change some things, then I am placing myself and my business in a situation where we can grow and generate higher levels of habit energy.

Higher levels of energy can only bring greater good to our clients and therefore, by extension, the communities of which we are a part. Isn't that why we are here in the first place?

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