

Freedom-Based Business Success Top 10 Tips from Being in Business for 10 Years

By: Lisa Manyon



It's hard to believe that what started as a creative spark in October of 2003 is now a thriving business 10 years later. I have a freedom-based business that supports my core values and allows me to work and play anywhere I choose.

There have been a lot of laughs, a lot of tears and a lot of lessons. Now, I'm going to share my top 10 tips for success with you here.

HAVE A CLEAR PLAN AND STRATEGY (AND KNOW IT WILL CHANGE):

Know your vision and uphold your mission by putting a plan in place to support your projections. Your marketing strategy is key to the success of your business, especially for mission-driven entrepreneurs who are creative by nature. You need a road map for success. It's also important to remember that your plans may change, and that is OK, as long as they are changing to support your vision. The key is to be consistent, and always market your message.

BE REALLY CLEAR ABOUT YOUR MARKETING MESSAGES:

Base your BIG vision, mission, and overall plan on your values, so everything is congruent. This gives you a solid foundation to uphold your word, and your word is everything. NEVER underestimate the power of the word. When you are clear and coming from a place of true service and integrity, you'll be MILES ahead of the game.

TRADEMARK YOUR BUSINESS NAME:

Once you are clear about your vision and mission, be sure to trademark your business name. It will save you a lot of legal hassles and give you security when someone tries to imitate you or use your business name (this WILL happen intentional or unintentional). You must protect what is yours, as this protects your reputation.

NEGOTIATE FULL RIGHTS TO YOUR DESIGN WORK (WEB, LOGO, ETC.):

Always read the fine-print, and make sure you own what you are paying for. Negotiate FULL rights; otherwise, your designer may turn around and charge you royalties for using your logo on promotional items etc. (beyond the initial design fee).

ALWAYS CHECK REFERENCES:

I cannot stress this enough. Unfortunately, people are not always who they say they are, and they cannot always perform the work they claim they can. Do your due diligence to avoid surprises.

CHOOSE YOUR TEAM WISELY:

Refer to #5, and be sure to speak to others who have worked with team members, especially if you're working with independent contractors. Have written job and task descriptions in place, and be sure to discuss them verbally to make sure team members understand what you are saying (often communication styles vary and expectations can be unclear unless you talk about it). Remember that your team members will grow with you or they won't, and change is normal here.



REMEMBER THAT PEOPLE ARE NOT NUMBERS:

When it comes to business, numbers are a part of the game. They are especially important when setting and reaching projections. However, the biggest mistake I've seen is treating people like numbers (a personal pet peeve), especially when building online lists (I liken some of the techniques to schoolyard bullying, and you can bet there will be a blog post about this soon.).

CHALLENGE THE NORM:

This is important, and it ties in with trusting your intuition. If it doesn't feel right, it's probably not right. If I hadn't challenged the norm, I would have never created the NEW marketing model for success and my "Challenge. Solution. Invitation™" copywriting and marketing formula. Just because someone says they are a guru or others think they are a guru doesn't mean everything they do and say is right for your business. Don't be afraid to create new ways of doing business that support your values. By challenging the norm, I've been featured in Inc. Magazine, the book Wonder Women: How Western Women Will Save the World, and more. The buzz continues to create new revenue streams for me (speaking, training, breakout sessions, and beyond) and additional media exposure including my regular appearance on Experience Pro's Radio (listen to a quick clip here).



DO WHAT YOU DO BEST AND OUTSOURCE THE REST:

I spent far too much time doing things I had no business doing. Like my books, admin work, etc. These are very important functions of business, but they are not the best use of my time. Take a good hard look at everything you are doing in your business, and get support so that you are focusing only on your magic. Note: this is an ongoing process.

INVEST IN TOPNOTCH MENTORS:

We are not meant to do it alone, and while I think you should challenge the norm (see #8 and #5), I believe you should invest in the right mentors to move your business forward. We all have strengths and weaknesses. Get help where you need it most.

Lisa Manyon is "The Business Marketing Architect," a content strategist for mission-driven entrepreneurs. She's the creator of the new marketing model for success as featured in Inc. Magazine. She teaches a relationship-based approach to marketing with integrity with her "Challenge. Solution. Invitation.™" formula. Lisa's Content Strategy Plans and innovative marketing vision have been known to accurately predict marketing trends and generate over \$40,000 in the first email campaign when incorporating her methods. Her big vision and ability to see all the pieces of your marketing puzzle allow her to help you reverse engineer your big ideas into tangible action steps, turning your dreams into reality. Lisa is a regular guest expert on Experience Pros radio, and her philosophies are featured in the book Wonder Women: How Western Woman Will Save The World and beyond. Lisa is available for speaking engagements and you can learn more by visiting her media kit lisa.instantmediakit.com. She offers free marketing resources on her award winning blog <http://www.writeoncreative.com/blog>.