

So, You Want to Start a Business?

Written by Jamie Wolf

Wednesday, 18 July 2012 08:24



Taking Action – Part 1 of 6

“You can’t cross a sea by merely staring into the water.” - Rabindranath Tagore, 1913 Nobel Laureate for Literature

You’ve mastered the essential behavior of making decisions and creating plans. You have a starting point. You looked at the big picture and figured out you are an entrepreneur. You’ve outlined what you want to do, where you want to do it, what resources you have and need, when to do what, and most importantly, why you want to reach your destination. Now it’s time to act on those plans!

Depending on the type of business you are considering – whether part-time or full-time, with a product or service, simple or complex – the planning part is exciting and consumes you but the action part ... well, that’s something altogether different!

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Why is that? **Sometimes before you can take action you have to examine yourself and figure out what's blocking your way forward.**

Select the areas below that you feel describe you today:

- ☐ I'm waiting for conditions to be perfect
- ☐ I have ideas, then forget them before I get to them
- ☐ I'm going to start tomorrow (next month, New Year's, other)
- ☐ I'm afraid
- ☐ It seems like a lot of work
- ☐ I'm not creative
- ☐ I'm too busy

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- I'm too tired

- I don't have any money

- I'm waiting for someone to tell me what to do/how to do it

- It's too hard

- There are too many things to choose from

- What if I fail?

- I tried before and it didn't work

- They won't let me

- I have too many responsibilities to other people

I could address each one of these, point by point – or I could tell you to **stop thinking and just do something!**

You've probably heard of analysis paralysis. I put you through 6 sections of planning and now you're stuck in that rut. It's time to move. Implement a step.

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That's the thing about taking action. **One small step leads to another small step. Before you know it, you've got a track record.**

When you have a track record, people come looking for you. You no longer have to go begging for their attention.

So how do you do? How do you act? How do you take a step forward? One way is to eliminate choices.

Choices can be overwhelming. They can freeze you into inaction. They can intimidate you and overwhelm you. In a fascinating book called *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness*, the authors Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein talk about the architecture of choice.

[\[1\]](#)

They explain how a well-crafted set of rules enable us to make smart decisions when we need to take action and can't afford to waste time evaluating too many possible choices.

You can also get SMART! SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-dimensioned.

When you set a SMART goal, it should be specific. You should be able to measure your progress toward achieving it. It must be achievable. It must be relevant to your objectives. And

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there must be a deadline for achieving it.

“I want to lose weight” is not a SMART goal, because it’s not specific and it doesn’t meet any of these other criteria.

“I want to get healthy by losing 50 pounds in two weeks” is not a SMART goal, either, because it’s not achievable, and it won’t yield its intended outcomes.

“Today is July 1st, and I want to weigh 130 pounds, when I step on the scale on October 1st. To lose those 15 pounds, I will walk briskly for one hour each day, and I will eliminate sugar, white rice, white bread, and white potatoes from my diet for the next eight weeks.” That is a SMART goal. It’s specific. It’s measurable. It’s achievable. It’s relevant. And it has a deadline.

Ideas, plans and good intentions don’t really amount to much unless you take action. Taking action creates results. It is time for you to transition! Gather all your notes and look at all that you have planned over the last three months, and know that YOU are ready! **Now is the time for YOU to ACT and when you do, you will ATTRACT all that you need to keep moving forward!** Good luck!

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If you are still looking for actions very specific to starting a business, here are some to get you started.

1. Figure out the numbers and determine roughly how much will it cost to get your business off the ground.
2. Based on # 1, decide if you have enough money or will need a loan.
3. If you need a loan, identify a few banks to talk to about commercial lending. Then go talk to them!
4. For the type of business you have in mind, figure out what county, state, and federal licenses, certifications, etc. you need for your business and what lead-time you may need to acquire them. Then start with the first one and work your way through. There are many helpful websites for your specific location that will walk you through the requirements.
5. Determine how much help you are going to need, and budget that. I recommend starting with contract, project-based help only.
6. Open a business checking account and get a business credit card.
7. Design your [company logo](#) and [order business cards](#) .
8. Obtain any necessary insurance.

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9. Acquire office or storefront space and/or purchase inventory, if necessary. But remember to start small, test your market, talk to your market so they know you exist and so you can respond to feedback!

10. Closely manage and analyze your books; pay careful attention to your cash flow.

11. Make a difference in your community!

DO's

- **DO** remember, when you take action it is not to show that you are busy. It is to deliver intended results and outcomes. You determined when you made decisions about starting over that these outcomes were right for you.
- When you experience missteps, which you inevitably will, **DO** pay attention to this feedback. The mistakes won't defeat you. They'll help you by allowing you to modify your decisions and take new actions.
- **DO** one thing today. Then email me, tell me what action you took, what result you got, and how you feel now that you've taken the hardest and most important step – your first one!

DON'Ts

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- **Don't** stay stuck in planning or revising mode. You can tweak things later as your actions provoke market feedback.

- **Don't** overwhelm yourself with too many choices. Look at all your notes and plans, pick 1 or 2 things to do, and do them right now!

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Get an accountability partner. Find someone who'll agree to speak with you by phone every two weeks (or who'll meet with you for coffee) to keep you accountable for taking action.

2. Identify what's holding you back if you are finding transitioning to action difficult.

3. Write down 3 things you accomplish each day and look back at the end of each month to see how much action you have taken. Note how your actions have attracted the right help and resources for you.

4. Plan to keep checking in with this blog to learn next steps to start a business.

5. Ask me a question! Tell me what's happened for you so far. Thank you!

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Beaufort resident Jamie Wolf is the author of 'Start Over! Start Now! Ten Keys to SUCCESS in Business and Life' and ten accompanying guidebooks. ☐ If you're ready to be Master of your Fate and Captain of your Soul, she invites you to come on board! Jamie offers online courses and coaching for entrepreneurs and people interested in starting over or in starting their own business. Visit her at <http://www.thestartover.com>

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