“How Sharp is Your Saw”
(350-400 words – read time approx.-3-4 minutes)

Remember Albert Einstein, he is known for some really great quotes among his many scientific achievements. One of my favorites is: “We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them”. Well, that ought to stir things up a bit. Let me ask you a few questions. Do you find yourself struggling with the same kind of Business challenges on a regular basis? Do you find you have consistent challenges dealing with people? Is technology constantly testing you and frustrating you? Do you regularly find there’s not enough time in the day to get things done? Do you think things will eventually change in all these areas of concern to better suit your style? Einstein also said; “Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.” So with that, let’s have a look at some ideas that might inspire you to lead a better quality of life and move past some of the barriers that may be holding you back.

Take a moment and think about one thing that you do very well. Maybe it’s a particular sport that you have mastered. Perhaps it’s a musical instrument that you spent years studying and are now quite accomplished. Possibly a hobby like racing cars, piloting your yacht in coastal waters, gourmet cooking, anything that people who know you would say you are great at doing. Got it? Good. Now, how long did it take to become so skillful and masterful at your particular craft? Why did you take the time to learn and become so proficient in this area of interest? You will likely start to notice in this discovery that the things you enjoy doing are tied to what you value. Further, the things you value are much easier to become passionate about than the things you don’t. Do you think there is some significance to being passionate about anything you do in order to achieve a masterful status? Hmmm!

Let’s draw the connection to your Business. When you started your Business, what was the purpose, (your why) the primary reason for doing so and is that still true for you today? Were you going to fill a void in the marketplace or were you simply determined to provide better value and service than what was currently being offered in your industry? Did it get the juices flowing just thinking how you could own your market or at the very least carve out a disproportionate share? Was there a goal or a vision you started with that would stretch and challenge you with its accomplishment? Is there any skill, competency or knowledge that you lack that could move your Business to that next level you desire? Okay, here comes the big one. Is there anyone holding you accountable to what you set out to do? Do you have a mentor that can listen to you and critique your ideas and plans? I’m going to recommend that you find and meet with someone you can trust or a small group you can mastermind with at least once per month.

I have talked about this in past issues and also know the value of working through this. Remember Einstein’s quote and the value of advanced thinking. Re-examine your big picture goal (your vision) and take a forensic look at where you are (your current reality) in relationship to that goal. Are you stuck in a rut with no clear direction or instructions on how to get out? When establishing your current reality it’s important to list all of the things you currently possess in terms of skills, competencies and knowledge. Also state what you have accomplished in relation to your goals so you are clear of the distance between the two. What’s important next is not to be too concerned if your goal or vision is seemingly far away or not even in
the picture of realization. What is imperative is to determine what skill, competency or knowledge you must learn and apply that would move you one step closer to your goal. Is it time to hire a Coach, attend that seminar, read that book or enroll in an online webinar? In the beginning of this exercise there is usually a fair amount of tension between where you are and where you want to go, this is a good thing. With each subsequent step of learning and development the tension begins to relax and the target begins to move closer. You will find this exercise can be applied to any new endeavor, skill or competency you want to master.

Think about it, even Tiger Woods has a trainer, a coach and a support team to stay at the top of his game. Would you agree that Tiger is a pretty fair golfer? He’s such a great metaphor for success because while others would be happy to be the “Tiger Woods” of their particular market, he continues to raise the bar on himself. Why not start to raise your bar. After all, the only restrictions to what we can achieve and accomplish are allowed by our own self limiting beliefs. In the prophetic words of another great mentor of mine, Napoleon Hill, “Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve”. It’s time to kick that “gremlin” off your shoulder that’s telling you aren’t good or smart enough. Get out the grinder or the file and sharpen your saw, life’s going to get allot more fun and interesting. Stay positive and strong, we have much to be grateful for!

Tune in next issue for, “Designer Business, Designer Life”.

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