The Magic of Thinking BIG

I was talking with a friend of mine — a very successful entrepreneur — when the thought suddenly hit me.

I realized that without exception, every successful person I know thinks BIG. And this guy was definitely one of these big thinkers.

Later that day, as I thought more about it, I realized that every major success I’ve had in my life (whether personally or professionally) has come about ONLY after I decided to think BIG—to stretch myself beyond my comfort zone—and do away with self-limiting beliefs.

For instance, back in high school, I was just an average student... until halfway through 10th grade, when I saw my friends earning better grades. I knew they weren’t smarter than I was. So I decided to apply myself and prove that I could do better.

Less than 2 years later, I had a solid “A” average and was a member of the honor society.

It happened again when I became a sales professional. At one point, I was earning barely $60,000 a year. Then I saw some of my colleagues get over the six-figure hump. We were all selling the same products, and we all had about the same level of experience. Why were they doing so much better?

That made me mad...and it motivated me to take action! I took some courses, read more books, tried new strategies and set higher goals. The following year, I nearly doubled my income.

How About You? If you look back at your own accomplishments, I bet you’ll find a similar pattern. You’re coasting along, doing OK. Then you come across a friend, colleague or family member who is setting the world on fire. Someone who you know is not any smarter or more talented than you are.
The difference? They’ve set higher expectations. And because of that, they’ve probably been bolder in their preparation and the actions they take every day.

Here’s one of the biggest lessons I’ve learned over the last few years: we get what we expect. In other words, our outcomes are a clear reflection of our thoughts and our beliefs. If you set modest goals (as I’ve done way too many times in the past), you’ll get modest results.

But if you think BIG—if you set lofty goals, take steady, focused action and actually BELIEVE these goals are within your reach—you’ll achieve tremendous success.

So why not think BIG? It doesn’t take any more effort. It doesn’t take any more time. And the results you’ll get will be much better.

**In fact, I have an assignment for you...**

If you have your goals written down, pull out your goals sheet and take a hard look at them. Are they big or even bordering on “bold”? Do they make you stretch or even sweat a bit? If not, then scrap them and start over. **Rewrite them until they get you really excited thinking about achieving them.**

Now... I’m not suggesting you set completely unrealistic goals. But take it up another 3 or 4 notches. So if you’ve been earning $50,000 a year and your original goal for this year was to earn $60,000, why not bump it up to $75,000 or more?

Or if one of your goals was to take off every other Friday afternoon to play golf or to be with your family, why not strive to take every Friday off—the whole day?

As Leo Burnett once said, “When you reach for the stars, you may not get one...but you won’t come up with a hand full of mud either.”

**The next step in your assignment is to BELIEVE you’ll accomplish your lofty goals!** I know it sounds corny, but belief is an essential ingredient in accomplishing any worthwhile goal. For help in this department, read *The Magic of Thinking Big* by David J. Schwartz. It’s an old book, but it’s just as relevant today as it was back in the day it was written.

Finally, to help you a bit in the “Belief” department, take a look around you. Think about people who have achieved great things. Start with celebrities, bestselling authors, history’s great leaders. **And ask yourself: how many of them started with more than what you have to work with today?**
I’m willing to bet that most of them had more obstacles and fewer resources than you have right now. Yet they overcame those obstacles and accomplished great things. I can think of at least a dozen people like that. Abraham Lincoln, Oprah, J.K. Rowling, Steven Spielberg, Martin Luther King, Jr., Winston Churchill, Gandhi—the list goes on and on.

Next, pick one person you know. I be you have a relative, friend or acquaintance who’s accomplished some pretty amazing things. And I’m willing to bet they’re not any smarter or more talented than you are. But they got to where they are today because they thought BIG and didn’t let a few obstacles stand in their way.

One of the biggest breakthroughs in my freelance career happened when I was just starting out as a part time freelancer, and I attended a conference for freelance writers. A couple of the speakers were writers who had achieved great success. And I remember that as I talked to them after their presentation and I learned more about their background, I realized that these people weren’t any better or more talented than I was. They just applied themselves more. They tried harder. They focused their efforts. And they never gave up.

It was at that moment that I realized that I could do the same. Three years later, I had so many clients and so much work, I quit my day job, and I never looked back.

How about you? What have you accomplished (either in business or in your personal life) by thinking a little bigger about what’s possible? And what motivated you to think bigger about that? What worked for YOU?

Let me know in the comments area. I’d love to hear from you!