In Business And In Life

THINK BIG AND KICK ASS

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MAIN IDEA

There’s no use having small dreams. They hold no magic whatsoever. Instead, you should dream big, aim for the top and then work hard to make your dreams happen. What you dream is what you generally end up doing so if you want to make bucket loads of money, set an audacious goal and then get out there and make it happen. The keys to doing this are:

1. Be as tough as nails and willing to kick ass in order to win.
2. Never do anything for money. Do it for love.
3. Develop solid gut instincts, and act on them every day.
4. Work so hard you end up creating your own luck.
5. Be intensely paranoid and never stop watching your back.
6. When wronged, fight back with a vengeance. Always get even.
7. Try to maintain your momentum in business. Don’t lose it.
8. Focus. Never, ever rest on your laurels or believe your own PR.
10. No matter what, think big. What you dream about is what you do.

About of Author

DONALD TRUMP is one of the world’s most high profile and successful real estate developers. He is the developer of some of America’s most prestigious addresses. Mr. Trump is also coproducer of a television show in which he also appears. He is the author of seven business books and has an extremely high media profile. Mr. Trump is a graduate of the Wharton School of Finance.

BILL ZANKER is the founder of The Learning Annex, a $100 million adult education company which has spent two years on Inc. magazine’s Fastest Growing Companies list. Mr. Zanker excels in generating publicity for his company by doing newsworthy things. He paid $73,200 to purchase a Lincoln Town Car previously owned by Warren Buffett in a bid to get him to conduct a Learning Annex class. Mr. Zanker also paid $57,100 to have lunch with media mogul Rupert Murdoch. The Learning Annex pays Donald Trump one-million-dollars an hour for him to teach at the company’s wealth seminars.

In an ideal world, everyone would be able to get rich and stay that way indefinitely. The real world is much, more tougher. At the same time as some people are getting ahead, others are facing financial ruin, bankruptcy and more. To get ahead, you have to be tough enough to come up with viable solutions to some very scary problems lots of people face. That takes the ability to think big and kick ass.

If you study the top 2 percent of achievers in society, you'll find they have a few things in common which are worth picking up on and emulating:

- These people shoot openly for the top. They don’t settle for average sized transactions but work towards pulling off spectacular and noteworthy deals.

- They're hungry for success, which motivates them to keep setting progressively higher targets and meeting them.

- They not only have aggressive goals but they take action working towards their goals every day.

- Top achievers do their homework in advance so they know what’s involved going in to a project, not when they’re halfway through it.

- The top 2 percent are highly adept at finding solutions to problems others consider to be intractable.

- They get used to hearing “No” and ignore it, sidestep it or find a creative way to turn “No” into “Yes”.

- Top achievers don’t act passively or let others push them around. When someone crosses them, they redouble their efforts to get even rather than turning the other cheek.

- These people know what they’re doing and aren’t afraid to go with their gut instincts when the occasion requires, even when that means going against the tide of popular opinion.

- Achievers do whatever is required to defend themselves and their interests.

“To be successful you have to separate yourself from 98 percent of the rest of the world. Sure, you can get into that special 2 percent at the top, and it is not just by being smart, working hard, and investing wisely. There is a formula, a recipe for success that the top 2 percent live by and that you too can follow to be successful.”

– Donald Trump
"Hard work is my personal method for financial success. I know a lot of people who do not have a lot of talent but they are rich. You can do it, too."

– Donald Trump

“More than anything else, it takes persistence to do the things you need to do to get to the top. The most successful people I have learned from just never take no for an answer. They have all had to endure big challenges to get to where they are. They've had to overcome the odds that stop most people from making it big. To do this, they've had to develop the habit of persistence.”

– Bill Zanker

Just making money isn’t enough to motivate you to get out of bed in the morning. After a while, making money in and of itself loses its luster. If you’re trying to make money doing something you hate, it just won’t work. Your heart won’t be in it and this general feeling of discontent will carry on into your personal life and marriage as well.

So how do you tell if you’re in the right line of business? There are a few indicators when you’re doing something which aligns with your passions:

1. You can’t wait to get to work each day – in fact you’ll sleep as little as possible because your mind will be full of ideas on things you want to get started on the next day.

2. You become a doer rather than a dreamer – you love getting your hands dirty – bringing your ideas to fruition.

3. You’re prepared to carry on when under pressure – because what you’re doing is creating something you’re proud of rather than doing your hours at work and then heading home.
4. You spend more time looking for solutions – and less time trying to find someone to blame when the inevitable problems crop up.

5. You have a healthy perspective on your problems – and view them as challenges to be overcome rather than total and complete game changers. When you’re doing what feels good to you, you’ll always remain positive and upbeat even in the darkest days you can imagine.

6. You learn from your mistakes and move on – rather than getting down on yourself or depressed.

7. You strive hard to learn from the history of successes and failures in your industry – rather than insisting stubbornly on making every mistake yourself. It’s always much smarter and less painful to learn from other people’s mistakes.

8. You hang in there and never give up – because you’re loving what you do.

9. You look at each new day as an adventure – and relish the fact there are no guarantees of success. Everything depends on you.

10. You’ll be intensely competitive – because you’ll be challenging yourself to move forward and do even better things in the future.

When taken together, these indicators can highlight whether or not you’re doing something you love. When you’ve discovered what it is you’re passionate about and then take action in a positive direction within that field, great things can and will happen. Donald Trump, for example, is profoundly passionate about making deals. Therefore, he gets involved in building and property development because that’s the cutting edge where deal making skills can have big payoffs. He has then taken his Trump brand and applied it in lots of other product categories. Trump has, however, been careful to stay out of areas like computers because he simply does not have any interest or expertise there. Once you figure out what lights your own fires of imagination, you can then get out there and go for it.

“Don’t think about how you can make money. Instead think about what you can produce or what service you can offer that is valuable and useful to people and to your community. What needs to be improved? What can be done in a better or more efficient way? What problem can you solve? What needs can you fulfill? And most important, what will you have fun doing? Sure, you need to get paid for your work, and you will if you provide something valuable. In the game of life, money is how you score. Yet the real fun is not in simply scoring: it is in the excitement you have coming up with creative ways to get the ball in the goal. Find your passion in doing something useful for people and the money will follow. It may sound simple but I have become a billionaire many times over by sticking with this simple philosophy.”

– Donald Trump

“I love to make the big score and to make the big deal. You hear lots of people say that a great deal is when both sides win. That is a bunch of crap. In a great deal you win – not the other side. You crush the opponent and come away with something better for yourself. In negotiations, I love to go for the complete win. That is why I have made so many good deals.”

– Donald Trump
“To be a winner in life, find a passion, get out of your comfort zone, and be a doer. Learn how to handle pressure, to bounce back from failure, and to never give up.”

– Donald Trump

“Everyone thinks they want financial security. But, actually, the happiest people are those who love what they do. Knowing that work can be fun is a good start. And once you find what you love, you’re almost there. I stuck with The Learning Annex because it was exciting, and running it became the greatest career I could ever have imagined. It is not work at all; it is so much fun! I get to learn all the time from the greatest teachers in the world. I find ‘gurus’ I want to learn from, convince them to share their knowledge with my students (which includes me) and I am in bliss. This is not work . . . It’s what I love. It is like discovering a new restaurant and sharing it with friends. Finding the greatest teachers of the world and sharing them with my students makes me happy. So I am good at it. And prestige is a funny thing. If you do anything well enough, it becomes prestigious. Do what you love and the money will follow. It has for me and I am positive it will for you.”

– Bill Zanker

“You can never rest, no matter how good things are going. Your current ‘good times’ are only a result of the hard work and dedication you have put forth. What you do today will produce results tomorrow. If you want to keep the good times rolling, you have to keep on planting those seeds every day! If you stop focusing even for one minute, you will start slipping backwards.”

– Donald Trump

When you’re passionate about a field, you’ll naturally become knowledgeable and competent in it. When you’re knowledgeable about something, you start picking up on intangible clues even without consciously realizing you’re doing that. You’ll develop something of a sixth sense which will come because you’ll know enough about what’s going on to read between the lines. If you hone and polish that skill, it will serve you well and you’ll end up becoming very successful by following your intuition.

More specifically, the best way to use your business intuition is to follow a piece of advice from Andy Grove, former CEO of Intel:

“Dive deep into the data, then trust your gut.”

– Andy Grove

The best way to use your intuition is to analyze all of the facts of the situation and learn as much as you can that way. Then use your own logic, reason and experience to make an informed estimate about what’s going to happen in the future based on past history.
and experience. If you practice listening to your gut on some small decisions at first and see how they turn out, you gradually learn to trust it and get better at following your gut. After a while, by doing this you can gain a genuine edge.

Nobody knows what will happen in the future with certainty. If you’re acting on your instincts, however, you stand a good chance of positioning yourself advantageously. You’ll be able to get into action before those who wait for all the facts get started. This superior timing can and will give you a nice edge well worth exploiting.

“When you make decisions, you have to use all of your abilities, your brain, your gut and your analytical powers. My advice is to go with your gut, but do not bet the ranch on it. Be cautious. Get all the facts, because there is always a reason why everyone else is going the other way. Believe me, when you find something good that everyone else is ignoring, when you go against the tide, that is beautiful. I love it – but be very, very careful, because sometimes it can be trouble; it can be really big trouble.”

– Donald Trump

“When I started The Learning Annex I used my gut. And still today I use my gut to pick a lot of the topics and speakers we feature. In my job I have to recognize talent before the rest of the world does. You cannot listen to what other people think. You have to think independently or you will never be really good at what you do. It is the same for movie and TV producers; they have to know what people will want to see before anyone else recognizes it. If you do the same thing as everyone else and don’t have the guts to stick your neck out and be different, you will at best achieve mediocre success. But more than likely you will fail. So dare to be different. Dare to be unique. And dare to take a chance on something that is unknown.”

– Bill Zanker

“There’s no doubt that some people are luckier than others but the truth is everyone can create their own luck and good fortune through hard work and intelligence. Keep at it.

Irrespective of whether you have a lot of luck in your personal life or not, there are two things you can do to help your luck along:
1. Work harder than everyone else – put in the proverbial “hard yards” practicing and getting better at your craft. If you know everyone else is off resting while you’re hard at work doing the basics, that gives you mental toughness going into a negotiation. You know you have the stamina to hang in there well past the attention span of your most intense competitor. This is a great edge to have.

2. Prepare better and more thoroughly – so you know the right things to do in order to enhance your chances of success. Don’t allow your career to get into a rut. Keep on trying new things and finding new projects to get involved in which push your envelope outwards. Get outside your professional comfort zone and do things you’ve never before attempted. Sometimes, these little-known opportunities can lead to tremendous success further down the road. Think positively, expect the best and then go out and do everything in your power to make that good stuff happen.

“A truly positive mental attitude is when you are good at what you do and you are prepared for every possibility, both positive and negative. You can boost your positive mental attitude by being thoroughly prepared. You cannot expect to be successful 100 percent of the time no matter whether you are in business, finance, real estate, management, medicine, or science. If you are not prepared for a negative result, a few minor setbacks, the loss of a promotion, or a deal falling through, such an experience will cause you an unnecessary amount of confusion and doubt. Both a positive mental attitude and a good work ethic are important in creating your own luck, but you cannot rely solely on them.”

– Donald Trump

“The harder I work, the luckier I get.”

– Gary Player, professional golfer

“Work is hard enough without putting forth extra effort. Most people do their jobs on remote control. It is just work. But if you tried to take pride in your job and become better and better at it, eventually you will become great and get noticed. Then everyone will say you had good luck. Look for something that stimulates you to stretch yourself beyond your normal limits. Then you must work on improving your skills every day and never quit. In just about every field, people learn quickly at first, and then, they stop learning. Only a few people keep on improving for years and decades; the ones we call great.”

– Bill Zanker

In the idealized world of our dreams, we can hire great people and they will unerringly do the things which are in our own best interests. It’s time to wake up. As soon as you get a little taste of success, other people are going to be plotting how to take you down.
That's just the reality of the situation so you're far better off preparing accordingly rather than getting ripped off left, right and center.

In particular, don’t be concerned about whether or not people like you. That's totally irrelevant. Instead, you want people to respect you. If the people you’re dealing with know that you know your stuff, then they are far less likely to try and do bad deals. If you dress the part, act intelligently, demonstrate that you genuinely know what's going on beneath the surface and move forward on deals with enthusiasm, people will just naturally respect you.

When you hire new people, you’re always taking a risk and you should approach it that way. Anyone you hire is going to get to know your business inside and out, which means they will know precisely where your weak spots are. What you should look for in new hires above anything else is loyalty. Try to hire people who are coming on board because they want to be part of something great and worth defending. Then go all out to reward people openly and generously for their loyalty to you.

It's also essential that you set high standards for yourself and for everyone else who comes to work for you. Expect the best. Let people rise to the challenges you set them. If they fall short while making a genuine effort to excel, cut them a little slack.

“Use your gut to hire the best people you can find, but do not trust them. Create a work environment where you reward good people for doing good work and for being loyal to you and your company. Be demanding of people and they will rise to the occasion. Do not be too hard when they make mistakes; everyone makes mistakes. Always be willing to give someone who wants to do better a second chance.”

– Donald Trump

“You can only do so much yourself. You need other people to help you accomplish really big things in life. Hiring the best people can mean the difference between success and failure in business. Entrepreneurs do not have the luxury of enormous budgets and huge staffs; they have to hire people who can do the work of ten people. For this reason I tend to hire people who are smart, flexible, and generalists. When I need a specialist, I hire a consultant. If you hire smart people who are willing to work hard, you do not need a huge, expensive staff. One more thing . . . I am a big believer that you have to reward people for the job they do. People that last with me get rewarded very well. We are in the expo business, but we function like a Wall Street firm; everybody shares in the wealth. I use this strategy with employees, consultants, and anybody I do business with. You have to give the people that work for you a piece of the pie. It’s okay to overpay people who deserve it. And if somebody is not pulling their weight, do not hesitate to get rid of them before they spread the disease of mediocrity throughout your company.”

– Bill Zanker
Real life is not played on some sort of adolescent playground. When someone does you wrong, it’s absolutely vital that you get even.

“You know, when you hit a bully back they always fold. I learned it in high school, you’ve got to hit a bully really hard, really strongly, right between the eyes. That is why I tell people, ‘Get even!’ This is not your typical advice, get even, but this is real-life advice. If you don’t get even, you are just a schmuck! I really mean it, too.”

– Donald Trump

The whole point is when word gets around you go after people who’ve taken you for a ride, then bullies and others will think twice before they enter into any transactions with you. This is a good thing, because it will cut down on the amount of stuff you end up having to deal with.

Being perfectly open and candid about your intentions to get even with anyone who cuts you a bad deal is a good thing. It signals in advance you’re a serious player and not to be trifled with. It also shows you value loyalty and aren’t afraid to do whatever it takes to get even. Both of these factors increase and enhance the amount of respect you have within the broader business community. That degree of respect, in turn, influences the quantity and quality of deals you get offered in the future.

“If someone attacks you, do not hesitate. Go for the jugular. Attack them back in spades. I love getting even when I get screwed by someone – yes, it is true, people still try to takemefor a ride, and sometimes they succeed, rarely, but when they do I go after them. You know what? People do not want to play around with me as much as they do with others. They know if they do, they are really in for a big fight. Always get even. When you are in business you need to get even with the people who screw you. You need to screw them back fifteen times harder. You do it not only to get the person who messed with you but also to show the others who are watching what will happen to them if they mess with you.”

– Donald Trump

“Life is full of losers who love to mess with people, especially people who are successful. I think it comes down to one of two things; jealousy or greed, or a combination of the two. Sometimes, there is no money involved, as Donald says, ‘They just do it for sport’. Always make a list of people who hurt you. Then sit back and wait for the appropriate time to get revenge. When they least expect it, go after them with a vengeance. Go for their jugular. Now, if you can get a sincere apology from someone and if they owe you money and pay you, I accept it and let it go. But if not, just wait for the opportunity and when it comes, hit ‘em hard.”

– Bill Zanker
“If you want to be a success, you have to get used to frequently hearing the word no and ignoring it. You will not be successful if you listen to nos. Find a way to turn the ‘no’ into a ‘yes’ or find a creative way to sidestep the ‘no’. Do not let anybody stop you!”

– Donald Trump

Momentum in business works like this:
1. When you first start working on a project, you have no momentum at all – and trying to line up people to work with you is a little like beating your head against a brick wall. You start talking to the professionals who can help you but they aren’t sure whether you’re a serious player or some fly-by-night outfit which will be here today but gone tomorrow when the bills become due. At first, it takes a huge amount of effort to get the ball rolling on any new project.

2. As you speak with more and more people, momentum starts building slowly at first – as you prove to other people you’re serious and committed. Nothing is happening still but people are just starting to feel a little more comfortable about dealing with you.

3. One day – often out of the blue – something will break for you – either you will sign a deal, land a new client or do something else which is noteworthy and impressive. All of a sudden, your credibility will get a shot in the arm and people will start to believe you just might be able to pull off what you’ve been talking about. You still have to keep working hard but now you’ll be operating at a higher level than someone who walks in off the street can manage.

4. Now your successes start multiplying – good things start coming to you in multiples rather than in dribs and drabs. At this stage, people start scrambling to get on board your bandwagon because you’re obviously going places. Your value as a facilitator is now well established because people like what you’re doing.

The benefits of momentum are so obvious and clear-cut it’s a wonder more people don’t focus more of their professional efforts on building it. A person with momentum can achieve so much more than someone who is just starting out from scratch.

So what exactly can you do to establish momentum?

■ First, focus on a specific goal with passion and intensity. Momentum always accrues to those who are tightly focused on some clear-cut objective and never to the generalist.

■ Become very knowledgeable in your chosen field. Study the careers, the methods and the achievements of those who have achieved greatness in your chosen field. This will not only give you great ideas but it will also position you advantageously. Most
accomplished people in any field don’t have time to deal with complete novices so lift yourself to a higher level by doing intense background research first.

- Find a mentor with hands-on experience in your industry and make them your friend. Ask them to critique you regularly pointing out both strengths and weaknesses.

- Keep challenging yourself to do more and to attempt progressively more ambitious projects all the time.

- Look at setbacks as an opportunity to learn what’s required to come back even harder in the future. Back yourself all the way to get there in the end and work hard to make that prediction come true.

When you have momentum, problems become only temporary diversions on the road to ultimate success. You expect mistakes to be made and problems to crop up because you’re consciously attempting to push the envelope outwards. View your role as that of a problem solver and keep moving forward.

There is one other key to maintaining momentum. When you reach the top, find a meaningful way to give something back. Make a sizable donation to your favorite charity. Give your insights and know-how to others who are just starting up the ladder themselves. Give others something of practical value. If you keep doing this consistently, you’ll find your actions will keep your momentum rolling.

“Whenever I approach a project, I know there will be problems. I expect them. I do not cry about them, because I know it is my job to solve them. Be the one to solve tough problems and you will be the one people pay big money for. Anyone can do things that are easy. It is rare to find people who can tackle big challenges. If you do, you stand out from the crowd. I have found if something is too easy, it is not usually even worth doing. Lots of other people are already doing it, and there usually is not much profit in the easy jobs. My business is so hard that sometimes I feel like Sisyphus, who was condemned to roll a boulder uphill for eternity. That is just the way it is sometimes, so I just keep going; I don’t give up. My focus is intense enough to make the effort worth it, and my momentum makes sure that my efforts will not be futile. I have learned a lot from demanding situations.”

– Donald Trump

“I have always been passionate about self-improvement. My plan is to take The Learning Annex to the billion-dollar level. I have met with broadcast executives and producers to build programming for a Learning Annex channel. When people think of self-help, they are going to think of The Learning Annex. The self-help industry is a $19 billion dollar industry just waiting for some company to own it. I intend it to be The Learning Annex. The Learning Annex has momentum. It’s growing fast and understands the market. We are passionate about it and our timing is perfect. Baby boomers are the greatest proponents of lifelong learning. People of all ages want to improve themselves. Our programming simply has to be relevant to each of the demographic groups we serve. We are taking our existing momentum to go to the next level. Once you have momentum, you have to keep it going. Latch on to a big business trend that has great momentum. Then partner with others to set big goals and let the momentum take you to higher and higher levels.”

– Bill Zanker
“As president and founder of The Learning Annex, I have had the opportunity to observe hundreds of supersuccessful people firsthand, millionaires and billionaires who have risen above the ordinary to achieve amazing things in life. They all possess one very important quality: persistence. How many days do you feel like you can’t do it anymore? Can’t make the call or knock on the door. How many times can you get rejected, yet know you are so close? How many times do you have to ignore people hounding you for money, while you are moving heaven and earth to make you and your family’s dreams happen? We have all been there. It is hard, but the rewards are great, so we don’t stop until we achieve our dreams. It takes persistence to face the difficult problems that nobody can help you solve. It takes persistence to endure setbacks and come back with the same level of intensity and enthusiasm you had before.”

– Bill Zanker

As soon as you start believing everything you touch turns to gold, you’re headed for trouble. That’s what happens when your early successes are talked up excessively. You stop focusing on doing what’s required to succeed in the future and start resting on your laurels. This is not good.

To avoid that:

■ When you achieve some early successes and people are saying nice things about you, stay focused by listening to your own counsel. If you’re honest, you’ll already know your own shortcomings and faults better than anyone else. Every time you read something good, ponder on some of the less-publicized facts about yourself which are not so good. This should ensure you’re well grounded.

■ Keep thinking about your challenges and problems. Envisage yourself solving them and think through all the potential solutions. Keep dreaming up scenarios where you break through and do even bigger things in the future.

■ Remind yourself there are always issues and events beyond your control. While you may be enjoying a great run at present, acknowledge that could all change in an instant if some terrible events come about. Therefore, you need to keep a realistic perspective on things.

“In the 90s a lot of good people went bankrupt. I never went bankrupt, but I went through hell. My company owed billions and was much too heavily leveraged. I was in debt personally for $900 million. Someone once asked me, ‘What was your mind-set when you owed billions of dollars?’ I answered, ‘My mind-set was the same as it is right now’. Actually, my mind-set was very positive. I started negotiating new deals even though I was in no position to do them, because it made me feel good. Remember that. If you ever get into deep difficulty, always focus on the things that make you feel better. Sure,
handle the bad stuff you have to deal with, but do not let it demoralize you or distract you from pursuing your goals. Realize that it is only a moment in time, and it will pass. Keep your sights set on a better time in the future, which will certainly come if you stay focused. Things cannot and will not continue downward forever; they always turn around. That is how I was able to make a comeback from the brink of utter failure. I got super focused. I went back to work and never worked harder, ever. I am still working, and I love it."

– Donald Trump

“Rich people are rich because they solve difficult problems. You must learn to thrive on problems. CEOs of big companies are paid huge amounts of money because they solve problems that nobody else can solve. Someone good at what they do and some are terrible and overpaid. I face problems every day. It is one of the things I do best. If you want to be in the top 2 percent, you must become very good at finding creative solutions to what appear to be impossible situations.”

– Donald Trump

“Wealth comes from big goals and sustained action every day.”

– Donald Trump

Divorce lawyers sometimes state marriages are “Made in heaven, settled in court”. As terrible as that may sound, the reality is when you get married, the odds are against you. More than half of all marriages end up in divorce. If you go into a marriage without a prenuptial agreement specifying what will happen should a divorce come about, you run a terrible risk.

When a man and a woman who used to be in love fight in court, their open hatred for each other is often more intense than any kind of business litigation. There is an edge to the public airing of dirty laundry which is particularly distasteful. Having a prenuptial agreement avoids this scenario because everything is agreed in advance should a marriage fail.

The reality is nobody intends to get divorced. Everyone assumes they have established a marriage which will last, but then real life intervenes. Broaching the subject of a prenuptial agreement might be difficult but it will be nothing compared to the possibility of losing all of your money to the man or woman you’ve been married to for just a few years.

“In your business, you always determine ahead of time what will happen if the business relationship comes to an end. It is the responsible thing to do. Why not do the same with your personal relationship? Sure, it’s not pleasant, but it makes a lot of sense to define
how things will be divided if the two of you call it quits. A prenup can spare you most of the messiest, most unpleasant aspects of a divorce."

– Donald Trump

“These days, a prenup is just as important to women as it is to men. I have seen many cases recently, where a woman makes a lot of money and the man does not, and the woman ends up having to pay big money to the husband. The fact is, whether you are a man or a woman, you need the certainty. It is really important. You always have to expect problems. You can solve the problem in advance before it happens with the certainty of a prenuptial agreement. Settle while you are friends, not enemies.”

– Donald Trump

“There are many people I do business with on a handshake. I trust them and they trust me. We still write down what we have agreed to, even if it is just an email. We write down the basics of the agreement so that neither of us will feel taken advantage of, confused about the relationship, or resentful that the other person forgot an important term. I call than an ‘email handshake’. The reason is that it is so easy to forget what we agreed to. It is not that we are ever going to have a big formal contract that involves lawyers and has all the ‘what ifs’ and says which state law is going to apply if one of us sues the other.”

– Bill Zanker

“Many people start with big goals. Yet after they run into a few problems or get distracted by other things that compete for their attention, they lose focus. To keep your goals alive, you must take action every single day for at least two hours. No one should care about your money and your success more than you do.”

– Donald Trump

The simple fact is no skyscrapers would ever have been built and no breakthroughs in science, technology or medicine would ever have been made if someone somewhere didn’t think big. Thinking big and then working towards achieving those big goals is at the heart of every noteworthy success.

As counterintuitive as it may sound, in a lot of ways it’s actually easier to do things on a large scale than it is to do small transactions. For example:

■ It can take just as much time and effort to negotiate the sale of a small bungalow as it does to buy a gleaming skyscraper.
There is often as much stress and aggravation in small deals as you will encounter on large transactions.

Banks actually prefer to invest money in a big prestigious building than in a rundown house in a bad section of town.

If you succeed with a small transaction, you stand to gain a modest increase in wealth. If you succeed with a large project, your net worth can grow at a much faster clip.

Now despite all these advantages, you may find it hard to believe you can actually pull off some big deals. You may find it hard to even envisage yourself doing something big, impressive and noteworthy. That's fine, but remind yourself everyone who is big now had to start somewhere. They worked themselves up to the top and if they did it, you can do the same.

“Do you believe that thinking big is reserved for people with money, college degrees, family connections, or even intelligence? That is not true. Anyone can think big. The most important thing is the size of your thinking. How big you think determines how big a success you become. Everything else is secondary. The simple act of thinking big immediately distinguishes you from the vast majority of people. So start now. First find a big goal for yourself, then mold yourself to become the person who can accomplish that goal.”

– Donald Trump

So how can you mold yourself to think big?
1. Walk softly but carry a big attitude – which essentially means believe in yourself and start acting now the way you will when you reach a higher level of achievement. Develop an attitude that you’re worth a lot and others will respond by valuing you the same way.

2. Start every day with a little pep talk to yourself – along the lines of: “Today is a great day. I live in the greatest nation on earth. I have a great profession. It’s great to be alive. There are plenty of opportunities all around for me to do some great things today”.

3. Always go first class in everything you do – the way you dress, the car you drive, the things you do. If your budget is limited, buy fewer items but better quality. Lease high ticket items if you have to but always project an image of success in everything you do.

4. Conquer your doubts and ditch them – by developing your own rock solid storehouse of self-belief. Nobody knows with certainty what the future holds so assume that you will succeed and work towards that as a goal. Other people will take their cues from you so if you positively ooze the attitude you’re worth listening to, people will do exactly that. If you value yourself, others will too. Never look for approval from others but generate your own self belief by believing in your own competence and worth.

5. Be proud of your big ego – view it as a positive, and then get done what you’ve promised to do.

6. Get into the habit of speaking your mind – because top achievers want their thoughts
to be known. They want others to know what they have to say is important. Don’t be afraid of what others think – they probably aren’t as smart as you give them credit for being. Speak up.

7. Hang out with other people who think big – because they will have an impact on your thinking as well. Meet with other big thinkers regularly and swap ideas, voice opinions, trade war stories and share your dreams. While you can and should be approachable, be selective about who your friends are. It’s best to spend the majority of your time interacting with people who genuinely want you to be successful. Negative friends can sap your energy and throw up roadblocks which is what you don’t need.

8. Match big thoughts with big actions – as fast as you can. This gives you the credibility which is essential. Drop your excuses and start doing what’s required to succeed. By all means start small but then keep pushing yourself to do bigger things, one step at a time. It’s not where you start that matters but what you learn as you go along. Remind yourself your capacity to do anything is just a state of mind so start thinking you can do more and pretty soon that’s exactly the situation you’ll find yourself in.

9. Make a personal commitment to do something big – and then scramble to find a way to do it. Enter into a binding legal agreement and then work to fulfill your obligations like there is no tomorrow.

10. Get a mentor – someone who can help you jump to a new level faster than you could manage on your own. Find an authority figure in your industry and get his or her advice and encouragement on a regular basis.

11. Use leverage intelligently – to extract top dollar for your work. In most commercial settings, you’ll have to threaten to inflict some pain before the other party will pay you what you’re genuinely worth. It’s all very well to believe that you’ll always get paid what you’re worth but in the real world it doesn’t automatically work that way. Make the other party feel the pain of what they will lose if you choose to deal with their competitor instead. Talk up the loss their company will suffer if they lose out on your deal. It’s the only way you’ll ever extract from any transaction a decent chunk of cash.

12. Hitch your career wagon to a star – some kind of big trend which will be impacting on society in the years and decades ahead. These trends are usually pretty obvious. Think big and create some big solutions for the human needs generated by these trends. If you can hook your own career to a trend which is just taking off, it can catapult you to a very high level of success.

13. Don’t start playing it safe when you get halfway to the top – but keep on thinking big. The moment you start thinking about playing it safe, your ability to think big get diluted and then disappears. Keep stimulating your mind with new information and looking for new and bigger opportunities. Don’t stall halfway to the top.

14. Keep setting the bar higher all the time – by always striving to outdo your own accomplishments. When you’re constantly trying to outdo yourself, great things can happen.

15. Be prepared for big setbacks on the way to big achievements – they’re part and parcel of the territory. Thinking big always means big setbacks. What matters most is how you respond to those setbacks. Great achievers in every field analyze their
failures in order to find new ways of succeeding in the future and you should do the same. View your failures as temporary diversions and continue to think big about the future. Fill your mind with your most audacious plans for the future and then get to work making that happen.

“Learn the art of forgetting. Move on and do not give a thought to the bad things that have happened to you. Do not be an idealist, wishing things were different, wishing bad things had never happened, and wishing you lived in a fairy tale world where everything always turns out right. Do not wait for everything to be perfect before you start taking action again. Be a realist. It will never be perfect. Just resolve to do better, then move on, forgetting the past. View every failure as a step on the way to ultimate success. Remember, persistence plus learning from mistakes equals success.”

– Donald Trump

“Think big, but keep your feet on the ground and your fingers on the till. You’ve got to know what you can do. There are always forces at work that can bring you down, jealous bureaucrats, greedy lawyers, cheating contractors, weak-kneed bankers. Do not get so caught up in your big dreams and daring ideas that you forget about the basics. You need to always remember to provide above all a quality product, and make sure you have safeguards in place to make sure you get paid. Think big, but take care of the basics.”

– Donald Trump

“All of the greats in every sport, in finance and in business, in the arts, and in government possess something special. A lot of people have it, but frankly, most people do not. Do you have what it takes to think big and kick ass? Virtually all self-made millionaires and billionaires, like Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, and Walt Disney had the ability to think big and kick ass. The only way to get rich is to be realistic and brutally honest. You have to get out of the ideal fantasy world you read about in magazines and see on TV. It is not as easy as they make it look. It is tough, and people get hurt. So you have to be as tough as nails and willing to kick ass if you want to win. Most people are not cut out for this. You have to deal with a tremendous amount of pressure. You have to think large and be creative to solve big problems that scare the crap out of most people. People are going to try and steal from you and destroy you just for the fun of it. You have to stand up to them, fight back and kick their ass. Nobody is going to hold your hand and help you along. You are on your own. You have to bend but never break.”

– Donald Trump

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