

Don't take certain levels of success for granted in your business. "When your business isn't growing, it's dying." You can't afford to "assume" that your business will grow or continue to grow just because you work long hours, or it's doing well right now. Make a game plan and develop business promotions, specials, programs, entertainment, etc for the entire year.

- Erica Miller

Sales goals without minimum performance standards and action plans are just another recipe for chance results.

- Douglas Preston

Do a yearly budget and give yourself goals for retail sales, service sales and profitability. Review your numbers and compare with your plan monthly.

- Catherine Aizen

Why are We Not Living Our Dreams: The Importance of Mastering

Difficult Changes

Does the thought of change make you restless or irritable? Do you have difficulty sleeping or concentrating when you are in the process of making a serious change? When you are forced to do something about a stressful situation, do you find that you tire easily and suffer from aches and pains in areas commonly associated with muscle tension? If you answered yes to any of these questions, and they significantly affect your ability to make decisions that could change your life for the better, read this article, this information is for you.

Of course reading this article is not going to change anything in your life unless you work with the information. The only power in this world that can change your life is you. If you were to consistently practice even just a few of the suggestions offered here, it will take hours of your time and that would require a great deal of dedication and commitment on your part. Scary; isn't it? Maybe that is the reason why so many of us are not living our dreams.

**by
Victoria L.
Rayner**

Fear **is** Lethal

For most of us change evokes fear. Fear creates anxiety. Anxiety and tension involves unfounded worry as well as other physical and psychological symptoms. Fear then, would be the number one reason why so many of us are reluctant to make changes, changes that we know would make our lives better. Despite all the benefits we could derive from taking action, we will often allow fear to hold us hostage and prevent us from making the necessary transitions that will bring us to a better place.

Perhaps this is the reason why most people will not make a change until they are forced to. Change is often inspired by some unexpected event that happens. The event is usually so devastating that despite our fear, we are forced to take steps to alter our situation. Suddenly, the fear is less of a threat than the inevitability of the circumstances. In such cases we permit ourselves to act and we grow beyond what we dreamed possible.

Fear is a Natural Response to Change

Very few of us would feel comfortable heading off on a long trip to some unknown destination

Before opening your own business, do some legwork by investigating the area you want to open in.

Is there sufficient parking? Is the area easily accessible? Is the area strictly urban or are there businesses around?

Try and negotiate a deal with your landlord on leasehold improvements like lighting, salon design and plumbing.

Remember anything built into a wall or floor, automatically belongs to the landlord. A shopping centers foot traffic may not be worth the pricey rents and the percentage of your gross they will want. Keep demographics in mind when you price your services. The area must provide the clientele that will avail themselves of your services. Don't price yourself out of the market. It is easier to raise your prices slowly than have to cut them.

- Maria Montalvo

Change Checklist

The following are lists of possible changes that you may go through, that may potentially affect your life in a profound way.

Personal

- Made a major decision(s) regarding your future
- Had legal difficulties
- Had an accident
- Experienced a theft, loss, or damage to personal property
- Ended a close personal relationship
- Started a new relationship
- Changed a leisure activity
- Experienced sexual difficulties
- Changed religious beliefs
- Went on a vacation
- Started an educational program
- Stopped school or college
- Accomplished a major personal achievement

Domestic

- Got married
- Had a baby, adopted a child or children or had a relative move in with you
- Had a marital altercation with your spouse
- Problem(s) with in-laws
- Separated or reconciliated with spouse
- Divorced
- Made home improvements

Work/Professional

- Promoted
- Transferred to a new division
- Change in work schedule
- Fired from job
- Started new job
- Changed salary status
- New workspace
- New boss
- New career
- Started your own business
- Making operational changes
- Implementing new services
- A company move
- Sudden personality conflicts with coworker(s)
- Unexpected crisis in company

without a map to guide our way. If we were to embark on such a course we would surely experience some confusion about the journey. When we encounter change, we encounter the unfamiliar and more often than not it leads to feelings of insecurity. We feel as if we have lost control.

Fear arises when we experience a loss of control. Oftentimes we will react to a situation that we are unfamiliar with rather than responding to it. When we react we end up viewing our situation emotionally rather than viewing it logically. How irrational we become over a change imposed upon us will depend upon the importance we place on the circumstances. If we view our situation emotionally it is difficult to see it objectively and without objectivity it is impossible to devise a strategy.

Allowing ourselves permission to temporarily experience the natural reaction of immediate fear from change gives us time to react. But, reacting will not allow us to respond. In the reaction phase we replace positive thoughts with negative ones and we move into a cycle I refer to as the "what if stage". The "what if stage" (if perceived as positive) is in actuality, the first stage of the decision making process. It is in the decision making phase that we eventually evaluate our options. This is why it is so important to calm ourselves down before even considering any strategies for re-gaining control. It is impossible to make a sensible decision when we are upset. Remember, that although you may feel the situation is controlling you, you and you alone are responsible for the way you feel about it.

Revamp Your Attitude by Using the "Traffic Light Method"

To really get a handle on change we must first change our focus from that of a reactionary person to a person who is willing to come back down to earth and make a commitment to a solution. A popular method I use to put a situation in perspective so I can regain a feeling of control over it is the "Traffic Light Method". Whenever I encounter a crisis situation that inspires change, I use this method to prevent myself from becoming overwhelmed. I begin to revamp my attitude by evaluating the situation and asking myself how I should approach it. Should I interpret it as a: red light (stop), yellow light (stay open-minded but, pro-

Seize opportunities - be alert to unexpected situations.

- Victoria L. Rayner

Naming the salon is equally as important as choosing a location. Choose a name that defines what you do and is easy and simple to remember.

- Mario Montalvo

ceed with caution). green light (go for it and make the necessary changes).

Unpleasant, unexpected situations have a way of temporally victimizing us, but we do not have to remain a victim we can choose to be a survivor by doing something about our circumstances.

Concentrate Only on What **is** Important

To face the challenge of change head-on we must first evaluate the situation objectively. To do this, put things into two compartments: those you have control over and those you don't. Narrow down your focus to only the things you have control over. It may sound simple, but it actually takes determination and practice to master.

It takes time to realize that not everything can be acted upon or at least not right away. Sometimes it is necessary to pause or hesitate until you receive some more information.

Whenever Possible Seek Reliable **Counsel**

If you are forced to make a change that requires treading on uncharted territory then you may wish to find others who have encountered similar circumstances to yours. Do not hesitate to ask them to share their experiences with you. Their knowledge can prove very useful to you in expanding your options. A word of caution however, always consider the background of your advisers and weigh their opinions carefully. Do not try to please others, decide for yourself. Ultimately, you will be the one who has to live with the results of your decisions.

Develop an **Effective** Strategy

Once you have completed your research and you have a basic understanding of what you can change and how others have gone about that process, you can start to develop your own plan. Before you can formulate a strategy however, you will need to realistically consider the various consequences associated with each of the

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- Lia Schorr

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Joseph Anthony

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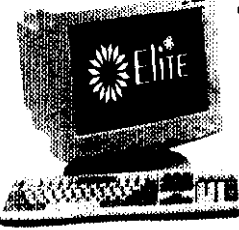
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possible options afforded to you in your situation. Do not rush this process. It's important to keep in mind that you do have choices. Once decided upon your choices will become the basis for your goals. Goals are the best way to overcome fear and move forward. They are the tools that will help you put your ideas into action to change.

Allow for Mistakes & Setbacks

Anytime you make a change you can expect to encounter resistance. Give yourself permission to make mistakes and anticipate set-backs. Do not ignore your intuition. Let your inner voice guide you. Be flexible revise your goals when necessary.

Change is difficult. Remember, be compassionate to yourself. Have faith in your decisions. Be tenacious. If we expect change to occur we must prepare for loss. Within each of us is a dream. Sometimes a loss must occur before we can realize that dream. It takes courage to let go and trust. We have to let go of what we do not want to make way for our good. Open your heart and your mind. Be hopeful.

Change Brings Enlightenment, Reflection & Renewal

The wonderful thing about change is that it offers insight. It is impossible to go through any transition without experiencing personal growth. The more extreme that change is the better the opportunity for personal development.

Most often the unexpected is subtle. It is most evident in small events that require change. Non-threatening circumstances that tend to capture our temporary attention, but do not necessarily demand that we alter the course of our lives. However, sooner or later it happens to all of us. Some major event that is so devastating that it alters our behaviors, our beliefs and the way we see life forever more. It is only during these times of crisis that everything extraneous falls away and only our truest desires remain. It is with these desires that we begin the extraordinary journey of change with a greater sense of possibility, a stronger sense of identity, an almost reverent appreciation for the moment and most importantly a clarity for our life's purpose.

Victoria Rayner is a fifteen-year veteran of aesthetics, was voted Esthetician of the Year, and is the recipient of the International Make-up Society's Outstanding Achievement Award. She has authored two books, *Clinical Cosmetology: A Medical Approach to Esthetic Procedures* and *A Survival Guide for Today's Career Woman*. Founder and director of the *Camouflage Clinics*. Victoria is the owner and an instructor of *Advanced Skin Care and Training Center* in San Francisco, California