

Follow these tips to learn new technology (or anything else, for that matter)

As entrepreneurs, we experience new opportunities unfolding daily. New technologies emerge regularly that we need to master in order to succeed. These opportunities are wonderful, but sometimes they can be intimidating.

I often hear people say they are “too old” to learn. They’ll trot out that tired and now-psychologically-discredited ditty, “You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.” Horsefeathers!

So, how do you do it? Here are 10 steps that can help you embrace learning as a competitive advantage and life-giving force.

1. Have an open mind.

This is critical! You can’t reach out with folded arms. Change your thinking from “I can’t do that” to “I’ll figure out a way to make that happen.” I like to call this moving from “no way” to “not yet” thinking. Instead of telling yourself why you can’t do it, tell yourself you might not be able to do it yet, but you’re willing to pay the price. Take courses, hire professionals, read books, watch educational videos and do whatever is necessary to learn new skills that help you.

2. Get help from the best.

You don’t have to do it on your own. Today we have access to the best brainpower through books, audio-video recordings and live coaching. Be willing to part with your TME (Time, Money and Energy) to get what you need. Find the people who know what you need to know and be willing to pay them to help you. Hire professionals through PayPal, WorldPay, Bitcoin or other technologies. Use tools like Skype or Google+ Hangouts. Saturate your mind with books, magazines and quality learning.

3. Be willing to give up activities that don’t help you.

This is a tough one. It is so easy to be drawn to a dramatic story on the news. Turn off that radio and your TV. Fill that wasted time with learning from great sources. Learn market-valued skills so people want to work with you!

4. Focus!

You’ve got to focus to achieve mastery. You could try to trick yourself into believing you can, but psychologists tell us even over-achieving salespeople can’t multi-task. Shut off your social media, let your phone calls go to voice mail, and pour yourself into the task at hand.

This is part of paying the price, and it is well worth it.

5. Practice.

There’s an old Russian saying, “Repetition is the mother of learning.” That applies to us today. You have to practice the right way (think coaching!). I think of the words of my judo instructor from years ago: “Do it 1,000 times until it becomes natural. Then do it another 1,000 times!”

6. Play with YouTube.

YouTube has to be one of the greatest “how-to-learn” tools we’ve seen in the past 50 years. Be willing to wade through some of the junk videos to find the gems. Pay the price, and spend time to learn through this rich resource.

7. Have fun with immersion.

I’m currently studying Spanish. I find that the more I experience words and phrases from books, apps on my iPhone, talking with native Spanish speakers, watching Spanish videos and other exposure to the language, the better I do. Find multiple ways to saturate your mind with the topic you want to learn. This will facilitate your learning and accelerate the process.

8. Use mind mapping to get an advantage.

My friend, Phil Chambers, is the world mind mapping champion. He describes this tool as a way to learn great amounts of information in a visual form. It was developed by thought leader Tony Buzan. Mind mapping is a great way to organize the details and learn best. Google this one and learn about it.

9. Don’t give up!

Have an aggressive and determined attitude toward learning. There are times when you’ll meet what Steven Pressfield calls “The Resistance” in his book, *Turning Pro*. Eventually, you’ll experience that wet-blanket, “I don’t want to do this” kind of thinking. Embracing a “never-say-no” attitude will motivate you.

10. Have fun!

Always remember why you’re learning. If it isn’t fun, you decrease learning. Keep it fun in productive ways that keep you motivated.

Learning gives you a strong competitive advantage today. It also keeps you alive mentally. Go for it!



by Terry Brock

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