

First the punchy...

Have you ever noticed that the person with the most natural talent is not always the most successful? Have you ever wondered why it is that two young footballers, each with similar talent, will go on to achieve very different things in their playing careers? Have you ever wondered why it is that two people in business, each with similar talent, will go on to achieve very different things in their careers?

What determines the results you achieve is the communication with yourself. Let me tell you a quick story to illustrate this.

I recently went skiing at a popular Australian ski resort with a group of friends...

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One of my friends, who I had not seen for two years, used to be extremely overweight. He had tried and failed repeatedly in his bid to lose the weight. He always had always described himself as the “fun fat guy!” and lived up to his description. He was a lot of fun and always ready for a good time!

As I walked into the ski lodge, I almost fell over when I laid eyes on him. I barely even recognised him. He had lost forty five kilos! That is obviously a tremendous amount of weight. His face almost looked to be drawn. The contrast was absolutely incredible.

Being that I am fascinated with human behaviour to what makes people tick; I couldn't wait to catch up with him one on one to find out how he had done it. I wanted to know what the trigger in his mind was and to know the self-talk that had given him the strength to accomplish his goal. When I finally had a moment alone with him later that night, I asked him why he was successful losing the weight this time. There had been so many times that he had tried and not been successful.

He told me an amazing story.

He explained to me that a year before he and his wife had a baby daughter. He said it was the most beautiful day of his life. It was absolutely magical and he explained to me that after this euphoric experience of being there in bringing his beautiful little girl into the world, he left his wife and newborn baby at the hospital and drove home. He said that as he was driving home he was thinking to himself how everything was going to be different from this day onward. He was nervous, excited, joyous and scared to death all in one!

He then described a surreal experience as he walked around their house knowing there was going to be a new little person in their home in a few days time. While walking around the home, he happened to catch a glimpse of himself in the mirror. He told me how he walked up to the mirror and just stared at himself. He stared for a long time. He just looked at himself in the mirror closely and began to cry. He looked even closer yet, and he began to sob. As he stared at his body he realised (in his mind) that he one day would be an embarrassment to this beautiful daughter that he helped bring into this world. He was, in his words, going to be the “fat daddy” at her school. This perfect little girl may well be ashamed to be seen with him.

Suddenly, he said, everything changed for him. She was the most important thing in the world to him and he was committed not to embarrass her. He was committed to losing the weight. It was no longer about him – but rather, it was about her. He started

getting up at five o'clock in the morning in the dark so no one would see him jogging. He started to eat good foods and dramatically changed his diet. The amazing part, he said, was that it was easy.

In short, his values changed and how he communicated to himself changed.

What was truly important to him was that he was a father his daughter could be proud of. When his values changed, he believed that eating right and exercising were important to do, learned new skills and abilities regarding exercising and nutrition, did those behaviours and achieved massively (or un-massively) successful results. The truth is that excellence in results can only be achieved if those results are TRULY important to us. If it is not, then it will eventually show itself.

Even more importantly, his identity changed. The true change was in how he saw himself. He changed his self-image, self-talk and how he was communicating to himself. He went from the "fun fat guy" in his own self-talk to "that little girl's dad".

In the context of personal development, your identity will determine how successful you will be. **The most important words you say all day are the words you say to yourself, about yourself when you are alone by yourself.** Most people are cruel to themselves. Human beings talk to themselves in their heads at approximately 1300 words per minute. True outstanding business champions have the identity of a successful person and speak to themselves accordingly.

There are many times that people tell me that they are having a really hard time developing the identity for success. There are many times that people say to me that they are really struggling to believe in themselves so they ask for some advice in doing that.

I tell them to "ACT AS IF".

I love this. Act as if! If you want to be a successful business person, act as if you are one. Take a look at what other outstanding leaders, top salespeople and top consultants are doing. What are they doing with their body language? What are they doing with their voice tone? If you were cast in a movie to play the role of the person you want to be with a strong identity, how would you act? Well...act that way! Act as if you are and you will be!

Sometimes the sceptics say to me, 'Chris, it simply cannot be this easy.' It is.

Obviously, to make this work for you there needs to be continual learning, growth, development and so on. If you told me that you were going to act as if you are an airline pilot, you are not going to get to fly a 747 tomorrow. (Although the theory worked for a long time in the book, 'Catch me if you can') However, it would be useful to take on the identity of someone who was working toward being the top pilot in the country. What would they do? How would they act? Where would they study?

One of the other things that I love about the simplicity of 'act as if' is that it is fun. If it's fun, you will do it! Don't put too much pressure on yourself. Have fun. Learn, grow, develop, adapt and be flexible. Enjoy the process of reinventing yourself in order to become the person you have always wanted to be.

