

Five Ways To Boost Your Initiative FAST!

By Angela Booth

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Summary: Are you a self-starter? Discover how you can increase your self-confidence (and change your life) by boosting your initiative.

Category: Small Business, Marketing, Writing

Words: 1000

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The educational system in the western world has a lot to answer for. It crushes the initiative right out of people. We get many questions from people who come to our Digital-e site. They want to work for themselves, or set up as a freelancer, or write a book. Our answers to these questions can be summed up by: "Use your initiative. Get creative. Anything you do will give you feedback, and then you can do another thing, and another."

For example, I've had several people request more info about

writing proposals in response to my proposal-writing article:
"How To Write A Proposal To Get Freelance Work" ---

http://www.digital-e.biz/art_writing8.html

The word "proposal" sounds official. Surely there are rules to writing proposals? People want to know what the rules are, so they can do it right.

Here's a response I sent recently:

Don't get hung up on the word "proposal". The mini-proposals I describe in the article are LETTERS first and foremost.

Like---

Dear person at this business

Your business would be greatly enhanced and you would make much more money if ---X. (Or you have this problem that needs fixing.)

I can do this for you.

You can get in touch with me at/ by ---Y.

See?

No big deal. Send a letter. :-) It should take you all of 10 mins max to create one of these things.

Here's a partial dictionary definition of "initiative":

1. The power or ability to begin or to follow through energetically with a plan or task; enterprise and determination.
2. A beginning or introductory step; an opening move: took the initiative in trying to solve the problem.

From: <http://dictionary.reference.com/>

Success begins when you take the initiative. Here's how to boost your initiative FAST:

= Tactic One: Realize there are no rules

In business, there's one rule: "whatever works". As long as you don't break any laws, you get to make up your own rules as you go along.

In the writing field, it seems as if there are a hundred and one rules for manuscript formatting, for approaching markets, for this and for that. You can safely ignore ALL of the writing rules --- you're an individual. Do it your way.

For example, there's a no-simultaneous-submissions rule which book publishers espouse. This is a problem for writers because book publishers will take anywhere from one month to one year (or even longer) to respond to any book proposal you send them. Since you might have to make 20 submissions before you get a publisher, this rule does not work for writers, so you can ignore it.

Professional writers become professionals by ignoring junk rules like this, and what's more, publishers expect them to ignore these so-called rules.

When you want to do something like send a proposal, just figure out how you want the other party to respond, and then work out how you might get that response. Then DO something. Once you've done something, you'll get feedback, and you can go on from there.

= Tactic Two: Keep learning

Learn something new every year. Take courses. The Internet has made this easy --- you can learn from the comfort of your office chair. Take the time to learn how professionals do the things that you're puzzling about.

For example, on Digital-e we've got several email courses that have been well received:

<http://www.digital-e.biz/ecourses.html>

We've even got FREE courses.

Many, many other sites have courses which will help you along the road to success. Every course you take will give you insights and knowledge. If you're serious about living your life well and achieving success, you must keep learning.

Do you read? All successful people read constantly. Reading's a painless way to learn. Anyone, no matter how busy they are, has time to read.

= Tactic Three: Get creative. Make lists of things to TRY then WORK the list

Ask yourself questions, like: "How might I do this?"

Then make a list of things you could try. Strive for creativity.

I love this story in Inc about an ice-cream seller who hires based on how creative potential staffers can get with a white paper bag:

http://www.inc.com/articles/marketing/market_methods/grassroots/11375.html

(You may need to paste this long URL into your browser.)

Keep listing until you have at least 20 things you could try. Then use your intuition to pick one item from your list and do it.

= Tactic Four: Rely on feedback

When you work your list, you will get feedback. (You can't get feedback unless you do something.) Feedback is merely guidance. It will show you which areas are productive, and which are not.

= Tactic Five: He/ she who hesitates gets run over by a truck --
- ASK

This is another way of saying "work your list". Ask people who can directly help you. If you want to sell something to a company based on a proposal, call the company and say: "I'd like to send you a proposal to do X. What should I include in the proposal?"

Or perhaps you want to sell images to an image library. Call an image library. Pick up the phone and tell the person on the other end what you want to do. That person will pass you on to another person. And maybe another. But you'll find out how you do it. Then, just do it.

If you're a writer, and you want to write a children's book, pick up the phone and call the publisher of a book you enjoyed reading. You may get voice mail. If so, leave a message. If you don't get a response within a week or two (people are always busy, so don't take it personally) send a email message, or a letter or a fax. Persist.

Try the above five tactics. If you try even ONE of them, I promise you that your life will change.

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