

Entrepreneurship With Purpose: Seven Tips For Leading With Intention

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Tapping into your purpose to lead with intention is one of the best ways to make the grinding work of being an entrepreneur feel more energized, joy-filled and passionate.

Leading with intention also can also help minimize the physical strains of working hard, such as stress, tension and anxiety, and support a healthier team and business. While building Serena Loves and supporting successful entrepreneurs on their wellness journeys, I've learned that infusing work with meaning makes building a business not only more enjoyable but also more productive.

Here are seven tips that I've learned throughout the years that have helped me and my clients become purposeful leaders.

Understand what drives you.

Entrepreneurship is difficult. It is constant work, and the rewards usually come far down the road. One way to help maintain energy, focus and positivity throughout the entrepreneurship journey is to do inner work to understand your "why." You might understand the need that your product is serving, but if your purpose is not connected to the business, it is easy to burn out or lose steam. According to McKinsey, businesses work better when they have a thought-out purpose, and the same is true for individuals. Developing and maintaining a mindfulness or meditation practice or working with a coach to guide you toward identifying your purpose can help you tap into your inner "why." This allows you to lead and grow your business with more confidence and energy.

Understand what drives other people.

If your team is excited, they will have more energy and focus to devote to the company. Take time to understand what motivates the people on your team. Research shows that managing people by nurturing their strengths can improve performance more effectively than trying to mold them into something they are not. Paying attention to the strengths and desires of your employees can help cultivate a culture of excitement and flow.

I spend time learning about what inspires each of my employees, which makes Serena Loves an environment where everyone is excited to show up. This of course can be difficult to scale. If you run a larger company, you want to be sure that the manager you hire embodies the values of the business and is ready to inspire and support your employees as you would.

Walk the talk.

As a leader, it is imperative that you embody your brand and your brand's values. Both your employees and your customers will look to your actions for signals of authenticity and trust. A leader who has done the inner work to define their purpose within the company can more naturally embody the organizational values. Being a living, breathing example of the person you ask your employees to be

supports a healthy internal environment. Your actions also impact how your customers and potential customers view you and the company. If you don't uphold the company values, no one else will see the importance of doing so either.

Bring energy positivity with you.

This is one of my top tips for leading with purpose. I bring positive energy with me into every meeting and interaction. This is the unspoken, intangible energy that can truly elevate your business, and it does not cost you anything. If I'm feeling happy and full of joy about my work, then this energy is infused into the team, the products and our communications. It helps everyone build excitement for progress and success. Not only will the work environment be more fun, but positive work cultures are also known to be more productive.

Create a positive impact.

Focusing on the positive impact of your work can help give you the energy to persevere in the face of challenges. My personal work was inspired by my parents' battle with cancer. I realized the immense impact food has on the mind, body and spirit, and wanted to share that information with the world so that they do not have to suffer in the same way that my family did.

What is your story? How is your work impacting other people? Understanding that you are making a positive impact on people's lives can help add a sense of purpose to your work. People who find meaning in their work are more likely to stick around and bring their best to the table.

Treat mistakes as teachers.

If you or your employees are going after big goals, you are bound to make mistakes. You might even fail. However, cultivating a work environment in which failure is a teacher can set your team up for long-term success. Turn failures into learning opportunities from which knowledge and growth can be gleaned. Additionally, it is important to develop the tools to handle failure. Researchers find that emotional regulation enhances the ability to learn from failure. In my work, I have found practices such as mindfulness, meditation and mindset shifts to be crucial for developing a healthy relationship with my emotions.

Learn the signs of dysfunction.

An undervalued component of living with intention is understanding when something is going sour before it happens. Becoming mindful of the signs of failure can help you manage problems before they get out of hand. For instance, notice your own signs of burnout before they impact your work. Also notice negative changes among your

team and address them before they impact the company culture or individual performance. You can familiarize yourself with the signs of employee disengagement to help nip problems in the bud. Learning how to recognize the signs of dysfunction, whether physically or organizationally, is one of the most important tools to have in your wellness toolbox.

Success as an entrepreneur is not a one-size-fits-all formula, but leading with purpose and intention can help you get there.