

The Power of ACCEPTANCE



“Power comes from being on a crusade to make something better.”

By Kevin Houchin

Part One

What if I told you that your business was the same as every other service and consulting business on the planet? Would you believe me, or would you start pointing out differences? Most lawyers start arguing differences. After all, we're trained to spot distinctions and use those distinctions to benefit our clients, which is a good thing when building a case but a big handicap when building your business and life. Real power rests in spotting similarities and allowing yourself to use fundamental principles without weakening everything by picking ideas apart.

One of these principles is The Power of Acceptance. This power is inspired by the following quote:

“The most profound choice in life is to either accept things as they exist or to accept the responsibility for changing them.”

– FROM *THE UNIVERSAL TRAVELER*
BY DON KOBERG AND JIM BAGNALL

We make this profound choice in every second of every day of our lives. Power comes from making the choice *consciously*.

You've heard that your business needs purpose, focus, mission, vision, and all the buzzwords that take you along one tangent or another. What these paths are trying to do is ask one question, and it's the core question of your life and your business:

“What problem do *you* accept the personal responsibility to change?”

This is a profound question for both your life and business. It's the nucleus of personal and business leadership. Let's break it down to make it easier because even though it's a small question, it has huge consequences.

What do you see as the problem that you are willing to solve?

I'll give you a couple of examples. People don't feel empowered to fuel that inner divine spark of creativity we all have inside. Too many people are trapped in jobs they hate because they don't trust their own creative spirit. Seeing that untapped creativity brings me tears. I *accept* the personal responsibility to help as many people as I can and fuel that divine spark of creativity.

Maybe you see the drama and pain that young children experience when losing parents who have not designated guardians as a problem you are willing to solve.

Maybe you see long prison sentences for minor but repeat offenders as a problem you're willing to solve.

Maybe you see the shame and fear of people in financial difficulty as a problem you're willing to solve.

Maybe you see the anger and suffering of bitter divorces as a problem you're willing to solve.

I'm not judging the problem you choose to solve. Power comes from being on a crusade to make something better. How you define that “something” is what will get you out of bed in the morning. Here's the real kicker – it's not just about you. How you define the problem will be the foundation of your branding and marketing strategy – providing the conceptual theme for all your communications. It will attract and screen the right team of employees and partners. Finally, it will draw the right clients.

What do you see as the solution?

Problems and solutions are the yin and yang of existence. Fretting about the problem doesn't do any good and solutions to non-existent problems aren't much use either. The solution must be easy to understand. Your solution statement becomes the opposite pole of the problem. Now comes the “business” of life and commerce – connecting those poles.

How can you best communicate the problem and implement your solution?

The “how” is what we pay for when we purchase services and the value we provide as respected professionals. “How” equals “value.” Communicating your “value proposition” or “unique selling point” is simply telling people how you connect the problem with the solution. The Get a Life.™ Conference is a perfect example of the “how” providing value. The Total Practice Management team accepted responsibility to solve the problem that there are too many lawyers who hate their work and who allow that dissatisfaction to ruin lives. The solution was to provide several ways for lawyers to find ideas about how to better balance their professional and personal lives. The value came from the Get a Life.™ Conference, web site and this magazine that attempts to show lawyers how to get from problem to solution.

An easy way to communicate your value is telling the story of what you found to be the problem, share a turning point, and then share the key points of how you get to your unique solution.

Start giving some thought to what you accept as it exists today. Because none of us can solve all the world's problems, the number of things we must accept as they exist will be far greater than what we can accept personal responsibility to change. If you can accurately define even one thing that you just cannot accept as it exists today, you will be closing in on your life's purpose. That purpose will guide everything you do from now on – in business and in life.

In Part 2 of this series, I'll discuss some tools and techniques to help refine your thoughts on this and move to the next level of The Power of Acceptance which is the ability to Receive and Surrender. ■