

Small Business Owners Share Their Most Inspirational Quotes

by Christina DeBusk December 22, 2016



ENTREPRENEURING

In complete transparency, I must admit that, not too long ago, I was thinking of walking away from my freelance business and hanging up my writing hat entirely. It was one of those moments when I thought to myself, “It would be sooo much easier to just work for someone else.”

Fortunately, before I could follow through, I found the inspiration to keep going via a quote by Maya Angelou, “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel.”

For me, this quote struck home because my goal isn’t to be famous or rich...it’s simply to leave others feeling better about themselves or their situations after reading my content. It’s to give them a little inspiration of their own when they’re about to lose hope, whether in business or health, or any other topic area they happen to be struggling with.

That’s when it occurred to me that I couldn’t be the only one who experiences this need for a little push or pull now and again. So, I reached out to other small business owners and asked them to provide the one quote that inspired them most.

This is what they had to say.

➤ **“A satisfied customer is the best business strategy of all.”** ~ Michael LeBoeuf, American Business Author, Former Management Professor

Purav Kapadia, founder and CEO of Linea Di Liara, says that this quote stands out because, “Owning a successful business keeps you very busy. When your customers are at the forefront of everything you do...you will find success.”

➤ ***“Energy and persistence conquer all things.”*** ~ Benjamin Franklin, Scientist, Inventor, Founding Father of the U.S.

Monika Miles, president of Miles Consulting Group finds inspiration in this quote because, “When starting a business, and even in the rough spots of a mature business, it’s easy to get discouraged when something doesn’t go right,” says Miles. “But if you keep working toward your plan and applying positive energy persistently, success will come. I’m a big believer of putting positive energy into all the things I do. When I get off track, I remember this quote and get back on the success path!”

➤ ***“Rack the shotgun.”*** ~ Perry Marshall, Business Consultant, Author of *80/20 Sales and Marketing*

“My favorite business quote is a motto, a philosophy, and a story all rolled up into 3 words,” says Joe Palumbo, owner at Ice Dam Guys, LLC. “The principle is that smart business owners and marketers give off certain ‘signals’ that they know will elicit a strong reaction from would-be customers—both the kinds of customers they want to attract, and the kinds of customers they’d prefer to turn away. Perry’s advice to ‘Rack the shotgun’ reinforced what I already knew, but didn’t observe as well as I do now: that a business only attracts customer to the degree it repels them. My company, Ice Dam Guys, performs an emergency service: ice dam removal. We tell customers—on our website and over the phone—that we’re not the cheapest. We tell them estimates over the phone are impossible (they are). Even though we offer same-day service, sometimes we’re booked solid for a day and tell customers they’d ‘be in line’ perhaps for a little longer than they’d like. That scares away pretty much all the customers who want something we can’t provide. The remaining people remain because they’ve read our reviews online, or saw us on the news the previous year, or appreciate the free info we share on our site. They make for extremely happy customers and are the reason my company keeps growing.”

➤ ***“Design is not just what it looks like. Design is how it works.”*** ~ Steve Jobs, Entrepreneur, Co-Founder of Apple

Shragy Gestetner, founder and CEO of Vant Panels, says “Our goal when designing Vant Panels was a design element that not only looks good, but is easy to install, affordable, and a real room enhancer. Thankfully, we were able to accomplish all three and we’ll just keep on creating with this goal in mind.”

➤ ***“Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do.”*** ~ Pelé, Retired Brazilian Professional Footballer

“At 46, I finally made the leap and enrolled in a master’s degree program,” says Suzanne Fisher MS, RD, LDN, and owner of Fisher Enterprises, the company behind Kibitz & Cook. “I gave up many nights and weekends to study, but it was worth every minute of hard work to achieve a lifelong goal. I am constantly striving to break out of the mold of what a dietitian is ‘supposed to be.’ I decided early in my career that I wanted more than a typical clinical position. I am proud to consult for many prominent companies, including nationally recognized software companies, The Miami City Ballet School and Powerhouse Gym.”

➤ ***“You have the power to move forward—believe in yourself.”*** ~ Joseph Murphy, Author, New Thought Minister

Elizabeth Upton is a writer, motivational speaker, and former nun who’s published a number of books, and this quote is one of her favorites because, “I’ve been inspired in my life as a writer to move forward regardless of rejections, hardships and failure, knowing that my intention and hard work matters more than great success.”

- ***“Anything is possible. Anything can be.”*** ~ Shel Silverstein, Best-selling Children’s Author

Shlome Knopfler, founder and CEO of Toys2Discover and Shape Mags, says, “When I came to the USA 25 years ago, someone told me a similar quote and inspired me to take big business risks. Although I came with hardly any money and barely spoke any English, I took major leaps and, thankfully, today we’re a large, growing, family-owned business. We always keep our minds open to re-imagine existing toys and invent new ones. The sky’s the limit as long as we’re helping children have fun and learn!”

- ***“Once a year, go someplace you’ve never been before.”*** ~ Dalai Lama, Religious Leader, Activist

Humphrey Butler, founder of ST&G, says, “This inspires me to visit new places and try new things, including creating Marvelous Maps. Our maps encourage travel, as well as adding in a bit of fun!”

- ***“I cannot do all the good that the world needs, but the world needs all the good that I can do.”*** ~ Jana Stanfield, Musical Artist, Motivational Speaker

Kirsten Chapman, founder of Kleynimals, says, “When I founded my business, it was because I was trying to solve a problem. I thought babies needed a non-toxic, realistic key toy to play with. From the inception of my company, I have always been committed to having a business that made me extremely proud. For me, the idea of having a business was one that would bring ‘good’ to babies, parents, people working on the product, and, ultimately, the world. While I realize that my product is not changing the world, it is my contribution to good... manufacturing in the USA and paying people enough; hiring developmentally disabled people; giving a portion of my revenue to causes that make a difference in the world, and, ultimately, making people just a little bit happier. While there is much more good that I can do in the world, I feel like Kleynimals is adding ‘goodness’ in a small way.”

- ***“When there’s a fire, call a fireman.”*** ~ Laurence Franklin, Former President of Coach and CEO of Frette

Meg Touborg, president of METWorks Inc., says that “this wisdom was shared by Laurence Franklin when he was President/COO of Coach, and one of my mentors. We were in a large and tense monthly meeting where many colleagues were trying to outdo themselves with clever solutions requiring time, money, and people. Laurence sliced through the escalating situation with this phrase and it has shaped my thinking and acting in business ever since. Identify the problem, hire the expert. The ‘right’ solution can be simple; if a problem is assessed accurately allow someone with knowledge and training to do their best to remedy.”

- ***“We choose to go to the moon not because it is easy but because it is hard.”*** ~ John F. Kennedy, 35th President of the U.S.

Lori Ben- Ezra, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist and clinical director of Lori Ben-Ezra, Ph.D. & Associates Psychological Services and says that this quote is inspiring because it “reminds me that there are times when I need to go out of my comfort zone to reach my goals and continually push myself to achieve in order to serve as a role model for my patients.”

- ***“When you arise in the morning, think of what a precious privilege it is to be alive – to breathe, to think, to enjoy, to love.”*** ~ Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor

Brandon Vallorani, entrepreneur and CEO of Vallorani Estates, says, “This quote reminds me of the fundamental reason that I start businesses, such as Vallorani Estates, and work so hard each day to make them profitable. Life is hard, but it is also good. I want to create products that help people experience and enjoy life to the fullest.”

➤ ***“The possibilities are limited only by our imagination and determination, and not by physics.”*** ~ Mike Duke, PhD, NASA Geologist

Thomas Dere is the owner of Luxury Auto Works and draws inspiration from these words. “I first saw this quote while I was working as a technician at the local Mercedes-Benz dealership,” says Dere, “and I always wanted to open my own shop because I knew I could do things better, but I wasn’t sure how to start. So, I kind of let my vision simmer in the background, thinking it would be impossible for me to accomplish. Not so much physically, but just the daunting nature of taking on a project like that seemed like too much at the time. After reading this quote, I became more motivated to explore my opportunities; it inspired and determined me to make my vision a reality and now Luxury Auto Works is the fastest growing independent, foreign repair shop in Austin!”

➤ ***“You don’t get what you want, you don’t get what you deserve. You get what you are ruthlessly committed to creating.”*** ~ Garrett J White, Master Coach and Mentor, “Warrior”

Adam Splaver, MD, FACC, FACP, FASE, and Clinical Cardiologist with Nano Health Associates reveals that this particular quote is inspiring because, “Every day I need to ask myself: What am I ruthlessly committed to creating? What am I going to do to not only help others, but to dominate the market that I serve and be the best Preventative and Metabolic Cardiologist in South Florida?”

➤ ***“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.”*** ~ Steve Jobs, Entrepreneur, Co-Founder of Apple

Steve Jobs makes the list twice as Bilal Malik, owner of Reserved Barking, shares, “This quote not only inspired me to open a doggie daycare center as I loved working and being with dogs, it also helped me weather the ups and downs of entrepreneurship, especially in the early stages.”

➤ ***“Your smile is your logo; your personality is your business card. How you leave others feeling after having an experience with you is your trademark.”*** ~ Jay Danzie, Author of *Danzie Dialog* Blogs

Tafa Jefferson, owner of Amada Senior Care, says, “This quote by Jay Danzie has a powerful message. Anyone who is interested in growing their business should be acutely aware of what’s required to build great relationships. Always seeking insight, sound advice and making others feel valued are recipes for successful partnerships.”

➤ ***“Chase the vision, not the money; the money will end up following you.”*** ~ Tony Hsieh, Zappos CEO

“This quote physically hangs over my work desk as a constant visual inspiration of my brand vision and my focus on customer satisfaction and service,” says Avivit Ben-Aharon, MS Ed., MA CCC-SLP, founder and Clinical Director of Gr8 Speech Inc. “It’s all about integrity and service. I love Zappos for their amazing customer service. They are my true mentors.”

➤ ***“Fashion’s not about looking back, it’s about looking forward.”*** ~ Anna Wintour, Editor of Vogue

Rachel Tabbouche, founder and CEO of Undercover Waterwear, says that this quote is inspiring as “Undercover Waterwear isn’t about following trends, it’s about creating trends. It was all part of a dream of mine for women to be comfortable, feel confident, and look beautiful all year long! With this in mind, we explore all possibilities for creating innovative swimwear and fitness apparel.”