

Challenge the Gremlin within you



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The Gremlin

What's the difference between winners and losers? Between successful businesses and failing companies operating in the same markets? Why does one person nearly complete a task when another finishes it; one person just sees an opportunity whilst another acts upon their vision?

The answer is often as simple as a person's willingness, or not, to work outside of their "comfort zone."

Unfortunately for most of us, when faced with the requirement to do something outside of our comfort zones our brain usually starts to come up with allsorts of apparently practical and very rational reasons why that uncomfortable thing we need to do can be put of until later. The fear of appearing foolish or inadequate; the fear of fluffing it; and that most terrible of all fears: the fear of being found out and exposed as incompetent to our friends and peers.

This fear of working outside our comfort zone is the work of the "gremlin" that we all have inside of us. Our gremlin is our inner voice which talks to us (do you talk to yourself? Well those of you who aren't sure are probably having a conversation with yourself right now: "do I talk to myself, well I'm not sure, perhaps sometimes.....") The gremlin is that negative internal conversation that tells you "you're not good enough", and "you can't do this", and at that moment when you need to feel supremely confident tells you that you're getting nervous and your going to blow it.

But it isn't just unpleasant changes that we seek avoid. Changes that we acknowledge and accept as positive are often resisted because it's better the devil we know, than the devil we don't. The improvement promised by a change is often just hypothetical, whereas the present is real and tangible. This too is the work of your gremlin - conspiring to convince us that we really would be better off playing it safe and staying in an emotionally comfortable place.

So how can you help yourself to increase your commitment to making changes?

First of all amplify the need for change. Become very dissatisfied with the present. Identify the disadvantages; focus on them, to the point at which you develop a very strong desire to change the present. This will increase the value of the perceived benefit and overshadow the cost associated with the change.

Secondly be realistic about the cost of change – recognise it's just your gremlin talking to you, it's not going to be that difficult. Death and injury are not on the agenda here. We're only talking about a bit of emotional discomfort.

Thirdly, be realistic about the benefits. Don't let your gremlin distract you. Focus your attention on the benefits of the change and visualise how much better things will be once the change is complete. The more you can become obsessed with this new great future, the greater will become your motivation to undertake the less comfortable parts of the change.

Lastly, stick with it, keep the faith and see the change through to the end. Believe that you are every bit as good, or powerful, as anyone you see, know or hear about. Believe that you really do have the potential to become even more successful than you are now