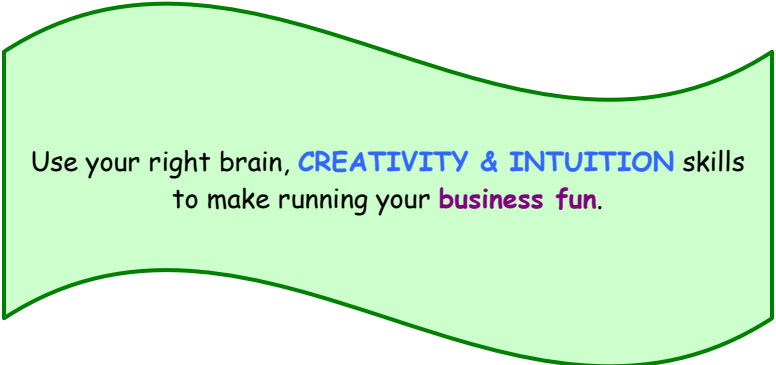


Nine Art Mates of Business Play

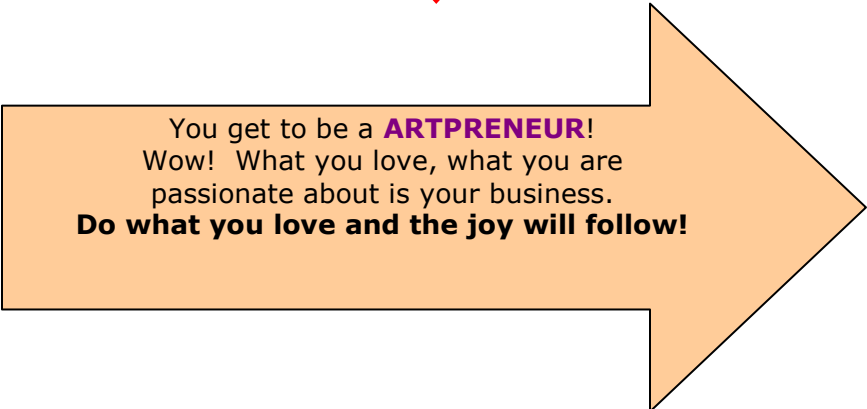
Welcome to the [Heartmosphere](#), where passion and business meet!



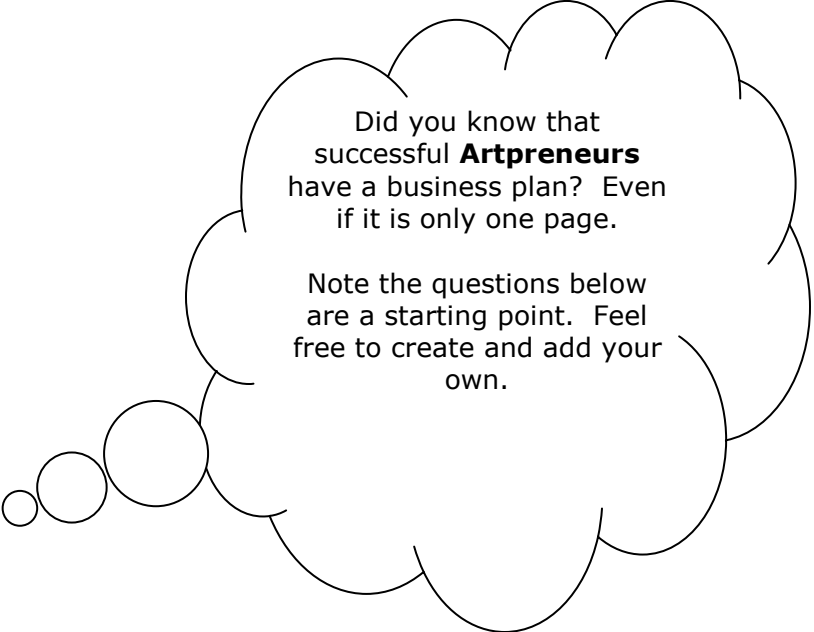
Are you a **CEO - Creative Entrepreneur Optimist**? Does your business excite your mind, body and soul? Then the **Nine Art Mates of Business Play** are for **YOU!**



Use your right brain, **CREATIVITY & INTUITION** skills to make running your **business fun**.



You get to be a **ARTPRENEUR!**
Wow! What you love, what you are passionate about is your business.
Do what you love and the joy will follow!

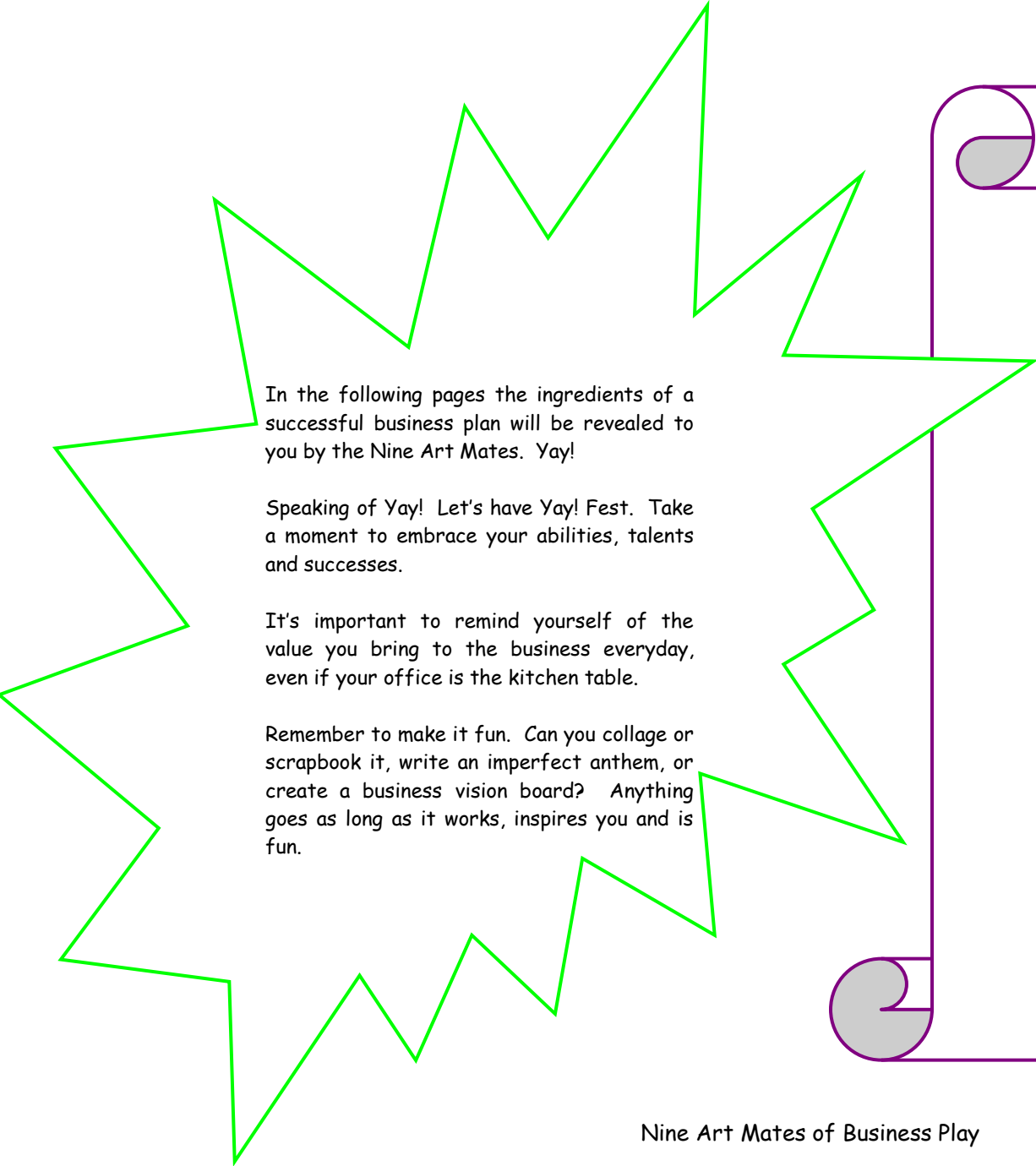


Did you know that successful **Artpreneurs** have a business plan? Even if it is only one page.

Note the questions below are a starting point. Feel free to create and add your own.



Yay! Fest



In the following pages the ingredients of a successful business plan will be revealed to you by the Nine Art Mates. Yay!

Speaking of Yay! Let's have Yay! Fest. Take a moment to embrace your abilities, talents and successes.

It's important to remind yourself of the value you bring to the business everyday, even if your office is the kitchen table.

Remember to make it fun. Can you collage or scrapbook it, write an imperfect anthem, or create a business vision board? Anything goes as long as it works, inspires you and is fun.

Social Support Mountain

Welcome to rock! A place where entrepreneurship, passion and joy are embraced and celebrated. Running a business can be rewarding and fun and sometimes it can be challenging and hard.

I was creating my own business as a **Right Brain Coach** and was slugging away in my home office when there was a knock on my door. I almost didn't answer because I was busy banging my head against the computer screen in despair.

Shoulders slumped, feeling defeated I slinked away from my desk. I open the door and the Nine Art Mates of Business Play waltzed in and hug me. They brought with them joy, laughter and support.

They turned my dreary home office into the **Treehouse Embassy** and dubbed me with the title of **Creativity Ambassador**. They explained to me the value of play, the importance of small steps, and inspired me to have fun while I worked.

They changed by life, made business playful and they can help you. In the pages that follow you'll discover these energetic, enthusiastic, supportive **Art Mates** Feel free to channel their personalities anytime you need a boost.

Welcome to Business Play!

Let me introduce you to the **Art Mates**.

Binky, Vision Art Mate

Cherish your visions and your dreams, as they are the children of your soul, the blueprints of your ultimate achievements. ~ Napoleon Hill

Binky, short for Bianca, skipped through my door first, quite in keeping with her envisioning talents. She sees the big picture, the future of what a company or person wants to achieve. She thinks big, in vibrant colors and is full of thriving passion.

She inspires, provides a net to aim for and leads others to follow in her footsteps. The **Vision** of your company is the big, bold future you want to experience and manifest. The first step to getting what you want is knowing what you want to accomplish.

Binky, is a majestic eagle that soars overhead. She is full of ideas and loves to be innovative. She regularly touches down and walks among us. She is quite down to earth and approachable. She's a true believer in managing by walking around.

She uses the binoculars she carries around to see future possibilities. And can write a great one line mission statement that conveys the essence of a company with one wing tied behind her back. Her best friend is the Easter Bunny and she is always willing to land and lend a feather of support.

Call on the **Vision Art Mate** when you need help forming or staying true to your Vision, Mission, Dream and Purpose.

Prosper, Abundance Art Mate

Abundance is not something we acquire. It is something we tune into. ~ Wayne Dyer

Prosper, waltzed into my door second. She is generous and kind and tends to give you the green ink off her back. She believes in karma, and sees abundance everywhere, from the multitude of cars in the parking lot, to the overflowing seeds in a sunflower, to the many blades of grass on a lawn.

She lives in a straw bale house, with geothermal heating, solar panels on the roof and a small wind turbine. She throws a monthly potluck extravaganza at her cozy home. Asparagus is her favorite vegetable.

She prefers to walk and takes public transportation for fun. She meets the most intriguing people on her adventures. She is a gifted money manager and knows how to use her resources creatively. Brainstorming new products and services gives her a thrill.

She feels joy when she pays bill because she knows she is honoring another for their talents. She believes in appreciating yourself and the value you bring to each endeavor you pursue. She is always saying, "Believe in your self and your dreams, you are worth it."

Call on the **Abundance Art Mate** when you need to connect to the flow of energy and money that exists around you.

Grace, Building Relationship Art Mate

How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard. ~ From the movie Annie

Grace is a house spider and crawled into my life next. This **Art Mate** was a bit of a challenge for me, I'm afraid of spiders. Grace was very understanding and talked me gently down from the kitchen counter.

She loves to create web mandalas. While she spins her network she listens to jazz and big band music. She has eight green legs and cultivates and grows relationships over time. She can crawl up to anyone and make a connection. She is a people person and loves to help you succeed in life and business.

She keeps in regular and friendly contact with people. You should see her LinkedIn list. She remembers all those small details about you, what you like, and your favorite things and tends to surprise you with a small gift of appreciation.

She sings off key, is a bit of a flirt and her smile is her best asset. She knows how important it is to listen and connects people who are in need with those who can assist. She treats and sees every person she meets as a precious gem.

Call on the **Building Relationship Art Mate** when you need to channel networking, the social butterfly and connecting to the right people to assist you in making your business successful.

Ant Momentum, Small Steps Art Mate

It is better to take many small steps in the right direction than to make a great leap forward only to stumble backward. ~ Chinese Proverb

Ant Momentum lives in a commune, plays hard and leads weekly Laughter Yoga sessions. He quiets his mind with brainwave entrainment CDs.

He lives a Spartan life and is a regifting expert. During his youth he joined the Peace Corps, backpacked around the world until he was hired by the **Art Mates** to use his special talents to inspire small business owners to take active steps to success.

Every now and then he deliberately gets lost so he can enjoy the scenic tour. He loves to play hockey and aims for the net and scores. Ant M also has a Master of Creativity in Kaizen Muse Coaching.

He is engaged to O, the One Eye Ogre. His most treasured possession is a sea shell given to him by Pole Frog in honor of his contribution to the Leap Organization. He is also a Board of Directors for the ADQ Center for the Good Life.

Call on **Small Step Art Mate** when you need to take an overwhelming task, or an action you are procrastinating on and turn it into one small, tiny step. One small, tiny step that gets you moving forward.

Chillax, Café Art Mate

Your mind will answer most questions if you learn to relax and wait for the answer. ~ William S. Burroughs

Chillax is a broad shouldered, surfing dude. His ears stick out slightly and he has a big heart. His art and craft is gentleness, deep compassion and active listening. He calls his gifts a Doctorate in Active Compassion.

He's the nurturer of the group. His voice is warm, soothing and comforting. He carries a handkerchief in his bathing suit and tends to cry at romantic movies.

He makes the best smoothies and mocktails. He loves country music and live dancing. He's a Vegan and would make any person a great spouse. His hugs are lush and express total acceptance for you the imperfect human being.

He's the one you turn to when you need some pampering. He's a talented cook and bakes loads of organic goodies and gives them away.

He volunteers at several organizations and has a zoo where strays are welcomed. There are people always crashing on his couch. His favorite fashion accessory is a five o'clock shadow.

Call on the **Café Art Mate** when you need to break away and cherish yourself. He knows that taking some time to relax is the best way to stay healthy, energized and enthusiastic about your business.

Giggling Rae, Sunshine Art Mate

The truth is that you are responsible for what you think, because it is only at this level that you can exercise choice. What you do comes from what you think. ~ A Course in Miracles

Giggling Rae loves to sit on the beach sipping chocolate milk. She rollerblades everywhere and wears a bright yellow helmet and knee, elbow and wrist pads. She can be a bit of klutz and likes to wear colored bandages for her cuts and scrapes.

She is a Positude Activist and has been kidnapped four times by the Naysayer Terrorist group. She's escaped every time. She's related to Harry Houdini. When she graduated from college she ran away from 9 to 5 life to join the Cirque de Soleil before she found her true calling as an **Art Mate**. She performs amazing feats of magic goodness.

She has a Doctorate in Positive Psychology and loves going to Princess Classes at Godmother Sharon's house. She makes and sends out a least one handmade thank you card a day.

She's into acknowledging when someone does something right and letting people know she appreciates them for their actions and character traits. She's always specific and detailed and sticks to behavior she has seen and feelings she has experienced. When communicating she sticks to her side of the fence.

Call on the **Sunshine Art Mate** when you need a daily dose of positive thinking, imaginative reframes and golden joy.

Pole Frog, Obstacle Leaper Art Mate

Life is full of obstacle illusions. ~ Grant Frazier

Pole Frog makes Superman look like a sissy. She likes to climb mountains and kayak. She was even on the Olympic decathlon team but had to quit when she broke her ribbit in an accident.

Crazy ideas get her excited, almost as excited as chocolate houseflies. Her favorite saying is, "**Passion + Persistence = Glory**"

Her boyfriend is a dolphin and she lives in a remodeled airplane. No, I'm not kidding, she turned the cockpit into a private pond with lily pads.

She does séance to meet with her Dream Team of Mentors, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Einstein, Aristotle, Amelia Earhart, Indira Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, Marie Curie and the Fool to find creative solutions. She buys insect fudge by the pound and has a serious hat fetish.

She loves to sit at the kitchen table to plan out a strategy of success. She is a brainstorming virtuoso and sees every attempt as one step closer to a solution. Even when the attempt goes awry it's a success because she learned something that moves her forward towards her goal.

Call on the **Obstacle Leaper Art Mate** when you want to find an innovative solution, or just the next step to reaching success.

Tribal Beat, Smoke Signals Art Mate

If you do build a great experience, customers tell each other about that. Word of mouth is very powerful. ~ Jeff Bezos

Tribal Beat lives on an Aboriginal reservation. He is a well respected Shaman and travels via out of body experiences. He is a card carrying member of the Drum Circle Thunder and is a social entrepreneur. People come from around the world to hear him speak, drum and play.

He is a master juggler. And drives a 1969 Mustang black convertible, called Beauty. Yes, his favorite novel is Black Beauty, what gave it away?

He's part owner of an organic ranch that creates aromatherapy products with Kentchantments on them. You know, those attitude shift affirmations you say while you use the Kentchantment beauty product on your body. The tagline for his company is, "White Magic for a Soulfilling Experience".

He uses the profits from the company to invest in green energy initiatives. He is an accomplished inventor and has over a thousand patents registered to his name.

Call on the **Smoke Signal Art Mate** when you need to share your message with the world. He knows how to get a person's attention and inspire them to buy again and again.

O, One Eye Ogre, Insight Art Mate

It is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye. ~ Antoine Saint-Exupéry

O, the One Eye Ogre is a big, curvaceous woman that loves bubbles of all kinds. Chewing bubble gum bubbles and blowing bubbles. She is an avid collector of snow globes, another bubble if you think about it. She's into epigrams, ambiguity and contradictions. Her favorite way to travel is in her sporty space ship with a custom paint job.

She's a professional kazoo player and when people hear her sing they experience insights. She's into "in" words like insight, intuition, inspiration, imagination. She follows hunches, gut feelings and is really in touch with her body wisdom.

She's well rounded and grounded and is always willing to share her experience with the world for free. She's a great oral storyteller and loves to paint pictures on cave walls.

She tends to do a dance of joy when she has an Aha moment. She's a napaholic and has been known to shout eureka when taking her afternoon snooze. She is an avid lucid dreamer and has a notepad by her bedside to capture answers and solutions that come to her in her dreams.

Call on the **Insight Art Mate** when you want to be mindful and experience and understand a situation based on deep perception.

Binky, Vision Art Mate

Experience the future you want to achieve!



Vision

What is the perfect future vision of your business?
What is your one line mission statement?
What is your purpose?
What do you value?

Branding

What is your story?
What is your logo and tagline?
What makes you unique and sets you apart?
What is your corporate culture and brand experience?

Goals

What are your long term business goals?
What are your medium term business goals?
What are your short term goals?
What are your SMART objectives?
(SMART = Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Timely)

Excellence

In what ways might you create business excellence?
How might you communicate your vision to inspire excellence?
In what ways might you inspire customer loyalty?
How do you nurture your customers and make them feel appreciated and special?

Products & Services

What are your products and services?
What are the benefits of your products and services?
What new product or service can you invent?
Why would people want to buy the product or service from your company?

Money

How do you manage and track the money?
How do you invoice clients and collect payment?
In what ways might you improve productivity?
In what ways might you increase efficiency?

Rewards

In what ways might you reward my customers?
In what ways might you reward yourself and employees?
In what ways might you contribute to the community?
In what ways might you reward people who refer customers?

Creating Wealth

What will you charge to make a good income?
How do you determine what to charge?
What products and services are time based, value based and result based?
How do you create value?

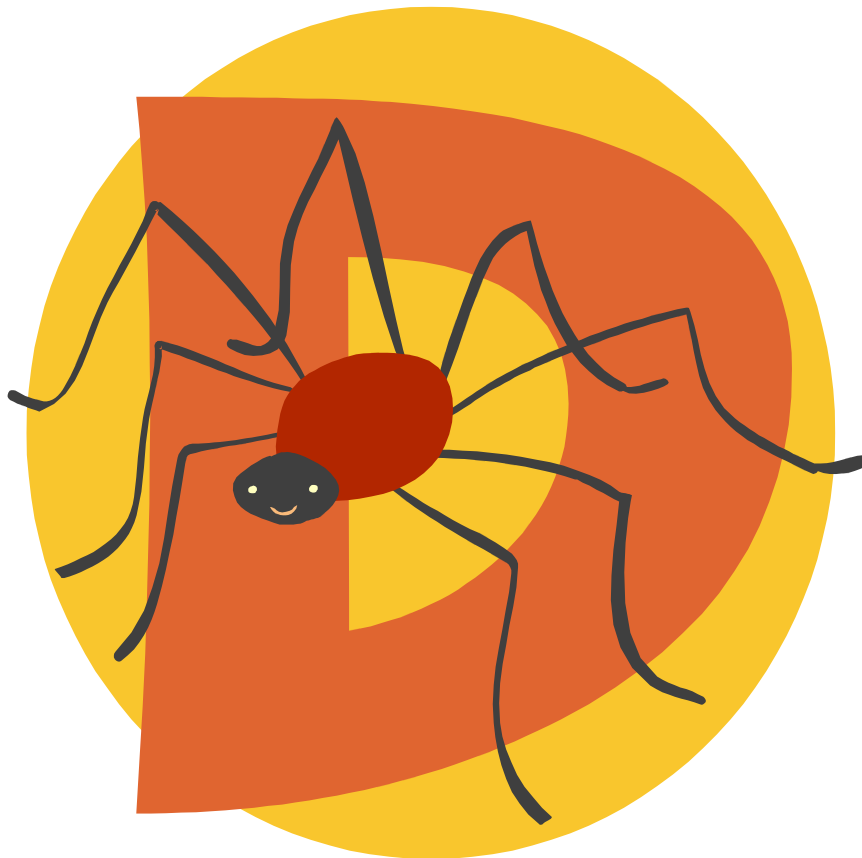
Prosper, Abundance Art Mate

Create a wealthy, joyful and abundant life.



Grace, Building Relationships Art Mate

Be genuine and authentically connect to people.



Support

What people can support you?
What organizations can support you?
How do you find good employees, interns, volunteers?
Do you want to hire a consultant, analyst or coach?

Partnerships & Collaboration

Who can you collaborate and partner with?
In what ways might you collaborate and partner?
What might be a good strategic alliance?
Are the partners and collaborators a good fit for you?

Customers

Who are your customers?
What do they value and what would make their life better?
What locations do they visit (online, shops, magazines, organizations)?
In what ways might you intrigue them to buy?

Cultivating Relationships

How do you acknowledge and appreciate people?
How can you build bridges and connect with people?
How will you develop and grow relationships over time?
What is one person or organization you can reach out to now?

Small Steps

What is one step you can take to move your business forward today?

What is a tiny step you can take today to share your message?

Who is one person, customer or organization you can connect with today?

What is one step you can take today to increase growth?

Playtentions

What is one business goal to play with this quarter?

What is one area of your business to play with this month?

What is one area of your business you can improve this week?

What is one task or activity you can play with and achieve today?

Administration

Are your records and business plan up to date?

Can you delegate the work to someone or outsource it?

Can you simplify, streamline or smooth out a process, policy or procedure?

Have you managed the money - invoiced clients, paid your bills, put money aside for taxes?

Improving

What is one small step to improve the customer experience?

What is one small way to strengthen the brand or vision?

What is one small way to improve a product or service?

What is one small way to improve yourself or employees?

Ant Momentum, Small Steps Art Mate

Goals and dreams only occur after several small successes.



Chillax, Cafe Art Mate

Relax, recharge and take time for you.



Play & Fun

- In what ways can you make it fun?
- In what ways can you add play?
- In what ways can you use creativity?
- In what ways can you add a sense of humor?

Relax

- In what ways do you relax?
- In what ways may you feed your soul?
- What are some small ways you can pamper yourself?
- How can I lull and return to my business refreshed, energetic and enthusiastic?

Rewards

- How do you celebrate your successes, especially the small ones?
- In what ways might you reward your customers?
- In what ways might you reward your employees?
- In what ways might you reward yourself?

Compassion

- In what ways may you place yourself in your customer's shoes?
- In what ways might you extend compassion to yourself and others?
- When you communicate do you remember to stay on your side of the fence?
- In what ways to you embrace your authentic self?

Posittude

In what ways do you cultivate a daily positive attitude?
In what ways do you cultivate positive thinking?
In what ways do you use positive words and phrases to express yourself?
In what ways do you remind yourself to be present and aware?

Appreciation

In what ways do you appreciate and acknowledge people, places and moments that make your life better?
In what ways might you express gratitude?
In what ways do you give yourself credit for what you are accomplishing?
In what ways might you choose to experience a beautiful day?

Reframe

How can you use your imagination to reframe the situation and see the positive side?
In what ways can you turn this around and see the good?
In what ways are you focusing on what you want to achieve?
How might you rewrite the story to have a happy ending?

Learning

What did you learn from this attempt at success?
What will you do differently next time?
In what ways do you use visualization to experience success?
What is one small way you might improve?

Giggling Rae, Sunshine Art Mate

Focus on and appreciate what is good in your life right now.



Pole Frog, Obstacle Leaper Art Mate

Find ways to successfully deal with risk.



Risk

- What are the risks and how can you minimize them?
- Where are you weak and how do you compensate?
- What are the big picture risks in this situation?
- What are the small risks in this situation?

Competition

- Who is your competition and what are they doing right?
- How is the competition weak and how can you take advantage?
- How does the competition wow its customers?
- How does the competition cultivate success?

Finding Solutions

- In what ways do you look for solutions?
- Who might you ask for help?
- What methods do you use to examine possible solutions?
- What is the short, medium and long term impact to a possible solution?

Creativity

- What are some creative ideas to solve the issue you are facing?
- What is the craziest solution you can think of?
- What resources can you use creatively to implement a solution?
- In what ways can you change your viewpoint to find a creative solution?

Benefits

What are the benefits of your products and services?

In what ways do your products and services reflect the values of your customers?

In what ways do your products and services make life easier and better?

In what ways do you contribute to the community?

Story Time

What is your story?

What is the mission of your story?

What message does your story tell the world and your customer?

In what ways can you improve your story?

Share the Story

What are different ways you can share your story with your customers?

What story will intrigue your customers?

In what ways do you tell a good story?

In what ways can you make your customer the hero of the story?

Choose an Instrument

What instrument will you use to share your story?

What might be an interesting way to tell your story?

What instrument will reach the most customers?

How will you choose the right instrument for the right customer?

Tribal Beat, Smoke Signals Art Mate

Share your story with the world.



O, One Eyed Ogre, Insight Art Mate

Be mindful and aware and trust your intuition.



Overcoming Fear

- In what ways may you express your fear and release it?
- In what ways might you deal with the fear of running a business?
 - Were you bold, believed in yourself and did it anyway?
- In what ways can you focus on small steps to achieve your goals?

Insight & Intuition

- In what ways do you cultivate insight and intuition?
- In what ways do you express faith in yourself and your business?
 - In what ways do you listen to your heart and soul?
 - In what ways do you quiet the mind to find answers?

Mindfulness

- Are you open, present and aware of the inspiration that exists around you?
 - In what ways do you take the time to "smell the roses"?
- In what ways do you give your customers your full and present attention?
 - In what ways do you focus your attention fully on the task?

Success

- In what ways might you invite abundance into your life?
 - In what ways do you attract success into your life?
 - In what ways do you practice being successful?
- In what ways do you visualize your business being a sustainable success?

Tying a Bow

Find a way to make creating, reviewing and updating your business plan fun. For example, you can collage, vision board or scrapbook your way to business success.

Divide your business plan into sections that make sense. You can create your own categories or use the Art Mate's nine areas of business play:

1. Vision (business play plan)
2. Building Relationships (networking)
3. Prosper (resources)
4. Sunshine (optimism)
5. Insight (innovation & imagination)
6. Small Steps (action plan)
7. Obstacle Leaper (research)
8. Smoke Signals (marketing)
9. Café (balance)

If you doing a formal, business plan to show to banks or venture capitalists you can use the Business Play Plan to get you started and then write everything up in a formal way.

One way to be inspired is to review other people's business plans. This will give you ideas, insights and inspiration. Something might click and resonate with you.

Make it fun. For example, use the building relationship Art Mate to connect with people who can inspire you. Call them up, let

them know you appreciate their talents and ask if you could take them out for coffee and ask them some questions.

You'll notice that most of the time the Art Mates do not give advice. For the most part they ask questions to assist you in discovering your own adventurous path.

Whenever you need some Art-spiration, feel free to visit Support Mountain, meet with the Art Mates, connect with the one that feels right and channel them and their energy to help you play with your business and make it a success.

For example, you might have one of the Art Mates write you a letter and see what they have to say. Or maybe the Art Mate will prefer to write a poem, song, or do an arts and craft activity.

To get you started with your business play plan collage or bizvision board your way to success. Collect pictures, words, phrases, glitter and whatever else catches your eyes and your heart.

Use the Nine Business Play areas and add items to each section. Use the front of each page to inspire you and use the back of each page to write down your business play plan.

Once the business play plan is finished keep it nearby. Look at it on a regular basis so it reminds you of your vision and your actions plans. Update it as necessary.

Making it Fun and Playful

- Listen to music?
- In what ways might you add laughter?
- In what ways might you turn it into a game or friendly competition?
- Can you reach out to someone for support?

The more fun and playful you can make running your business the more likely you are to take small active steps to success. Find small ways to shift your attitude. For example, when Ray, goes to an interview, he wears funky socks. This one tiny action gives him a bit of a boost and makes him feel more positive.

A business play plan can be simple or complex. It is designed as both a planning and inspiration tool. Spend time on the plan, and more time on taking small steps that will leap frog you to success.

Think of your business play plan as a treasure map. Yes, you need a map, a way to direct you in the direction you want to go. However, to collect the treasure you need to take action. You may look at the map every now and then but most of your time will be spent walking towards your goal.

If you are not sure where to go next, make an educated guess and follow your intuition. Focus on the vision and be flexible in the details. Take action and move yourself forward towards business success.

Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there. ~ William Rogers

Successes Scrapbook

Find a way to keep track of what works. What has been successful in the past? When you are feeling low, overwhelmed or negative look at your Success Scrapbook, this will remind you that you do have skills, talents and abilities. That you have achieved goals, dreams and intentions. That you have been successful in the past and can be again. Sometimes you need reminding of what you already know - you are talented.

SWOT Mobile

Okay, you've created your business play plan, and you've decided on a goal and an objective. What now you may be asking? Will now you can create a SWOT Mobile to explore your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Strengths: internal factors of an organization that support the achievement of the objective.

Weaknesses: internal factors of an organization that may harm the achievement of the objective.

Opportunities: external factors that support the achievement of the objective.

Threats: external factors that harm the achievement of an objective.

Use the SWOT Mobile to explore the landscape of your business and industry. Make your strengths and opportunities larger than your weaknesses and threats so you have a visual reminder that you can be a big success.

Small Questions

- In what ways might you capitalize on your strengths?
- In what ways might you improve on our weaknesses to achieve the objective?
- In what ways might you benefit and use to your advantage the opportunities?
- In what ways might you lessen each threat?
- In what ways might you might you find competitive advantages by matching strengths with opportunities?
- In what ways might you convert weaknesses and threats into strengths and opportunities?

Craft Solutions

When you are contemplating an issue or looking for a solution be sure to ask for what you want. Ask a small question. One that directs you towards what you want to achieve. Do you want to harm people or keep them safe?

Do you want to create a product so people don't get hurt? Or do you want to create a product that keeps people safe? Think about those two questions. The first one focuses on harm and the second question on safety.

Don't think about a carrot. Don't think about a carrot! Are you thinking about a carrot? Of course you are because the word carrot has been mentioned and the moment it was mentioned a carrot appeared in your mind.

Focus on what you want to achieve. Focus on the best and most desired result. That is the way to craft a solution.

The Art Mates are all about asking questions. The reason they ask questions is because the brain cannot reject a question. So, if you keep asking the same small question over and over eventually your brain will find an answer.

This is magic, brain magic. If you are looking for a solution ask yourself a question. Write the question down and place it somewhere you will see it regularly. Eventually an answer will arrive, like magic from your brain. Wow, the human brain is awesome.

Other Activities

- Collage your perfect customers. Where they shop? What they value? Where they visit? What is there typical day like? What would make their life better?
- Use a mind map to discover the competition. What are they good at? Where are their weaknesses? In what ways might you use their strengths and weaknesses to your advantage and improve your business? Taking the time to go on a treasure hunt about your competition will lead to precious gems of information you can use to make your business better.

Choose to be Positive

Life is more enjoyable when you focus on the positive. When you choose to focus on what is working in your life right now. Research has shown that if you are feeling down and you make the effort to smile that you will feel better.

However, note that you do not want to deny or bury your feelings. If you are feeling sad, then admit you are feeling sad. Emotions are helpful. Sadness allows you to express pain, anger an injustice, and fear can keep you safe.

Emotions can get you into trouble when they go to extremes or when you deny or bury them. Denied or buried emotions suck energy from you, energy you can be using elsewhere.

One thing you can do is do a Release List. This takes the emotions that are inside and releases them onto the written page. It's amazing how releasing and acknowledging emotions frees up energy that you can use elsewhere to make your life and your business better.

Go through the actions of a release list.

Acknowledge what you are feeling. Then choose a small action that will make you feel better. You might smile or go for a walk or reach out to a person for support.

Make a choice every morning to be positive. There are several ways to be positive every day.

- Be gentle and compassionate. With others and with yourself.
- Acknowledge what people are doing right. Tell them. That includes giving yourself credit for what you are doing.
- Appreciate what is working in your life now. People, actions, moments.
- Express gratitude and appreciation.

Culture of Success

Have you ever listened to people or the media? Often the words are filled with negativity and naysayers. All this does is create a culture of blame, where people and organizations waste precious time discovering ways to blame someone, anyone for what has gone wrong, so no one points the shaking finger at them.

This is not helpful. Things go wrong. That is life, imperfect life. Think of what you could achieve if you took away the energy wasted on the blame game and focused it on the success game. When things do not go as planned turn the moment into a learning opportunity, a way to reflect and improve.

Ways to Create a Culture of Success

- Appreciate and acknowledge others. This includes expressing gratitude.
- Build on strengths and celebrate successes.
- Be genuine and authentic and embrace deep acceptance of the people you meet.
- Focus on learning and improving (not blaming).

Sustainable Design

- Social Entrepreneurship
- Green is In
- Contribute to the Community

Small Questions

- Where there smoke signals you could have paid better attention to and resolved before it became a fire?
- Where there big picture influences you could have considered?
- What might work better next time?
- In what ways might we improve our product, services and policies based on this situation?

Pay Attention to the Small Moments

There are some situations that are inherently dangerous if things go wrong, flying a plane, a delicate surgery. When research was done on these high risk situations it was discovered that when small things go awry they are paid attention to and fixed. They do everything they can to deal with small situations before they become a five alarm crisis.

A lot of times in life you ignore the small problems hoping they will go away. How often does that really work? Think about any major event or crisis you have lived through. Did that crisis just suddenly happen? Or, now looking back, were there small moments that hinted at the disaster to come that you missed or ignored?

Yep, ducking your head in the sand and channeling your inner ostrich is not going to make the problem go away. It is better to take action and fix the small oops before it becomes a major event.

Acknowledge to yourself that dealing with even a small mistake is uncomfortable, even scary. It is especially scary if you have to talk to someone else about this issue.

Dreading the situation is ten times worse than dealing with it. Because dreading it is about fear and fear has a habit of taking over and blocking out rational thought. Take a few moments to visualize and see yourself dealing with the situation successfully.

Let's go through a real world example. You have an employee who could do something better. Now, right now the problem is minor and you have decided you are going to talk about this issue with the employee. Good for you. Give yourself a pat on the back for choosing to do something to improve the situation.

Take some time to gather your thoughts. When dealing with people you want to focus on the behavior, not the person. So you want to do three things at this point.

One you want to list the things you appreciate about the employee, their talents, skills and abilities. Create a list of what they are doing right. Two, write down the behaviors that are a concern. Three brainstorm possible solutions.

Then arrange for a time to speak with the employee in private. When they arrive at the session start with why the employee is valued. This is where the first list, what you appreciate about the person is used.

Then let the employee know you have some concerns you would like to share with them. Stay on your side of the fence. Speak about what you feel and what you have observed.

Give the employee, the person space to speak and respond. LISTEN. This is very important. Listen to the employee. Make sure they know you are listening by using Active Listening skills and reflecting what you hear back to the person.

Ask the employee what are some ideas, some small ways they can think of to improve the behavior. This is a time to brainstorm about solutions. Discuss the solutions. Have the EMPLOYEE choose a solution to implement it. You have more buy in if the employee is doing the choosing of the solution.

Thank the employee, the person for having this discussion. These conversations are difficult for you and the employee. And this is where you need to keep taking small steps to support the employee to achieve success.

Ensure you give the employee positive feedback when they implement the solution. People want to be acknowledged, they want people to notice they are making an effort.

So, when you see the employee making an effort, reward them for that effort and tell them they are doing good. And this feedback is best served immediately upon observing the behavior. If you wait until performance review time, six months down the road, the feedback is not going to be effective.

The best way to encourage good actions is to provide immediate and positive feedback. Acknowledge people for what they are doing right and they will repeat the behavior. Focus on a person's strengths and use them to the advantage of the business.

Clients & Customers

Finding Gold

How do you connect with people? How do you find the gold of new customers? It's simple really. Just remember to bring a SOCK. Smile, Optimism, Connect, Keep at it.

Smile. Smile let's people know you are friendly. Even if you are reaching out to people online, smile as you type. Smile and people will smile back at you.

Optimism. Enter each new venture with hope and the belief it will be successful. This is known as the Law of Attraction. Believe in success and you will attract success to you.

Connect. Once you have smiled at someone and they have smiled back at you it's time to connect authentically. Find something to comment on. Be genuine. The best way to be authentic is to be

mindful, present and aware. Pay attention to the person you are connecting with. Listen to their conversation and focus on them. You will find a way to connect. One of the best ways is to ask a small, open ended question.

Keep at it. Persistence is the path to glory. You will get better with practice. The more people you connect with the more chances you have to reach a new customer or share your message with the world.

Bonus points make it fun. Can you add an element of fun or play?

WOW, Word of Wonder

Find ways to add elements of fun and play. Impress people with excellence. And make people feel wonderful.

You want to keep your existing customers. It's more profitable to keep an existing customer than to spend money to find a new one. It takes time, money and resources to find and recruit new clients. Not to mention pissed off clients bad mouth you to everyone they meet.

The best source of new clients is referrals from happy clients or past clients who enjoyed the connection with your company. As you can see existing clients and old clients are a treasure map of possibilities that can lead to the precious gem of a new client.

You want to WOW your clients. Because when you WOW clients they will tell other people how wonderful your company is.

We live in a world where average and mediocre is accepted, even encouraged. Fast food, dollar stores, bargain bins - these we are told are the necessary ingredients to consumerism.

Consider taking a different path. Consider a return to craftsmanship, a time when excellence mattered. People will pay for something they consider valuable and well made, and that includes a well crafted experience.

You want to find ways to create a unique, memorable adventure for you clients. Something they can RAVE about to their friends. You want to WOW your clients, so they sing your praises to everyone they meet. Something that is becoming increasingly important in our media savvy and social webworking world.

Why is this a worthwhile activity? When your clients are WOWed, they spread the Word of Wonder about your company for FREE. That's right. They become advocates for you and your company. They share your story with the world for nothing but the joy of telling others about their most excellent adventure with you.

How to Wow?

Add Elements of Fun and Play

As a child you played and had fun. One of the reasons you remember your childhood fondly is because you were able to enjoy the present moment and use your imagination to make whatever activity you were doing fun. When you are having fun life is smoother, more relaxed and often filled with laughter.

As an adult you often work in restricting and stuffy corporate environments. In fact the lack of joy and appreciation in corporate life is often the very reason people decide to become Artpreneurs. They know deep in their heart that life and work is better when filled with passionate purpose.

Any time you can make something more fun and playful is going to make your product more attractive to a person. People buy items simply because they are fun and to engage in a moment of play. Fun and play is something that people value and therefore something they will spend money on.

Small Questions

- In what ways might you make it fun?
- In what ways might you add an element of play?
- In what ways might you make it an adventure?

Impress Clients with Excellence

Everybody appreciates craftsmanship. If you build it well they will come. Something that is well made is desired by others.

Certain words when spoken automatically bring craftsmanship to mind: Apple, IDEO, Martha Stewart lifestyle, a fine wine, a gourmet meal. People understand that craftsmanship and excellence is something worth paying for.

Gain the title of excellence and people will come to you. Well made products and services WOW people and are often mentioned in the media - TV, print and online.

Over and over these media outlets create top lists. Getting on these top lists because you are a most excellent company with a most excellent product or service gives you credibility and free advertising.

Small Questions

In what ways might you add excellence to the customer experience?

In what ways might you improve the excellence of your products and services?

In what ways might you become renowned for excellence?

Make the Client Feel Wonderful

We live in a negative world. Turning on the news is a recipe for depression. Dealing with every day annoyances can suck the energy right out of you. And getting through your daily To Do list can cause fear and the desire to hide under the covers and never come out.

People often feel overwhelmed by life and live with heavy hearts and empty souls. If you can make clients feel wonderful, that precious feeling of joy, they will keep coming back for more.

You, I, other people want to feel good. We want to live meaningful lives and feel respected and appreciated. And most of us want to feel part of something wonderful, so we can carry that feeling of wonder around with us.

Wonder is a feeling that inspires AWE, a feeling that we can connect to when we feel low and need a wonder boost.

When you WOW your clients you make them feel good, you make them feel wonderful and they will be lifelong customers.

WOW is something you keep on earning. WOWing people is not something you do once or even occasionally. WOW is something you do every day, with every customer interaction.

Note, a bad experience can in moment forever erase the goodwill and excellence you have spent creating and recreating for each customer. Once the WOW feeling is lost it may never be found and returned to the heart of the customer.

Use every moment to create a WOW experience of excellence so people connect with your company and think fondly of you forever.

Small Questions

In what ways might you show the client you respect them and their values?

In what ways might you create wonder and meaning?

In what ways might you embrace craftsmanship?

Imperfect Moments

There will be moments when things go awry. When things do not go as planned. Life happens and you have to deal with it.

You want to keep your relationship with people authentic and genuine. When things go wrong admit it. **Admit it first.**

Now you don't have to tell them every single time there is a bump in the road. And if they don't know what to expect you don't have to tell them how what you provided was different.

For example, at one point Binky was a corporate trainer. She often felt the need to tell people what she felt went "wrong" with the presentation. If the person is not aware you are doing something "wrong" don't tell them. That will only lessen their experience, especially if they enjoyed it.

You need to be open and honest with clients when they are impacted and are aware that things aren't going as expected.

For instance, you cannot meet a stated deadline, or you have a cold and you are doing the presentation anyways. These are imperfections people are going to notice.

If it is a small imperfection, such as stumbling a few words, you may want to keep quiet or be very low key when you acknowledge the imperfect moment. Listen to your intuition on whether this small moment of imperfection should be mentioned.

With medium or major stumbles you want to be the first to bring up the issue. By acknowledging the issue first you make a person feel like you are taking care of the situation and also being honest.

We live in a world where we accept that people are corrupt and that businesses squeeze people to increase shareholder value. Clients tend to be the first person to mention an issue and often they are ignored or dismissed. You'll stand out if speak up first.

Apologize for the issue. Explain what the issue is and what caused it and what you are doing to fix it. Set clear expectations for the client. Let the person know when and how you are going to keep them up to date as you resolve the issue and when the issue will be resolved.

Also you will want to show the client you appreciate their patience while you fix and solve the issue. For example, a discount, a bonus gift, etc.

Ask the client how you might show your appreciation. They might respond they want it all for free. Have a response prepared that explains you are still providing the product or service, albeit delayed and while you cannot give it away for free as you want to stay in business but what you can do is give them a discount.

It is also a good idea to give the client options. Let them choose how they want to proceed. Give them some control of the resolving of the issue. Do they want a discount or a bonus gift?

When speaking and responding to the client do your best to leave out the word "but". People do not like to hear but, it sounds like a cop out. Try using the word "and" instead. Or rephrase the phrasing so no "buts" are required.

If you need to use the word "but", put the good stuff, what you can do for the client after the "but". Start with the negative and end on the positive.

What is the Better Response

- "I'm sorry, I can give you a discount but I cannot give it to you for free."
- "'I'm sorry, I cannot give it to you for free, but I can give you a discount."
- "I'm sorry, I cannot give it to you for free because we are still sending you the product. What I can do for you, to apologize for this experience is to give you a 10% discount."

When it comes to fixing an issue under promise and over deliver. You don't want to have to call the client again to let them know that you have a problem with the resolution.

Opportunities for Improvement

A customer complaint is an opportunity to strengthen the connection with your company. You spend time, effort and heart building relationships with people and building a bridge that connects you.

There will be times when you discover a bomb on the bridge. Two things can happen at this point. You can diffuse the bomb and make the bridge stronger.

Or the bomb goes off. Once the bomb goes off the bridge may still be there, but it will never be the same. Or worse the bridge is destroyed beyond repair.

Customers will speak out about issues that concern them. And while these moments can be challenging they are also a source of great ideas. They give you and your company a moment to reflect and improve. As you improve your products, services and procedures based on customer complaints you move towards excellence.

Each concern brought to your attention is an opportunity to strengthen your relationship with the customer. Keeping an existing customer is more profitable than spending money to find a new customer.

Each concern is an opportunity to improve products, services and procedures for all customers. Because if there is one customer speaking about it, there are several more thinking about it.

Treat every concern a person brings to you with compassion. Listen to what they are saying. Use your active listening skills. Show the person you have heard them by reflecting what they say back to them and ask for more information.

Give the person time to express their feelings and personal experience. If warranted speak to the client in private. Give the person your FULL ATTENTION.

Be genuine, authentic and compassionate as you discuss the issue with the client. See yourself extending a golden light of compassion. And see that golden light surrounding the client and supporting them.

Remember the client is human, they know imperfections happen and they also want to resolve the situation. Be grateful they are giving you the opportunity to improve the situation and are willing to speak out. Other clients simply switched companies and fumed to their friends about how awful the company was.

Do your best to resolve the issue to the client's satisfaction. Speak with a superior, if you have one, and see what alternatives are possible. Do your best to provide the client with some options. Accept the client may not be happy with the alternatives and that's okay.

You may not be able to resolve the concern in the way they want. What you can do is ensure the person feels you took them and their concern seriously. That you LISTENED to them and you HEARD them.

Apologize, this will often help the client become calmer. A doctor's office was having an issue with their clients being unsatisfied because clients were not getting into their appointments at the scheduled time. Client satisfaction went up, even though they were still getting in late, because the reception staffed apologized for the delay.

Say, "You're sorry. " It will help smooth the waters. If you cannot resolve the clients concern the way they want explain why. Offer them a few alternatives so the client can choose. There is more buy in and acceptance when you give people the ability to choose the bridge they will cross.

Accept the client is not angry at you but at the situation and you happen to be the person they are speaking about this issue. The issue is creating feelings of anger, sadness, confusion, fear, overwhelm in the person who is sharing their experience with you so express compassion in return.

Thank the person for bringing this concern to your attention so you can work together to resolve it. Be sincere. Use your active listening skills throughout the conversation. Remember to breathe deeply and stay calm.

Treat each customer concern seriously. Use Active Listening skills. Listen to the customer. Focus on the most emotional word. Then let them know you heard them by reflecting their thoughts back to them. Then ask for confirmation or expansion.

For example, "I'm sorry, it sounds like you feel upset because your shipment was delayed, is that correct?"

You want the customer to feel heard. The best way to do that is to actively listen to what they are saying and reflect it back to them. Ask the customer how they would like the situation to be resolved. This lets the customer feel their thoughts and ideas are valued.

Investigate their concern. Just don't respond. Treat their concern with respect, research it. Even if it is only for five minutes. The client needs to know you are taking them seriously and that you are taking action to resolve their issue.

You might want to ask them if you can research the issue and get back to them. If you do this, give them a timeframe and stick to it. This gives the client time to calm down and time for you to brainstorm solutions. 2-4 is a good number.

There will be times when you cannot resolve the issue in the manner the client has asked for or expects. Explain why the solution asked for or offered by the client is not possible - industry regulation, law, finances, limited resources. By giving an explanation you are giving the client a reason. Remember, because it a very powerful word.

In a research study a man asked people if he could cut in line to use the photocopy machine. He got a 60% rate when he asked. When he added an explanation, can I cut in line because I need to copy something the acceptance rate went to over 90%.

Offer the client a few alternatives. This way the client gets to choose a solution. People feel better when they get to make a choice.

Small Questions

In what ways might you prevent the situation from happening again?

In what ways might you improve your products and services?

In what ways might you impress the client with excellence?

Follow your Own Path

Often people will tell you to find the market or create a product for a market niche. I'm going to tell you something different. A famous screenwriter, William Goldman, said "Nobody knows anything".

There is no way to predict the market, whether it be a film or an entrepreneurial offering. In 1993, Bill Gates is quoted to have said, "The internet? We're not interested." Of course, in a few years when the internet was becoming the next frontier of computers he was very interested.

The best chance of success you have is creating a company, product or service that you are passionate about and brings you joy. If you like it, other people might as well.

Creating a business takes energy and you won't put your best efforts into the project if you are creating something to please the market. Please yourself and then figure out how to share your storey with the world.

Create something that is meaningful to you. Create a simple business plan, something to guide your efforts, uses the law of attraction, and helps you plan the steps to move successfully forward with your business.

Take action, take a small, active step every day to make your business successful. Stay true to your vision and be flexible about the details to reaching success.

Being an Artprenur is about being a hero in your very own adventure. You will experience a hero's journey, you will face obstacles, you will discover hidden riches and learn and grow as a person.

Follow your intuition, listen to your heart and feed your soul. Do what you love and the joy will follow.

Learn from each attempt. Be present and aware to opportunities that exist around you. Be open to changing direction and finding new paths to success.

There is a reason that idea came to you. Maybe you will inspire others, maybe you will inspire yourself. Maybe you will make new friends, develop new skills or grow from the experience.

No one knows the future, but you can take active steps to create the future you want and envision! You've been given a mission, a purpose, a dream - embrace it.

Remember the only way to become a business success is to open a business and play. Play everyday. You are a ARTPRENEUR. You take regular action to make things happen. Yay!

You have support. You have the nine Art Mates of business play.