

## **Mental Programming of Top Persuaders**

The psychological edge gained by top persuaders cannot be overemphasized. How do great persuaders prepare their minds for success? What is their mental process before, during, and after the persuasion cycle? This mental aspect is one of the most important (and usually neglected) traits of success.

Almost everyone wants to accomplish their dreams, achieve more, become a better person, or pursue bigger and better goals. And we often know exactly what we need to do to make these things happen. So why don't we do them? Why do we fall short of our dreams and aspirations?

Writing down your goals coupled with a strong desire to reach them won't automatically bring success if you overlook this one vital detail: Successes are not achieved if they aren't first conceived mentally. We are told all the time to be positive, to change that attitude, to have a good outlook. In fact, we are so bombarded with these messages that they are easy to tune out. We gloss over "think positive" messages, saying, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, I've heard that before. Now get to the meat."

In this chapter, we're going to talk about much more than just positive attitudes—I call it "mental programming." This mind training or self-persuasion is what gives great persuaders the psychological edge. It's true that "you'll only achieve it once the mind believes it." By "programming" our minds, we dictate our future. It's just that simple. Think of your loftiest goals, your greatest aspirations. Do you really believe you can achieve them, deep down? Do you? If you can't visualize your success, you are unlikely to ever experience it in real life. We are always thinking and processing information, and our thoughts either propel us closer to our goals or drive us away from our dreams. We have a choice. It is critical that our "mental programming" is always geared to our advantage.

Great persuaders have to forget their past mistakes and focus on their future potential. Rest assured that this is something you can reprogram yourself to do. We all try

to hide our mistakes and shortcomings, but you can only bury them for so long before they come back to haunt you. Identify your feelings and where they are taking you. Learn to handle those feelings, thoughts, and emotions on your own. Don't bury them; understand them, master them, and adjust them.

Great persuaders share a "psychological edge" or a "mental programming" commonality with great athletes. Here are some examples of what athletes and top persuaders have in common. They both:

- Maintain self-discipline.
- Are able to rebound after a loss.
- Are always learning and growing.
- Continually improve—they can ask tough personal questions after a loss.
- Constantly practice the fundamentals.
- Determine issues that caused mistakes, deal with them, and move on.
- Become stronger with fierce competition—they are strengthened by adversity.
- Visualize success/mental rehearsal of winning.
- Replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts.
- Enjoy the mental/psychological pressure of the game.
- Have the ability to change the way they are feeling.
- Possess a strong self-image and self-esteem.

The first step in adjusting your mental "settings" is to take an honest look at where you are now and where you could use some work. Typically, we turn our minds off for subjects and topics that make us feel uncomfortable. But when we are in a state of denial, nothing can change. It's time to blow the dust off of the "Needs Work" files that you've stashed away in the dark corners of your mind. Pulling them out will be a bit like exercising again for the first time in years. In the beginning, it will be quite uncomfortable—maybe even painful. But it's necessary in order to get back in shape.

Ultimately, you will be much better off for having dealt with your issues. The things that were once so difficult will eventually become easy.

I have devised two formulas that help illustrate the importance of mindset, or mental programming. If your thoughts are set on cruise control—whether negative or just neutral—then all the training and tools in the world are not going to yield great results. Multiply anything by zero, and what do you get? Zero. The exponential success that is possible will not happen. Tools, experience, and training won't do a thing if your mindset is set at zero or even below zero.

#### Success Equation

$$(\text{Tools} + \text{Training} + \text{Experience}) \times \text{Mindset} = \text{Success/Wealth}$$

$$(100 + 100 + 100) \times 0 = 0 \text{ (Failure)}$$

Here's another way of thinking about mindset in terms of "programming." You could buy the most incredible computer. It could be top of the line, with the fastest processing chip available. Let's say you get it with all the bells and whistles, sparing no expense for an ergonomic keyboard, a wireless mouse, and a 32-inch flat-screen monitor with built-in speakers. You get a perfect desk to put it on, and you're ready to go. But without the right software, all the fancy external features are of little value in and of themselves. What good is the hardware if it is sitting there collecting dust and there's no software to run the computer?

Anytime we consider a major project in its ultimate and final form, we have to acknowledge the steps that will be necessary to get us there. Becoming a master persuader is no different. Just like building a house or even a skyscraper, you cannot go about it haphazardly. If you were building your home, you would not just go out and get lumber and cement and then start building. You would start out with a visual representation of the finished product. You would turn that into a blueprint. Then you would carefully follow prescribed steps to ensure a safe, functional, and beautiful home,

starting with the foundation. Make sure your mental programming is built on cement, not sand. Make sure your foundation will withstand the storms that are bound to come.

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