

## Is Perfection Slowing You Down?

Personal success is determined by the kind of habits that we have as success skills and the resources we need on our entrepreneurial journey. We can have good habits or bad habits; and these habits will determine the results we receive financially. Therefore, it's very important that we acquire healthy habits and heal the unhealthy ones.

One of the habits that doesn't contribute to personal success is striving for "perfectionism" with all of our activities.

Being a perfectionist will hold you back from reaching your goals. If there's one thing that can really hamper a person it's try to get something perfect. There is no such thing as perfection because it is only an "illusion". The thought of perfectionism exists only in our mind and it will stop us from every achieving financial freedom.

Therefore, you should strive for excellence--which is good enough. It's good to be interested in excellence, but when you feel that your work (or relationship) has to be perfect you're saddling yourself with a burden nobody needs and it can affect every area of your life. You won't be able to please yourself at work, at home, nor will you be able to ever complete a project simply; because nothing is perfect, no one is anyone perfect, or ever will be. So, don't put this burden on yourself because it's like a wolf in sheep's clothing. It seems to be heading in the right direction, but it's actually way too much of a good thing.

Recently I came across a postcard that said, "Perfect is the enemy of good". At first, I thought; now wait a moment – isn't perfect good? I was brought up believing that doing something perfectly was the way it was supposed to be done. My parents were both perfectionists and had the same expectations for us kids. They did not stress "being excellent". I must admit I've been a victim of holding back and waiting until everything is absolutely right before I begin or complete a task. Many people spend their time "getting ready to get ready".

I used to be proud of my drive for perfectionism. But now, thinking of all the ways I held myself back and all the things I didn't do in fear that they would be somehow flawed, I query the cost. Even this article is a prime example. I kept putting it off again and again because nothing I wrote ever seemed, you guessed it – perfect.

I believe procrastination is born out of an excessive drive to perfectionism. Often, when we feel we don't have the time, energy or resources, it seems better to put off taking action or to take no action at all rather than risk being imperfect. Over time, we build the habit of procrastination and end up paralyzed by inertia.

So what is the answer? I'm not suggesting we throw caution to the wind, surrender our standards or accept shoddy work. But can we agree that not quite perfect is often good enough? Could it be that as long as, moment by moment, we aspire to do our best, accepting our flaws and inadequacies along the way, it is enough? That striving for and reaching "good" is a noble goal? Think for a moment of what more you would do if you surrendered the notion that everything needs to be absolutely, utterly perfect.

I can't begin to measure the amount of time I've spent dwelling on something. I'd be disappointed or embarrassed when in hindsight I realized that it wasn't perfect. But no longer – I've decided that things just need to be "good enough". Perhaps, I'll hold onto the belief that really big or important things need to be perfect – but not at the cost of doing them. Because, you see perfect really is the enemy of good.

Here are some other ways perfectionism hampers you:

1. Perfectionism can lead to isolation. You won't want to let people get too close to you lest they perceive your short-comings. This leaves you without alliances and out of the loop at work and alone at home.
2. Perfectionism also makes you a poor risk-taker and taking risks is often required in business to have personal success and business success. Perfectionists become dysfunctional when something comes up that they've never seen before, or if they're asked to try something different that seems risky to them. It can also keep you from meeting deadlines.
3. When you're a perfectionist, your timidity and concern won't always be perceived as that; more often it's perceived as arrogance. It appears to others that you think you're better than them, because you have an exalted standard of performance for yourself.
4. When your goal is perfection, it becomes difficult to make decisions and to meet deadlines. You're always trying to out-think yourself and become "too analytical". In other words sometimes we get "analysis paralysis".

5. Perfectionists are often micro-managers. They're afraid to let anyone else do anything, because of the unrealistic standard of perfection.

As you can see, there are many ways perfectionism holds you back, and it does very little good. Excellence is good; perfectionism is not, so don't let yourself fall in that trap. If you have tendencies to be a perfectionist, change your self-talk and be easier on yourself. You'll do better, and everyone else will appreciate it. Strive to excel, do your best, and operate out of excellence.

Now, ask yourself these questions.

- Is there anything I'm not doing – things I'm holding back on because it might not be perfect?
- Do projects sit on the corner of my desk gathering dust simply because I believe I don't have time (or don't know how) to do them perfectly?
- Does decision making slow me down because I waste so much time searching for the one perfect solution to a situation rather than choose from a wide variety of "good" possibilities, just make a decision, and go for it?

Remember, that personal success, business success, and success skills come from striving to be excellent. Release the need to get it perfect. You don't have to get it perfect; you just have to get it going! This is a "success strategy" for being successful in a home-based business.

### About the Author

Businesswoman, Rose Kirkland assists Women to be success stories and inspiration to others.

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