

Skills 360 – 10 Most Important Words in Business (Part 2)

Discussion Questions

1. When problems happen, do you become upset or try to think of solutions?
2. Do you think you are generally hopeful about the future or do you tend to think negatively?
3. What qualities do you think are important for a business leader in difficult situations?

Vocabulary

Crisis: a very difficult situation or emergency; "Investors are worried that continuing problems in the stock market might lead to another financial crisis."

Short-staffed: not having enough employees or workers; "We laid off dozens of employees to save money, but now we're short-staffed and can't fill orders quickly."

To drive someone nuts: to make someone upset or annoyed; "The autocorrect feature on my mobile phone really drives me nuts."

To arise: to happen or start to develop, especially for problems or situations; "Problems arose for the developers when local residents voted against construction of the new shopping mall."

To moan: to complain about something, especially in a way that bothers other people; "Every Monday morning my colleagues moan about having to come to the office so early."

Optimism: the feeling or belief that good things will happen; "Analysts are expressing optimism that the real estate market will bounce back quickly."

Pessimism: the tendency or belief that the worst will happen. "Now is not the time for pessimism, we need to believe we can do this or we will fail."

Hurdle: a problem that must be overcome or dealt with in order to reach a goal or do something; "Lack of capital is a major hurdle for many young entrepreneurs with good business ideas."

To give up: to stop trying to do or achieve something; "After being rejected by over a dozen universities, Roger gave up on his plans to study for an MBA."

To keep your eye on the prize: to stay motivated and focused on your final goal or reward; "Okay folks, I know things have been really busy, but let's keep our eye on the prize and we'll get this done before Christmas."

Down the road: in the future; "Sales our good in our retail outlets, but 10 years down the road we're going to have to be more competitive in the online market."

To overcome: to deal with a problem successfully; "You are going to have to overcome your lack of confidence if you want to be a good salesman."

Decisiveness: having the ability to make decisions and act firmly. "Decisiveness is a quality we look for in new managers."

Bumpy: we can use "bumpy" to describe a road or process that has many problems; "We had a pretty bumpy start-up phase, but we finally managed to turn a profit in our fifth year of operations."

To display: to show a feeling, emotion, or characteristic; "David displayed tremendous preparation and diplomacy during the negotiations."

On the fence: someone who is "on the fence" is having difficulty making a decision or taking a position; "While the executives support expansion wholeheartedly, the shareholders are still on the fence about it."

All-in: in poker, if you are "all-in" you put all your money on one bet, but we can use this expression more generally to say you are completely committed to something, especially a plan; "This sounds like a good idea, but before I go all-in I need to know more about the project partners."

To have what it takes: to have the ability or intelligence to do something; "I thought I'd enjoy law, but after a few years as a junior lawyer I realized I don't really have what it takes."

Transcript

Hello and welcome back to the Skills 360 podcast. I'm your host, Tim Simmons, and today we're going to continue our look at the 10 key characteristics of the successful business leader. And just like last time, we're going to match these qualities to useful words or phrases that you can use in your everyday work life.

To begin, I want you to imagine you're called to an emergency meeting to talk about a **crisis**. Like there's a big project to finish and you're **short-staffed**. One person says "oh no, this is never going to get done." Another person says "This happens all the time and it **drives me nuts**." But this is not what the good business leader says. The good business leader starts by saying "how about..." As in: "how about bringing staff over from another department for a couple of weeks." And what does this show? It shows that you are solution-minded. When problems **arise**, and problems *always* arise, you can't **moan** and complain. You have to think of solutions.

Being solution-minded is related to another quality of a good businessperson: **optimism**. A great man once said "if you plant potatoes, don't be surprised if you get potatoes." Now, you might not be in the farming business, but what this means is that if you think and talk negatively, you get negative results. But if you think and talk positively, then you get positive results. And the key expression here is "I believe." So when your colleague says "is this going to work?" You say "Yes. I believe it will work." Others might not believe. They may be filled with doubt and **pessimism**. But optimism will see you over many **hurdles** that will force the pessimist to **give up**.

Of course, thinking positively means **keeping your eye on the prize**, even when the prize isn't right in front of you. A wise business leader can see that prize miles away. He says, "in the future..." to help people overcome the present. This is what we call "vision," or the ability to imagine what success looks like **down the road**. In fact, how can you know which road to take if you don't even know what the ultimate destination is? Well, we ask the people with vision, the people who say "in the future..."

Okay, so we've talked a lot about **overcoming** problems, and how optimism, vision and being solution-minded can help us do that. But there are a couple of other qualities that you may need. One of them is the ability to say "no." Not "maybe", or "maybe not", or "let's think about that", or "well, I'm not sure." I mean just a plain and direct "no." Sometimes people come up with bad ideas, ideas that clearly won't get you to where you need to go. And while sometimes you need to be diplomatic about things, at other times you need **decisiveness**. And that means saying "no" when you think "no".

The road to success can be **bumpy**, as we all know. And if you ask successful entrepreneurs and business leaders how they got where they are, they will have a lot of different answers. And they'll show the qualities we've mentioned in different amounts. Jack might be more diplomatic than Helen. But Helen might be more visionary than Jack.

However, there is one quality that absolutely every successful business person [displays](#). And this quality relates to a phrase that these people think and use all the time. That phrase is "yes, we can." And what it shows is determination. You can't be [on the fence](#) about success. You have to [be all-in](#) and 100% determined to make it. And every organization is led by people like this, who can persuade everyone through the strength of their determination that "yes, we can."

So, can you? Do you [have what it takes](#) to be a successful business leader? Are you solution-minded, optimistic, visionary, decisive, and determined?

That's all for today. If you'd like to test yourself on what we've just covered, have a look at the myBEOonline.com website. There you'll find a quiz about today's show as well as a complete transcript.

So long. And see you again soon.

Review

1. Which of the following phrases would a good business leader use to respond to an emergency situation?
 - A "Unfortunately..."
 - B "Who is responsible..."
 - C "In the future..."
 - D "Why don't we..."

2. What does Tim say about the way we think and talk?
 - A The way we think and talk are not as important as the way we act.
 - B Thinking and talking a lot about problems can be counterproductive.
 - C The way we think and talk has a direct effect on the results we get.
 - D The way we talk normally reflects the way we think.

3. The business leader who says "in the future" is demonstrating the quality known as:
 - A vision
 - B optimism
 - C determination
 - D decisiveness

4. According to Tim, being optimistic, solution-minded, and visionary can help a business leader...
 - A deal successfully with difficulties
 - B earn the respect of others
 - C adapt to economic changes
 - D approach business decisions with confidence

5. Tim says that while sometimes we have to be diplomatic, at other times we must be _____, which means saying _____ very clearly.
 - A direct... "never"...
 - B decisive... "no"...
 - C cautious... "maybe"...
 - D assertive... "don't"...

6. Which of the qualities does Tim say that every successful business person displays?
 - A optimism
 - B determination
 - C vision
 - D decisiveness

Review

1. Which of the following phrases would a good business leader use to respond to an emergency situation?
D "Why don't we..."
2. What does Tim say about the way we think and talk?
C The way we think and talk have a direct effect on the results we get.
3. The business leader who says "in the future" is demonstrating the quality known as:
A vision
4. According to Tim, being optimistic, solution-minded, and visionary can help a business leader...
A deal successfully with difficulties
5. Tim says that while sometimes we have to be diplomatic, at other times we must be _____, which means saying _____ very clearly.
B decisive... "no"...
6. Which of the qualities does Tim say that every successful business person displays?
B determination

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