

CHAPTER SIX

MODELING BEHAVIORS AND TRAJECTORIES

GIANT STEPS

If you are a runner or have ever been in ANY conversation with a runner (on any topic), you know that they typically can't go 5 minutes without working running into a conversation. They're forever talking about their favorite run, their next run, their pace, their new shoes, or how excited they are about their negative splits in their last training run (if you're lost, don't worry about what half of that means; it is irrelevant). It's almost Pavlovian every time they open their mouth. I am no different.

In 2019, I completed my first, and please, for the love of all things holy, last marathon: the 2019 Boston Marathon, actually. Notice how

I said I COMPLETED it, not that I RAN it. I was a Charity runner, and given my finish time, I don't know how much running I did that day, but you better believe I crossed that finish line. I was the last official finisher for the 2019 Boston Marathon (Go ahead, google it, I'll wait), and I have the distinction of holding the title of "last official runner" for the longest period, thanks to COVID!

Well, if you're not impressed by that, then let me pass on some advice that may impress you, or at least I can impress upon you: trust your training. This proved to be an invaluable mantra that propelled my injured leg through 26.2 glorious miles in Boston on that fine spring day. The same can be said about building a business: trust your training.

Training for a marathon and building a business share similarities despite being incredibly different adventures.

- **Goal Setting:** In marathon training and business, begin by setting clear and achievable goals. Having a specific target to work towards is crucial for motivation and direction.

- **Planning and Strategy:** Both require a well-thought-out plan and strategy. Marathon training involves designing a training schedule, nutrition plan, and recovery strategy. In business, it involves creating a business plan, marketing strategy, and financial projections.

- **Consistent Effort:** Success in both areas depends on consistent effort over an extended period. Marathon training demands regular, structured workouts, while building a business requires daily dedication to tasks like marketing, customer service, and product development.

- **Resilience and Perseverance:** Marathon running and entrepreneurship involve facing setbacks and challenges. You must develop resilience, bounce back from failures, and stay committed to your long-term goals.

- **Continuous Learning:** Whether it's learning about running techniques and nutrition in marathons or staying updated on industry trends and market shifts in business, continuous learning is essential for improvement and adaptation.

- **Mentorship and Coaching:** Mentors or coaches are valuable in both areas. In marathon training, coaches provide guidance on training methods, while in business, mentors offer insights into decision-making, networking, and overcoming obstacles. Put a pin in this one; we're coming back to it.

- **Support System:** Building a support network is crucial. Marathon runners often train with others for motivation, while business owners benefit from advisors and a network of peers who can provide guidance and assistance. When all else fails, both benefit from a shoulder to cry on. Oddly enough, training for a marathon, and building a business can "break" you. It's important to have someone who will remind you "why" you started.

- **Measuring Progress:** Tracking progress is vital. Marathon runners monitor their pace, distance, and times, while businesses track key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate their success and make necessary adjustments.

- **Adaptation and Flexibility:** Marathons and businesses must adapt to changing circumstances. Marathoners may need to adjust their training due to injuries or weather conditions, while business owners must pivot when market conditions change.

- **Celebrating Milestones:** Recognizing and celebrating achievements along the way is important for maintaining motivation and morale. Acknowledging progress is essential whether it's completing a long training run or hitting a revenue milestone.

While the end goals of marathon running and business building differ, the steps and attributes required for success are surprisingly

similar. To succeed at either (or both), they each demand goal setting, planning, resilience, mentorship, and consistent effort. Mastering these elements can help individuals excel. Enjoy your run!

For this chapter, I want to shift from talking about BEING a coach, mentor, or inspiration to HAVING a coach or mentor. Some of the most successful coaches and business people have also had their own coaches or mentors who played pivotal roles in their personal and professional development.

The co-founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, has had multiple mentors throughout his life, including Warren Buffett. Buffett has been a close friend and advisor to Gates, offering financial and life advice. The late co-founder of Apple, Steve Jobs, credited his success to several mentors, including Robert Noyce, co-founder of Intel, and Edwin Land, inventor of the Polaroid camera. These mentors influenced his approach to technology and innovation. The renowned life coach and motivational speaker Tony Robbins has himself been coached by mentors like Jim Rohn. Rohn played a significant role in shaping Robbins' career.

Media mogul and philanthropist Oprah Winfrey has publicly spoken about the importance of her mentor, Maya Angelou, the renowned author and poet. Angelou provided guidance and wisdom to Oprah throughout Oprah's career. Maya Angelou herself had mentors, including James Baldwin and Langston Hughes, who encouraged her as a writer and poet.

Even the most accomplished individuals often have mentors or coaches who have played a crucial role in shaping their paths to success and personal growth. Mentorship and guidance are valuable tools for learning and self-improvement, regardless of one's level of achievement. And now you can have something in common with Oprah!

Footprints

Have you heard of the poem "Footprints" by Margaret Fishback Powers? You probably have, as it's found on cards, calendars, and posters and is cherished by millions. Abstracting it, the narrator reflects on life's journey, symbolized by a beach. The narrator notices that there are two sets of footprints in the sand most of the time, symbolizing someone guiding and supporting them throughout life. Yet, during tough times, the narrator sees only one set of footprints and wonders where the support went. Eventually, they realize that during those challenging moments, they were lifted up and carried through difficulties. The poem underscores the idea that there's unseen support and strength to help us endure and overcome life's challenges even in tough situations. That is the type of mentor you need and want to have in your life.

Just like in the poem, a business mentor should walk alongside you, guiding you during the good times and carrying you through the rough patches. Your business mentor should be enthusiastic and eager to support you starting from the beginning of your entrepreneurial journey. A mentor's commitment and excitement should remain unwavering, even when you're just starting. A great mentor will share your enthusiasm for your business venture and be willing to offer guidance, advice, and encouragement during the early stages when it's needed most. They should also be experienced and knowledgeable in your industry and bring a wealth of wisdom and expertise. This experience allows them to provide valuable insights, strategies, and solutions while helping you navigate challenges and make informed decisions.

A business mentor should be a reliable and experienced companion, willing to share the load during the tough times and inspire and

guide you throughout your entrepreneurial adventure. Their presence should be a source of strength and support, helping you endure and conquer the challenges that inevitably arise in the business world. Be like Oprah!

Needs More Seasoning

What do my cooking and someone starting a business have in common? In both cases, a bit more seasoning is required. (Insert "rimshot." I'm here all week, folks, 2 shows a night, tip your waitress, and try the veal. Maybe the three years I spent in stand-up comedy DID prepare me for life). So what's the point? Well, first off, A. I think ketchup is spicy, and 2. stop comparing the beginning of your journey to someone else who's further ahead, doing so may not work out well for you.

Comparing is how we make sense of the world. In many aspects of life, comparing ourselves to others can be a constructive tool for growth and motivation. However, when it comes to starting a new endeavor, constantly measuring one's own beginnings against the achievements of those who are more experienced can be detrimental. When seeking out mentors, it is important to seek advice from individuals who have been through similar stages of business that you are currently in because their experiences at that specific stage can provide invaluable insights and guidance.

- **Relevance of Advice:** When seeking guidance from someone who has already navigated the same stage of business, you are more likely to receive advice that is directly applicable to your current challenges and circumstances. Their insights will be relevant, practical, and tailored to your specific situation, making it easier for you to implement their recommendations effectively.

- **Realistic Expectations:** Understanding what your mentors did at a similar stage of their business helps you set realistic expectations. You can gain insights into the challenges they faced, the mistakes they made, and the strategies that worked for them. This knowledge allows you to anticipate potential obstacles and make informed decisions while avoiding unnecessary frustration and disappointment.

- **Learning from Their Mistakes:** By asking about their experiences at the same stage, you can learn from their mistakes and avoid making similar ones. This can save you valuable time, resources, and effort, as you can proactively address potential pitfalls and make wiser choices based on the lessons they learned.

- **Confidence Building:** Knowing that successful entrepreneurs or professionals faced similar challenges and uncertainties in the past can boost your confidence. It reinforces the idea that overcoming obstacles and achieving success is possible, even when you're in the early stages of your business journey.

- **Networking and Building Relationships:** Connecting with mentors who have experienced the same stage of business as you can help build stronger relationships. Mentors may be more willing to provide assistance, advice, and connections because they understand your particular needs and difficulties.

Mentors who have been through the same stage of business as you are more likely to provide you with more relevant, practical insights, help set realistic expectations, allow you to learn from their mistakes, boost your confidence, and strengthen networking opportunities. Learning from those who have walked a similar path can significantly enhance your chances of success in your business, especially at the beginning of your journey. Also, if you want to get together with me for dinner, let's order take-out.

Standing on the Shoulder of Giants

The famous phrase, "standing on the shoulders of giants," is often attributed to Sir Isaac Newton, but its implications go far beyond the realm of science. Just as a person standing on the shoulders of a taller individual can see farther and gain new perspectives, individuals in various fields can make significant strides by building upon the work, ideas, and innovations of those who came before them. Similar to having a mentor, but more granular in execution.

It is easy to understand how benefiting from those with more experience can help build a business. But, in the realm of brand building and awareness in the digital world, "standing on the shoulders of giants" involves capitalizing on the established influence, credibility, and reach of well-established online businesses and social media influencers. By partnering with other brands, people, or companies with an extensive reach, you can rapidly expand your brand's visibility, connect with a targeted audience, and benefit from the trust and authenticity that other people bring. It's a strategic approach that recognizes the power of collaboration and leverages existing platforms to elevate a brand's presence, including the digital landscape.

Example: As a marketing firm disguised as a boutique book publisher, I often coach our authors on the best approach to expanding the reach and marketability of their books. One suggestion I make time and time again is to "stand on the shoulders of giants ." If you're a mortgage originator writing a book, ask a top-producing realtor in your area to write the forward of your book (and vice versa). If you're a Health and Wellness coach, contact a mental health professional with a large online following specializing in athlete preparedness and ask them to write a chapter. If you're a business coach, find a local Business attorney interested in being quoted in your book on the "top 5

mistakes every new start-up makes" or something like that (people love lists). The idea is that the more people you invite to the party, the more people you have talking about the party. Your invited contributor will help promote your book (because they are in it) and, in turn, will promote you!

The Game Changers Conference

Shameless Plug Alert: At Belmont City Press, we developed a conference with small but growing businesses in mind; it's called The Game Changers Conference (TheGameChangersConference.com). The two most effective ways of connecting with your ideal client are through speaking opportunities (in person, podcasts, from the stage, and in videos) and writing (blogs, articles in major news outlets, or a book). The Game Changers Conference walks you through a 12-step marketing plan to promote you and your business by utilizing speaking and writing opportunities.

Through The Game Changers conference, business owners can capitalize on the opportunity to learn how to establish credibility, brand their expertise, simplify their lives, and gain more business. If you want to gain insight on PR industry secrets while learning to scale your business, create recognition, and drive sales this is the conference for you. I am looking at you Real Estate professionals, Mortgage Industry experts, Salesforce personnel, coaches, and anyone looking to become the go-to person in their niche.

In this conference, I break down how I was able to survive and thrive for 30 years in sales, present at more than 250 speaking engagements, build a multi-seven figure business while earning a six-figure income, and be featured in The Boston Globe, The Boston Examiner, Book Launch Express, Book Publishers Central, Bookstore

Newswire, NBC, CW, AP News, FOX, ABC, to name a few. At BCP we have also had multiple book publications hit #1 in the US and Canada. I have literally "written the book" on marketing to succeed in business, and this conference is how I can share my experience and expertise with you. I'm not saying I'm a "giant," but at a minimum, you can benefit from my experience.

The Game Changers Conference walks you through the steps to:

- Obtain the PR needed for your marketing
- Obtain reviews for your business
- Obtain UGC for your marketing
- Gain Opportunities to Write/Publish a guest blog
- Find podcasts to be featured in
- Write the perfect press release and get picked up by networks
- Connect with reporters for featured articles
- Position yourself as the go-to expert
- Find speaking opportunities for marketing
- Get your business partners to promote you!
- Craft your Signature Talk (no, not your sales pitch)
- Define Your Avatar (Ideal Client)
- Perfect your 5-minute webinar
- Organize your media kit and one-sheet
- Centralize your expertise
- Create evergreen marketing material
- Learn Low low-budget Marketing Tips
- Create Affiliate Marketing Programs for Your Business
- Construct Workshops and Webinars
- and More!

Three more things to know about The Game Changers Conference;

1. The conference can be scaled to accommodate 100 people or as few as five.

2. Depending upon the structure and benefits desired, each conference presents opportunities for attendees to add Keynote Speaker and/or Published Author to their bio due to the conference activities.

3. I travel, so let me know if you would like to chat and see if The Game Changers Conference is a good fit for you, your friends, your colleagues, or your group or organization. Visit TheGameChangersConference.com

Bonus Content

Here is a quick example of one of our lessons from our "Low Cost Marketing Ideas" from the conference and our coaching program: How to leave a WIN-WIN review.

Leaving a review is an excellent ZERO-cost marketing idea. Now, leaving a great review is easy if you like the product, understand it, have used it, etc. But, let's pretend you met "Becky" at a networking event, and she sells widgets. In speaking with her, you discover her company's ideal clients align well with your business. Leaving an online review of the company would expose you to her clients, but you have never been a client of "Beckys," and you have never used her widgets. How do you leave a review without losing your authenticity? Let me show you.

Review: 5 Stars*****

"It was clear from the moment I met Becky from Widget company that she has a passion for widgets. Becky was able to walk me through widgets and teach me some things I didn't know. She answered all of my questions, and I can confidently say that WIDGET COMPANY is the right place to start if you are in the market for widgets. Ask for Becky and tell her Red from Belmont City Press sent you."

-Red Hilton, Publisher, Belmont City Press

This review does many things. It leaves a review for the Widget company and indicates a good customer experience, which is a win for the Widget company. It also mentions you and your company without committing to anything that could compromise your authenticity. That's a win for you. It also gives the reader of the review an "inside scoop" feeling that if they mention your name and, in this case, they ask for Becky, they will be treated like a friend. Now that's a win-win review!

Find Your Giant, Then Become One

Having a mentor and emulating industry professionals can enhance your entrepreneurial journey. By leveraging the concept of "standing on the shoulders of giants," you gain access to a wealth of knowledge, experience, and networks that can accelerate your growth and success. Mentors can guide you through good times and challenges, offering advice, support, and insights grounded in their own experiences. This mentorship is invaluable for setting realistic goals, navigating the early stages of your business, and avoiding common pitfalls. Additionally, engaging with industry leaders and incorporating their strategies into your business can help you make informed decisions, adapt to market changes, and achieve your goals more efficiently. Mentorship not only enriches your personal and professional development but also positions you to contribute to the success of others in the future.