

by Jay Conrad Levinson

WHAT IS A GUERRILLA ENTREPRENEUR?

The guerrilla entrepreneur knows that the journey is the goal. He also realizes that he is in control of his enterprise, not the other way around, and that if he is dissatisfied with his journey, he is missing the point of the journey itself. Unlike old-fashioned enterprises, which often required gigantic sacrifices for the sake of the goal, guerrilla enterprises place the goal of a pleasant journey ahead of the mere notion of sacrifices.

The guerrilla entrepreneur achieves balance from the very start. He builds free time into his work schedule so that balance is part of his enterprise. He respects his leisure time as much as his work time, never allowing too much of one to interfere with the other. Traditional entrepreneurs always placed work ahead of leisure and showed no respect for their own personal freedom. Guerrillas cherish their freedom as much as their work.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is not in a hurry. A false need for speed frequently undermines even the best-conceived strategies. Haste makes waste and sacrifices quality. The guerrilla is fully aware that patience is his ally, and he has planned intelligently to eliminate most emergencies that call for moving fast. His pace is always steady but never rushed.

The guerrilla entrepreneur uses stress as a benchmark. If he feels any stress, he knows he must be going about things in the wrong way. Guerrilla entrepreneurs do not accept stress as part of doing business and recognize any stress as a warning sign that something's the matter -- in the work plan of the guerrilla or in the business itself. Adjustments are made to eliminate the cause of the stress rather than the stress itself.

The guerrilla entrepreneur looks forward to work. He has a love affair with his work and considers himself blessed to be paid for doing the work he does. He is good at his work, energizing his passion in a quest to learn more and improve his understanding of it, thereby increasing his skills. The guerrilla doesn't think of work as a marriage, he thinks fling.

The guerrilla entrepreneur does not kid himself. He knows that if he overestimates his own abilities, he runs the risk of skimping on the quality he represents to his customers, employees, investors, suppliers and fusion partners. He forces himself to face reality on a daily basis and realizes that all of his business practices must always be evaluated in the glaring light of what is really happening, instead of what should be happening.

The guerrilla entrepreneur lives in the present. He is well-aware of the past, very enticed by the future, but the here and now is where he resides, embracing the technologies of the present, leaving future technologies on the horizon right where they belong -- on the horizon until later, when they are ripe and ready. He is alert to the new, wary of the avant-garde, and wooed from the old by improvement, not merely change.

The guerrilla entrepreneur understands the precious nature of time. He doesn't buy into the old lie that time is money and knows in his heart that time is far more important than money. He knows that instead, time is life. He is aware that his customers and prospects feel the same way about time, so he respects theirs and wouldn't dare waste it. As a practicing guerrilla, he is the epitome of efficiency but never lets it interfere with his effectiveness.

The guerrilla entrepreneur always operates according to a plan, He knows who he is, where he is going, and how he will get there. He is prepared, knows that anything can and will happen, and can deal with the barriers to success because his plan has foreseen them and shown exactly how to surmount them. The guerrilla reevaluates his plan regularly and does not hesitate to make changes in it, though commitment to the plan is part of his very being.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is flexible. He is guided by a strategy and knows the difference between a guide and a master. When it is necessary for change, the guerrilla changes, accepting change as part of the status quo, not ignoring or battling it. He adapts to new situations, realizes that service is whatever his customers want it to be, and knows that inflexible things become brittle and break.

The guerrilla aims for results more than growth. He is focused upon profitability and balance, vitality and improvement, value and quality more than size and growth. His plan calls for steadily increasing profits without a sacrifice of personal time, so his actions are oriented to hitting those targets instead of growing for the sake of growth alone. He is wary of becoming large and does not equate hugeness with excellence

The guerrilla entrepreneur is dependent upon many people. He knows that the age of the lone wolf entrepreneur, independent and proud of it, has passed. The guerrilla is very dependent upon his fusion business partners, his employees, his customers, his suppliers, and his mentors. He got where he is with his own wings, his own determination, his own smarts, and, as a guerrilla, with a little help from a lot of friends.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is constantly learning. A seagull flies in circles in the sky, looking for food in an endless quest.. When it finally finds the food, the seagull lands, then eats its fill. When it has completed the meal, the seagull returns to the sky, only to fly in circles again, searching for food although it has eaten. Humans have only one instinct that compares: the need for constant learning. Guerrilla entrepreneurs have this need in spades.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is passionate about work. He has an enthusiasm for what he does that is apparent to everyone who sees his work. The enthusiasm spreads to everyone who works with him, even his customers. In its purest form, this enthusiasm is best expressed as the word passion -- an intense feeling that burns within him and is manifested in an unmistakable devotion towards his work.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is focused on the goal. He knows that balance does not come easily, and that he must rid himself of the entrepreneur never thinks of retirement, for never would he want to stop doing work the loves.

The guerrilla entrepreneur has no weaknesses. He is effective in every aspect of his enterprise because he has filled in the gaps between his strengths and talents with people who abound in the prowess he lacks. He is very much the team player and teams up with guerrillas like himself who share the team spirit and possess complementary skills. He values his teammates as much as old-fashioned entrepreneurs valued their independence.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is fusion-oriented. He is always on the alert to fuse his business with other enterprises in town, in America, in the world. He is willing to combine marketing efforts, production skills, information, leads, mailing lists and anything else to increase his effectiveness and marketing reach while reducing the cost of achieving those goals. His fusion efforts are intentionally short-term and rarely permanent. To do this, he must remain focused upon his journey, seeing the future clearly, at the same time concentrating upon the present. He is aware that the minutiae of life and business can distract him, so he does what is necessary to make those distractions only momentary.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is disciplined about the tasks at hand. He is keenly aware that every time he writes a task on his daily calendar, it is a promise he is making to himself. As a guerrilla who does not kid himself, he keeps those promises, knowing that the achievement of his goals will be more than an adequate reward for his discipline. He finds it easy to be disciplined because of the payback offered by the leisure that follows.

The guerrilla entrepreneur is well-organized at home and at work. He does not waste valuable time looking for items that have been misplaced, so he organizes as he works and as new work comes to him. His sense of organization is fueled by the efficiency that results from it. While he is always organized, the guerrilla never squanders precious time by over-organizing.

The guerrilla entrepreneur has an upbeat attitude. Because he knows that life is unfair, problems arise, to err is human, and the cool shall inherit the Earth, he takes obstacles in stride, keeping his perspective and his sense of humor. His ever-present optimism is grounded in an ability to perceive the positive side of things, recognizing the negative, but never dwelling there. His positivity is contagious.