



TOOLKIT 36 – INVESTING IN YOURSELF

- ❖ **Continue to grow and develop – the alternative is mediocrity.**
- ❖ **Develop your business by developing yourself.**
- ❖ **Ensure you are a business asset not a liability.**

Most of us qualify in our technical skills and some of us keep up to date with our technologies and skills.

The majority of people however believe they learn best on the job. This is in part true however we can learn bad as well as good habits and non-learners often have one experience many times over – they never learn. This can be very expensive for the business.

So let's remind ourselves how we learn.

STEP 1 BECOME A LEARNER.... AGAIN!

There are 4 basic learning styles:

- ACTIVIST - Learn by doing
- PRAGMATIST - Learn by practical hands on – no frills
- THEORIST - Like developing themselves and ideas
- REFLECTOR - Like to think about things and chew them over

None of them are right or wrong, we are all different.

Q. *Which do you think is your preferred learning style?*

If you are serious about learning and investing in yourself here are some things to try:

- Have a go at something new. Take a risk, do something different and enjoy the thrill.
- Ask lots of questions about your topic. Be inquisitive. Keep asking why, how etc.
- Tolerate ambiguity – there are no magic answers to all problems so live with it!
- Don't take yourself too seriously. Have fun it's OK....

STEP 2 SPOT A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Q. *What should you learn?*

A. It depends. Here is how to find out.

Ask yourself:

- What is business critical right now and is there anything I need to learn to succeed?
- If I could do 'X' what impact could that have on my business?

- What aspect of our business do I want to improve?
- How can I get new perspectives on the pig?
- What excites and interests me?

In answering these questions you should identify some new learning opportunities.

STEP 3 DO SOMETHING

Entrepreneurs learn in very practical ways:

- Personal problem solving
- From successful peers
- From family and friends

In practice this means having a go, talking to other successful business people and family or friends.

I personally prefer to learn from successful people/organisations so I ask 'who does this really well?' I then find out and go and talk to them.

Some people get inspiration from books others prefer being trained.

TIP:

Do something that fits your style and personality.

If you read an article, paper or book on a topic every day in a year you will be an expert. In five years you will be the world expert!

SUMMARY

Your strengths and weaknesses are also those of your business. If you grow so does your business; that's the reward for investing in yourself.

Checklist

Here is a list of things you can do to invest in yourself:

- Read a book on a topic
- Do a Google search
- Do something different
- Attend a course
- Visit somebody who does 'it' well
- Learn a new skill – i.e. reading and understanding the F.T.
- Change roles for a day
- Get a coach
- Write an article on a topic
- Learn a language
- Become an expert i.e. lean manufacturing