

A Switched On Entrepreneurial Mindset

Business is changing faster than ever. To survive and thrive in a world where nothing is permanent, we need to up our game. We need a new mindset. A Switched On Entrepreneurial Mindset.

In our autumn ezine, Raise the Bar's Head of Learning and Development, Gayle Robling, talks to former lawyer turned entrepreneur, Sahar Hashemi, on how to bring fresh ideas and entrepreneurialism into the workplace. Sahar is the founder of the hugely successful Coffee Republic and is one of Raise the Bar's most popular speakers.

In her latest bestselling book "Switched on", Sahar makes the powerful point that "Life is too short to come in to work just for the pay cheque". Without realising, we can all too easily find ourselves coasting on autopilot, far too internally focused, resisting change, losing sight of the basics and doing the same old thing we did everyday yet somehow expecting new results. Whilst the realities of many of our working environments mean that we can't all be entrepreneurs, Sahar firmly believes that this shouldn't stop anyone from being innovative and enterprising. And in today's tough times, encouraging creativity and fresh thinking amongst your teams can give you that much needed edge.



So, what's Sahar's formula for unleashing the hidden entrepreneur in ourselves and those around us? Her approach is highly accessible no matter what role you carry out or what organisation you work in. It's simply about adopting 8 habits into your everyday working life which can enable you to combine the security and resources of your organisation with the freedom and creativity of entrepreneurs.

Habit 1: Believing that anyone can do it

Let go of the 'this isn't me' mental block. The ability to be creative and more entrepreneurial is within all of us, not just a select few. And if you're thinking 'my company won't allow it' – think again. Future survival depends on cultivating and not stifling a 'Switched On' culture at every level of the organisation.

Habit 2: Step into customers' shoes

It's so easy to lose the crucial connection with customers in an up and running business. To hone your creativity and bring your job to life, you need get under your customers' skin as much as possible and relate to them as fellow human beings rather than statistics. Becoming your own customer rather than just being the 'seller' or 'service provider' will give you a huge competitive advantage.

Habit 3: Get out

You won't expose yourself to fresh stimulus sitting behind your desk swamped in bureaucracy. Beware of becoming too internally focused and just relying on formal research reports. Get out of the office, do some market research yourself by impersonating your customer and getting an insider's perspective of what your product or service is really like from the other side of the fence.

Habit 4: Become clueless

You can't see and think in the old way expecting a new way to magically appear. Your skills, experience and 'how we've always done it' mentality will blind you from seeing new opportunities. Break from old habits, unlearn conventional practices, and open your mind, so you stumble on new ways of doing things.

Habit 5: Prototyping

The new opportunity you've spotted doesn't come to life in a PowerPoint presentation or a spreadsheet. Prototyping is making your idea tangible. It gives you a hands on, 'let me show you what I mean' approach that gives speed and momentum to your new idea. It's about getting started on a small scale and experimenting under the radar.

Habit 6: Notch up on no's

You need to change your attitude to 'no'. In the entrepreneur's world a 'no' is just a journey to finally getting a 'yes'. New ways of doing things always meet with resistance. It's a status quo bias. Trying to play it safe narrows your perception and makes you complacent.

Develop your persistence muscles and know that if you're not notching up on no's it means you're safely tucked in the complacency of your comfort zone.

Habit 7: Bootstrapping

Bootstrapping is about finding a way to make things happen however scarce your resources, restricted your channels, or limited your budget. Instead of being paralysed by limited resources it's about being creative and making the most of what you've got; and somehow making $2+2=5$ by finding detours from conventional paths.

Habit 8: Take 100% of yourself to work

Leave behind the traditional thinking that work and play are opposite words. There is a direct correlation between how much you enjoy your work and how well you do it. And you can't enjoy your work if you are holding back. Organisations don't need corporate automatons any more. Being yourself and expressing your individuality is the greatest asset you can bring to work.

Sahar is passionate about helping people to blast through old thinking and bring their best selves to work. She points out that work is about fulfilment and it's an enormous part of our lives, so just turning up really is no longer an option.

So, shake off those old ways of thinking and dig deep within yourself to access those resources that are sitting untapped within you. Resources that can help you up your game and stand out from the crowd. The future belongs to the fresh thinker.

To find out more information on Sahar's 'Switched On' workshops with Raise the Bar or to book Sahar as a Speaker, please contact us on at enquiries@raisethebar.co.uk, visit us at www.raisethebar.co.uk or call us on **+44 151 426 0110**.

