

AIM to be Weird!

Having been in the business of professional speaking for over two decades, and with the exception of maybe 2 of them, every year has been better than the one before it. I guess you could say that I subscribe to the 25-year plan to overnight success. So, if you are looking for a get rich quick scheme or a short cut to speaking success, you can save yourself the time and effort of reading any further.

If, however you plan to be in this, or any business for the long haul, then I've got a deal for you! The "best practice" that has given me longevity, two best-selling books and a continual flow of corporate contracts may sound really simple, but trust me, it isn't! It's a lifelong process called AIM to be Weird!

The closer you get to the perfect intersection of your Abilities, your Interests and the Market, (i.e., your AIM), the more the concepts of work and life overlap, the lines gray, and they are no longer mutually exclusive. You don't have to live two lives to cope or be happy. You are "tapping your natural weirdness." Anything else is merely an avocation, a dream, or just a job.



ABILITIES + INTERESTS = AVOCATION

You can love to do something (Interests), and even be great at it (Abilities), but if no one is willing to pay you for it (Market), it's just an avocation. For example, I love to eat, and I am really good at it. But so far, I haven't found anyone willing to pay me for it.

Many people default to this sector as an escape from their real "work." Let's say you hate your job, but you love the theater. So, you act in local plays, but it is not a career. It's an intrinsically rewarding escape (Avocation) where you are able to use both your interests and your abilities. There is nothing wrong with that. But wouldn't you rather be able to escape into your work? Wouldn't it be wonderful to get paid for what you love, and also do well?

INTERESTS + MARKET = DREAM

Who hasn't dreamed of being a movie star, a professional athlete, a musician, or a racecar driver? There are markets for these talents. But probably not for you or me! Sorry to be so blunt, but someone had to tell you! In any event, it's a dream. Time to wake up!

Sadly, there actually are people who attempt to work in careers (like professional speaking) in which their talents just aren't suited. That's painful...for everyone. They can even get by for a while, but it certainly isn't rewarding for them or their clients, and eventually

something has to give. Whether it's a stress-related ailment, career failure or unhealthy escapes, nothing good can come of it in the long run.

ABILITIES + MARKETS = JOB

So, what's wrong with that? You're good at something, and they pay you for it! Without the Interest, motivation and satisfaction will always be lacking. It's a job. A hard job! And ultimately, if you are not fired with enthusiasm, you will probably be fired, with enthusiasm.

Paychecks don't drive you out of bed in the morning. Paychecks don't make you want to stretch and excel every day. Paychecks don't make you feel centered in life. Just as in the Dream mode (Interests + Market), this will also catch up to you, and in the same way, i.e., stress, job loss, addictions, bitterness, mediocrity, and other negative outcomes.

You're good at something; you love it, and you get paid to do it! It doesn't get any better than this! These are the people that every employer wants to hire. These are the weirdos in the workplace that are worth their weight in gold. They have tapped their natural weirdness, and life is good. They jump out of bed in the morning, or maybe even in the middle of the night, anxious to take on another day.

There are plenty of historic and modern day examples of people from all walks of life that have tapped their natural weirdness. From Einstein to Edison to Elvis, these are the people who have attained what Maslow called "self-actualization."

Tapping your natural weirdness means that you have found the purpose for which you were put on this planet. You are fulfilling it and it is fulfilling you. And, it can get weird. Many if not most of those who find their true AIM can appear weird to the rest of the normal world, but that is a subject for another whole book.

Sound idealistic? Maybe. But why not AIM for it? At least you would be heading in the right direction, and who knows, maybe 20 years from now you'll be a successful weirdo too! Now, AIM to be Weird!

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