

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT YOU HAVE

HOW I LEARNED TO BOUNCE BACK AFTER FAILURE

I have written many times about how instrumental my parents have been in my personal and professional success. When it comes to building a small business from the ground up, my dad is my No. 1 source of guidance. One of the many lessons he's imparted on me was how to get back up after you fall down.

Like me, my dad is a small business owner, and to succeed, he had to get back up after each failure. As a business owner, he dealt with a lot of unexpected situations. Dad says that a lot of people get knocked down and think, "I'm never going to do that again." But that's not how he approaches obstacles. His philosophy has always been, "Make the most of what you've got." He insisted on learning from mistakes instead of giving in to them. After each failure, he would find the positivity in the situation and make a plan of action for how to avoid it in the future.

As a trial lawyer, I've found his perspective to be invaluable. For me, losing a case is the worst pain in the world. I still remember every single loss I've had, and it's hard to move on. But thanks to my dad, I've learned how to find the value in every experience and develop a plan of action to avoid making the same mistakes. In both my personal and professional life, I've developed a consistent identity of who I am and how I deal with failure. I'm not the type of person who gives up after falling down.

It starts on the personal level. I surround myself with loved ones who are there for me whether I win or not. I go fishing with my dad and spend time developing hobbies outside of work so that I have healthy outlets to turn to when I'm stressed.

At work, I use my dad's strategy of making a plan of action for my next move after failure. After each case, whether we won or lost, I have a case-review meeting with my team. We do a full "autopsy" of that case. We ask ourselves, "How can we do this differently next time?" That way, we learn from our mistakes and empower each other to find solutions.

Even in his personal life, my dad is adamant about learning from his mistakes, and there was one in particular that he's insistent he won't

repeat. My dad recently shared this story and it was pretty funny to hear his perspective. Roxana and I have fond memories of the particular trip he recalled, but my Dad? Well, read on and see what you think.

When my sister and I were kids, my mom came up with ideas for each of our vacations. They often involved a road trip, and one summer, she decided that we would road trip across the U.S. "We'll drive all night, and play with the kids during the day," she told my dad. He thought it sounded like a great plan.

During the trip, my dad drove every night while the rest of us slept soundly. During the day, we'd visit sites with my parents. As night came, we'd get back in the car, my dad would get his umpteenth cup of coffee, and he'd drive the rest of the night. This trip also took place before the days of Mapquest, so if he had gotten off on the wrong exit or made a wrong turn, we might have ended up on the other side of the country without knowing it.

It took my dad a month to catch up on sleep after that trip. When he got back, he told my mom, "I'm not doing that again."

It just goes to show that if you try at anything, failure is inevitable. There will be times when things don't go your way. But you are not your failure; *you* are defined by how you react to failure.

Happy Father's Day, Dad!



-Russell Button

PASSED DOWN

Small Business Leadership Lessons From My Father

As I mentioned on the cover, I turn to my dad for many life lessons, and when it comes to leadership lessons, I can think of no better leader than my dad.

Running a small business requires a good leader at the top. The old vision of a good leader is someone who strikes fear in their employees, uses them until their wheels fall off, and then starts all over again. The leadership that small businesses need is quite the opposite.

We all have value, or we wouldn't have a business in the first place. However, there comes a time when you cannot possibly do everything that needs to be done.

Scaling up = Growing pains

As owners, there are usually one or two things we do really well among our many tasks. The rest can be (and usually are) done better by someone else. It's just a matter of finding those other people.

Here are the lessons I would choose if I boiled all my dad's lessons down to just three:

1. **Build a system that encourages your employees to be leaders in their roles.** Rarely do businesses encourage employees to be leaders in their roles, but I have found that when you train someone to be great and tell them they can do it, they do better than you could have imagined.

2. **Empower your team to find solutions and figure out how to do what needs to be done.** Empowering your team to figure out the logistics means allowing your team to figure out how to do what you want. Once they understand that, they can do logistics better than you. Let them impress you.

3. **Never stop grinding — improve and motivate your employees to be their best.** Teams lose motivation when you stop coming up with new ideas for growth. This does not mean steer away from the fundamentals. Instead, it means finding out how you can do more of the fundamentals better, faster, and more efficiently. Do not stop improving the systems and grinding to accomplish more.

On a nice day when your team has been pushing hard, give them a surprise and go grab some ice cream or sit on a patio for a Friday afternoon — it's good for team morale.

Great leadership is learning how to motivate people, and there has been no one who's helped me more than my dad. Thanks, Dad!

HOW GABRIELA GETS IT DONE

MEETING EACH CHALLENGE WITH A DETERMINED SPIRIT



As our firm continues to grow, we search for skilled professionals to add to our team. When one search led us to Gabriela, we knew we'd gone in the right direction. Though she's only been with our firm for a couple months, she's already made a huge impact. Attorney and founder Russell Button says, "We already feel the weight lifted off our shoulders."

As our marketing coordinator, Gabriela makes sure our firm is connected with the community and reaching the clients who need our help. Russell Button says that she "knocked it out of the park" during the rigorous hiring process, which included a presentation to the entire firm. "I knew I was going to hire her."

She fits in really well with our team. She's a team player, has the right mindset, is a self-starter, and fits with how we operate. She's more than we could ask for," says Russell.

Gabriela felt a similar connection to the Button Law team. She'd been looking at different job opportunities but hadn't seen anything that interested her — until she saw Russell's post. "I saw Russell's job application, and I love a challenge. I love taking everything on 100 percent."

How did she develop such a strong work ethic? She attributes it all to her mom.

"My mom was a single parent and an immigrant. From the time I was 5 years old, I saw her working all the time. She was always making sure we had enough," says Gabriela. Gabriela is the first in her family to go to college and recognizes the sacrifices that her mom made so she could get to where she is. It only drives her to work harder. "There's no reason I can't succeed," she explains. We couldn't agree more.

After putting in her 100 percent at work, Gabriela enjoys spending time with her family and the new addition to her home — a puppy. "It's been a lot of going to the country, letting him be a dog and completely wearing himself out," Gabriela says of pet ownership.

Gabriela is grateful for the support she's found at home and in her new workplace, and we couldn't be more grateful to have her on our team!

3 KEYS TO MAKING CORE VALUES COUNT

ESTABLISH THE GUIDING HEART OF YOUR BUSINESS

A cohesive vision for the future is central to any thriving company; it's the road map by which you and your team steer the business to success. But a set of lofty goals isn't quite enough to motivate and unify an organization. It's important to have an overarching aim for the coming years, but you also need to provide some guidance on how your business should conduct itself *today*. You need core values that encourage a certain spirit for your team and hold them to a high standard of excellence.

To build a set of core values that's unique and valuable to *your* business, you must first decide whose input you want during the process. This should be a panel of the key players in your business and employees skilled at providing new and powerful ideas. Ensure that each of the members of your think tank embodies the qualities you want to see throughout your organization.

Next, get everyone in a room to start brainstorming. Set a date for a meeting and encourage everyone to come prepared with a list of values they feel are the most important for your business. Ask your think tank which values are central to them as individuals and expand that to include values that are vital to your entire company.

After you've got a healthy list of good ideas, combine and define them. Look for commonalities. It's likely that many of them will orbit just a few key principles. After a bit of pruning and rewording, these principles become your core values. Once you've got your set of 5-10 main ideas, outline exactly what each of them means in a few sentences or a paragraph. You may want a skilled writer on board during this step to nail down a set of clear and compelling definitions.



The process may be difficult, but once you're done, you and your team will have a set of powerful, unifying core values. These will state your company's purpose and drive your team to excellence. Core values may seem like a small consideration in the midst of day-to-day operations, but they can make an enormous difference.

MEMES



5-STAR FACEBOOK REVIEW ★★★★★

Today marks three years [after being] hit by an 18 wheeler ... Russell came in and got everything accomplished in six months. Not only did he help me get what [we] deserved, but he also helped me get rid of the guilt that I felt of no cause of my own. I will forever be grateful to him and his associates!

-Shawna P



FRUITY BREAKFAST SMOOTHIE

Start your morning off right with this delicious fruit smoothie!

INGREDIENTS

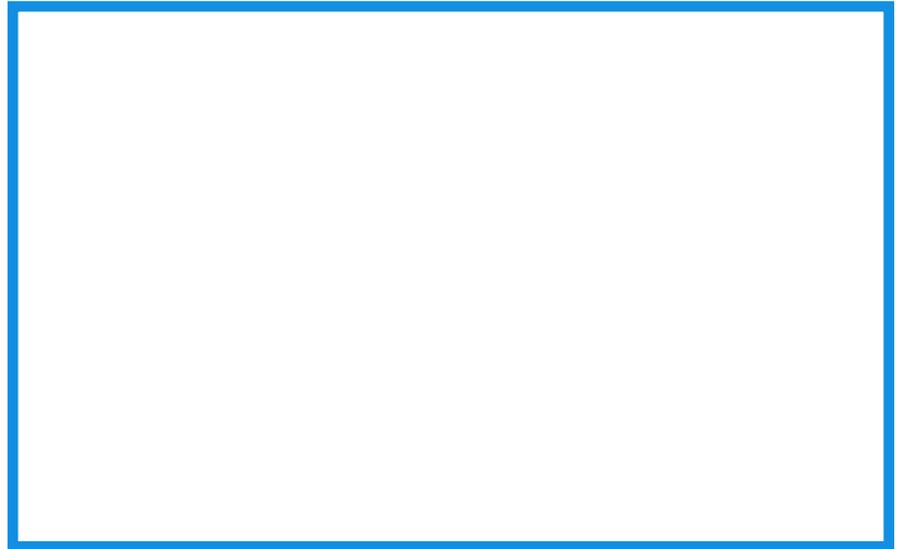
- 1 cup yogurt, milk, tea, or juice
- 1/2 cup frozen raspberries
- 1/2 cup strawberries
- 1 banana
- 1 cup mango slices
- 1-2 teaspoons sugar

DIRECTIONS

1. Add all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. Pour into a glass and enjoy! Optional: top your smoothie with chia seeds and shredded coconut. Enjoy the great tasty start to your morning!

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FOR HOME REPAIRS, ED'S YOUR MAN FROM SHEET WALL REPAIRS TO WINDOW INSTALLATION

When you're getting to your honey-do list and are in a pickle trying to find someone to fix that pesky ceiling fan, Ed's your man. From patching up a roof to fixing countertops, Ed Safra does it all with a positive attitude and strong work ethic. A resident of the DFW for the last 25 years, Ed started his own construction company six years ago and has been building the business from there. Ed says, "I'll help, from small repairs to big, if I can."

Attorney Russell Button first learned about Ed's work after Ed did a great job for his parents. Russell was having difficulty finding someone to help with home repairs, and on his parents' suggestion, he called Ed. Ed marched out on a Saturday morning, assessed the situation, made recommendations about what needed to be done, and just like that, the repairs were quickly and skillfully completed. To top it off, Russell says, "He left our house cleaner than it was when he got there."

After this experience, Russell says, "Ed is the first person I'll call for anything construction-related."

Ed started out his career working for bigger construction companies, where he learned the ins and outs of electrical work, sheet wall repair, plumbing, and window and door installation. When he stepped into a supervising role, he realized he would enjoy starting his own business, and it gave him the courage to begin.

He now takes on jobs all over the DFW area and travels to East Dallas and the Frisco area when clients need his help. "We work in all the Metro areas," says Ed. If he can't fix something himself, he'll recommend someone who can. Ed's business includes several trustworthy employees he considers family. "My workers are my family and friends," Ed says.

Outside of work, Ed is dad to six dogs, all of whom he rescued after they were abandoned. They include Paloma, a husky, and Tahlia, an old 8-year-old border collie. Ed says he found Tahlia in the street when she was just a puppy. He found the owner and was told, "I just dropped her because I don't like her." "I had to keep her," says Ed. Ed likes taking the pups for walks around his neighborhood and to the lake. He also enjoys barbecues with his family. "We like to cook outside on the lake with my nephews, nieces, and all the family around," Ed says.

If you're looking for help with home repair, give Ed a call at 817-298-7277!