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Kick off 2011 with the “Right” Mindset!

Having the Right Mindset is the most important component when laying your foundation for success. It is essential that you are able to define just what the “right” mindset is.

Over the holidays I watched a movie called “Men of Honor”. Perhaps you saw it or are familiar with the story? The movie was inspired by the true story of Carl Brashear, the first African-American Master Diver in the United States Navy. Carl Brashear grew up in rural Kentucky where he was forced to quit school in the 7th grade to work on his family’s farm. He decides to join the Navy where he is assigned to the galley of the salvage ship. He observes the bravery of one of the divers, Master Chief Petty Officer Leslie W Sunday. As a result of this, coupled with a promise he made to his father that he would always try his best, he becomes determined to overcome racism and become the first African American Navy diver. He also has a dream that he will eventually make it to Master Diver. He works hard, overcoming his lack of formal education as well as obvious prejudice and attends the Diving School. Master Chief Sunday is the head instructor and is ordered by an extremely racist officer to ensure that Brashear fails.

Brashear proves himself as a diver in many ways, gaining the respect of his colleagues especially since he is continuously faced with unfair treatment. He is continually and deliberately set up to fail various tasks as ordered by the commanding officer who refuses to have an African American succeed. During an underwater assembling task where each student is required to assemble a flange underwater, Brashear's tool bag is cut open and the tools he needs are scattered on the water’s bottom. Brashear does not give up and finishes the assembly, successfully completing the diving school requirements. Master Chief Sunday is later demoted for allowing Brashear to pass.

Brasher becomes a national hero as a result of his efforts to recover a missing atomic bomb and for saving the life of Navy crew members. Brashear loses his left leg in this heroic action and must fight the US Navy bureaucracy in order to return to full active duty and fulfill his dream of becoming a master diver. With the help of Leslie Sunday, he is successful and reinstated. He eventually becomes the first African American to achieve Master Diver status despite the fact that he was also an amputee.

The obstacles Brashear had to overcome were huge: He lacked education. He was African American and faced great racial prejudice. The Navy diving program was difficult enough with only an elite few succeeding. Numerous roadblocks were deliberately set in his path that would have defeated most. He was an amputee. Any one of these obstacles would have held back even the most highly motivated from achieving the goal. Not Brashear. He had a tremendously strong mindset. He was

determined and he kept his focus, no matter what happened. In his heart and in his mind, he believed he would be a master diver.

Brashear took control over all the aspects of his life that he could. He learned and he always did his very best. He was persistent. Brashear believed in himself and he believed he could be successful. Eventually, not only was he accepted as a Diver, he achieved the elite Master Diver status as a Black man and an amputee. He achieved this as a direct result of his intensity, his hard work and his commitment. As a result of his mindset, his willingness “to put it all out there”, he gained support from those who originally wanted to see him fail. The legacy of Brashear continues to inspire others to achieve great things.

So, what is the “right” mindset? It is understanding and visualizing your dreams for the future. It is allowing yourself to make friends with your “Inner Winner”. We all have those little voices in our heads. You know them. One is that voice that tells us that “the sky is the limit”. We can do anything we set our minds to. The other voice, which is often quite loud, is that one that makes us doubt ourselves. That voice points out all the possible obstacles and how difficult it will be. When we are in touch with our “Inner Winner”, we truly believe that we will win, that we can do it. When we are in touch with our “Inner Whiner”, we focus on the challenges, the difficulties. We give up. Brashear listened to his “Inner Winner”.

When we experience the “right” mindset, we move from believing that *We Could Do* to *We Can Do* to *We Will Do*.



In order to have the right mindset, you have to know where you are going. You have to believe that you can really do it by listening to your “inner winner”. Now to convert that mindset from one of a longer term to a shorter term, you need to establish a real sense of urgency. In fact your sense of urgency needs to be that of “Life and Death”. When we are placed in a situation where the life of a loved one- or ourselves- depended upon us doing something, we are more likely to act with a true sense of urgency. To achieve short term results, we **MUST** act with urgency, every minute, every hour, we cannot put things off. Procrastination is the enemy.

The final aspect of our mindset is critical. We must stay focused. Today so many of us are proud of our “multi-tasking” abilities. Multi-tasking can take away our focus. It can distract us and get us off track. If we get involved in too many different tasks, then we are not able to complete those that are most important. The majority of the folks I coach share that this is the most difficult aspect to control. Keeping the focus will make the difference between staying on track with your goals and achieving your desired results.



Again, having the Right Mindset establishes the base for your foundation. A few suggestions that can help you keep the “Right Mindset” are”

- Meditation
- Visualization
- Support systems
- A Coach
- A Mentor
- Success – little successes along the way
- Achievement of milestones or progress
- Motivational books, tapes, speakers

You know yourself and it will be critical to do what works for you to keep yourself, feeling confident, focused and moving along. Now let's get 2011 off to a GREAT start!!! Believe in yourself and make 2011 the best year ever!!!