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How sellers can develop resilience in hard times

Denver Business Journal - by [Garry Duncan](#)

Garden enthusiasts talk about a plant's hardiness and ability to withstand cold, disease and stress. Sellers likewise need hardiness to withstand the cold shoulder of current buyers, the disease of discouragement and the stress of increased sales pressure.

Resilience is a hallmark of successful people and, especially, top sellers. The ability to bounce back from loss, disappointment and the emotional stress to perform is even more critical in the current economic environment.

Some people are naturally resilient, probably related to a number of factors, including their experiences, environment and a natural optimism. While others struggle with it, the good news is that optimism is something anyone can learn. Reviewing past losses and the wins that followed, the good decisions that replaced bad decisions, and the new and better opportunities that eventually appeared will remind you "this, too, will pass."

Sales challenges force personal growth and change, and it's clear in this market that you must bring your A game.

Consider these methods to keep your thinking clear and amplify your ability to rebound from disappointment.

- **Refocus on your strengths and put them to work.**

If you build relationships well, concentrate on that. Or perhaps you're good at generating referrals, networking, cold calling or presenting. Hobbies and personal interests are good, too. Whatever you do well and enjoy, make some time to do it more frequently.

One entrepreneur, who's great at networking, finds that attending two or three events a month instead of just one keeps him energized when sales slow.

Using your strengths will build confidence and reduce stress. Taking advantage of what you do well instills a sense of mastery and control of yourself, your environment and your destiny. Many sellers are in professional selling because of the desire to be in control of their income and good fortune.

- **Research indicates that being forward-thinking enables faster rebounds from setbacks and adversity.** It's no surprise, since history is rich with examples of forward-thinking people who overcame great odds. Walt Disney, who pushed forward for more than 15 years to launch Mickey Mouse, and Abe Lincoln's single vision of a united country at all costs, are two famous examples.

Focusing on long-term goals is essential, even if benchmarks need to be changed. Passion about goals is vital because goals get you through the rough spots.

Professionals know it's important to recognize their feelings, but they also know there's a difference between honoring feelings and acting upon them.

Resilient sellers recognize when they are feeling defeated or stressed, and know it's OK to entertain those feelings for a short time. However, resilient salespeople don't linger on them or continually replay them in their mind. They honor those feelings, then quickly refocus on goals and make the necessary changes to move forward.

- **Rebounders also have a great sense of self in combination with empathy.** They know themselves, and know their value as a person isn't dependent on what others think. Social culture relates value to how we look, what we own, what we achieve or how much others like us.

Resilient sellers never let anyone else determine how they feel about themselves. Winners in every field demonstrate this fact repeatedly. Athletes miss plays, musicians miss notes, doctors misdiagnose and attorneys lose cases, but they don't beat themselves up continually over mistakes. They learn and get better.

Being clear about your own beliefs, principles and values strengthens resilience and the ability to overcome adversity. One terrific way for slow rebounders to strengthen resilience is by learning how to journal for at least two to six weeks.

- **Successful people know no one does it alone.** They build support systems that range from family and friends to coaches, peer exchange groups and even managers and fellow employees.

Just as sellers must show empathy, it's necessary sometimes to receive it. Hang around winners, visionaries and people who are busy getting things done. They won't let you muddle in your misery and will help toughen you. Some people rely on spiritual connections, and of course, physical health and exercise help keep everything in perspective.

Don't overlook the use of humor. Its biological benefits include lower blood pressure, reduced physical stress, muscle relaxation and fortified immune systems. Most importantly, humor strengthens the ability to cope and reduces depression.

Mental hardiness and resilience training, just like skill training, require effort and consistency. Implement the concepts one at a time until you find which ones work best for you. To win, you must be hardy enough to survive setbacks.

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