

Kick Start The New Year

As we start the New Year, so many of us reflect upon what it would be like to make this year a better one. Instead, what if we think about how we can make it happen? How does the reality that we want to see actually manifest? It happens by first figuring out where you want to go and removing the obstacles that are stopping you from getting there.



When I was in Istanbul, Turkey I heard [Matthew Kelly](#) talking about getting to where you want to go and dreaming of the possibilities of what might be. As a life and business coach, Matthew helps people and businesses focus on their greatest desires and dreams and then helps them get there. He also wrote the best-selling book [The Dream Manager](#). Reading his latest blog post reminded me of some of the planning, focus, and what we should avoid in order to reach our greatest desires.

To kick start your life and make 2013 the best ever, ask yourself the same questions Matthew asks. I will share the questions as well as provide one example from each to demonstrate changes I will make this coming year.

1. If you could only accomplish three things next year, what would they be?
2. What are you going to do to ensure you have more energy next year than you did this year?
3. What relationships do you want to improve? How will you improve them?
4. What new habit(s) are you going to adopt in 2013 to grow

spiritually?

5. What bad habits are you going to eliminate?

6. What are you going to spend more time doing?

7. What are you going to spend less time doing?

I will make it a key top priority to build successful mobile apps. I will do P90X2 cardio workouts twice a week on top of the weight workouts to increase my energy. I will improve the relationship with my team and the culture of our company, and I will do this by injecting a positive energy with all my interactions and eliminating any negative people or conversations that come up. I will read a page each day from my spiritual books. I will eliminate the habit of complaining about the small stuff. I will spend more time reading books and material that have big ideas and positively change my thinking. I will spend less time watching negative news stories that bring my vibrational energy down.

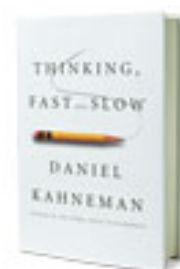
What about you? What are a couple of big things that you are going to go after, and what will you eliminate to kick start your life to the big dreams that we are all after?

Can the Entrepreneur Optimism Be Risky?

As an entrepreneur, I consider myself a pretty optimistic person. I look to the future and see a rosy picture filled

with visions of a lifestyle that incorporates my dreams. I will sacrifice now acknowledging that I will see better times ahead. Knowing that the little steps of progress I see in my company is leading to something better really gets me excited, and the optimism overflows even more! Have you ever thought this could be a little risky? I didn't, but let's explore this some more.

When I was preparing for India, I knew I needed some good reading material to entertain me on the 24 hours of travel time I would have each way. I went to [Barnes & Noble](#) to search and came upon a really good book called "[Thinking, Fast and Slow](#)" by [Daniel Kahneman](#). Daniel won the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics in 2002, and with this book he aimed to "improve the ability to identify and understand errors of judgment and choice in others, and eventually in ourselves, by providing a richer and more precise language to discuss them."



I have found this book to be very interesting and mentally stimulating in the same vein that I did with "[The Black Swan](#)," which you can read more about [here](#) on my [blog](#). I have not finished the entire book yet but was very intrigued with a chapter called "The Engine of Capitalism." Here, Daniel discusses the advantages of optimism and how it leads to happier, healthier, more resilient people. The optimists are the inventors, the entrepreneurs, and the political and military leaders, which he points out are not the average people. They get there by seeking challenges and taking risk.

Most interestingly, he discusses how an optimistic bias can blind an entrepreneur from seeing the full risk of an undertaking or the decisions they make. In study after study, Daniel shows that optimistic people were not capable of predicting or generating the results they expected. What do we do with this overconfident optimism? Daniel suggests one

option would be to do a “premortem,” and I see another option of firing “bullets.”

The premortem occurs when the organization has almost come to an important choice but still before the big decision. They gather a group of people involved in the assessment, and they write a brief history imagining that they implemented the decision and it died, so now they have to imagine they are looking back and come up with reasons why it might have failed. Daniel says this does two things. First, it overcomes group think when it appears a decision is moving forward. Second, it opens up the floor for knowledgeable individuals to express their doubts when they may have been suppressed by the leader before.

I think there is another way to handle overconfident optimism, and that is to fire bullets, as [Collins](#) discussed in “[Great by Choice](#).” When you test the market reaction by looking for empirical evidence with small, low risk exposure (firing a bullet), your confidence comes from real world market feedback. Only then do you fire the big cannon ball without worrying that your optimistic bias got in the way of a venture that could have been devastating to your company.

I know my over eager optimism has gotten in my way and has been costly. How are you managing yours?

Side note on the [4 Billion Customers'](#) blog last week: I read [David Meerman Scott's](#) [blog](#) this week, reinforcing the mobile expansion to all parts of the world. He was in the jungles of Central America and experienced tribal people with no running water or electricity using mobile devices to better their world. Check out his [blog](#).

What are your dreams?

What an interesting week! Last week, I traveled to New York City to participate in the [Entrepreneurs' Organization](#) Injected Campus event, which brings the regional EO Forums together. We met in lower Manhattan to be close to the [New York Stock Exchange](#).

This year during our event, the NYSE opening bell was rung by [InvenSense](#), a company that makes the motion possible in the Wii and in smartphones. InvenSense was launching their IPO and was going public. I had always wanted to be there in person to see the opening bell, but it also made me think of my own dream of being up there to ring the bell with the IPO launch of my own company. That evening, it felt a little closer as my friends on the Global EO Board got to be on stage and ring the closing bell! WOW! Click [here](#) to see the video I took of the opening bell.

Along with going to the Stock Exchange, we enjoyed a wonderful evening dining and socializing at the [Harvard Club](#) in Times Square. We also heard from three great speakers and spent time with EO members that have really invested time and resources into the Entrepreneurs' Organization, thus getting a lot in return. This entire event was extra special!

[Matthew Kelly](#) spoke to us at the NYSE for one of the events. He does business consulting and wrote the book [The Dream Manager](#)." His talk resonated deeply with me, so I wanted to share it with you. Matthew told a story about one time when he was playing golf. One of the guys he was playing with seemed really down, and when Matthew asked him about it, he

mentioned he was having business problems. After digging, Matthew finally got him to reveal that he has a janitorial company with more than 400% turnover. This man was spending all his time hiring people and had no time to work on business strategy.

Matthew inquired, "Have you asked the employees what is the problem?" The man had not and wondered if they would even know, so Matthew said, "Let's find out." They conducted a survey and realized that transportation was the main problem. They decided to get buses to help the employees, and the business changed significantly. The turnover rate dropped to just over 200%, so they did the survey again. This time, they discovered the employees had dreams and desires. They decided if the employees were helped to realize these dreams, then their respect and loyalty to the company would grow.

They hired a full time dream manager to discuss dreams with the employees. The dream manager assisted them in creating plans and processes to put them on the path to realizing their small near-term dreams, such as purchasing a laptop or planning a vacation. Additionally, He helped them work towards their long term dreams of buying a house or getting the proper education toward a new career.

This approach resonated with me because I am of the type that is always strategizing about working towards the things that make the future better. I have often asked my team what it is that they are working for and want to have in their lives as they increase their incomes. It is astounding how the culture of a company can change and how your employees' perception and loyalty toward their employer improves!

I am working toward my dream of building a company that can go IPO. What are you doing to invest in the lives and dreams of those around you?