

## **5 Business Lessons I learned from Hanging out in Hip-Hop Class**

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By Beth Schneider

I've been a dancer my entire life. I started out at the tender age of 4 with my first pair of shiny black tap shoes with little pink bows. I later graduated to jazz, swing, ballroom, a little country line dancing and in my mid 20s returned to my love of tap where I studied with a professional dancer who taught the likes of Paula Abdul and other celebrities how to shake a leg.

So when I decided I wanted to drop a couple of pounds before the holidays hit I went back to my roots and signed up for a series of dance classes.

Going in I knew that dance requires creativity, focus, control and power. But driving home one day I thought about how much learning to dance is like running a business. Here are 5 business lessons I've learned from hanging out in a hip-hop class.

### **I can do a whole lot more than I thought**

Each lesson is broken down into sections. It doesn't matter what class I'm in the instructor belts out 8 counts of new steps and I watch thinking, "my body doesn't do that".

You know what, after it's broken down and we practice a bit, "my body can do that". It's the same with your business. What business tasks, systems, phone calls, and risks are you not taking because you think you can't? All it takes is breaking it down and a little practice and you'll be amazed at what you can do.

### **It gets easier with time**

My first day in hip-hop class I looked around at the room full of 20somethings and through, "what on earth is a tap dancer doing in a hip-hop class"? I tripped over myself, got frustrated with the steps and pretty much looked like an idiot. But the more I do it the easier it gets and the more fun it is. To top it off I'm surprised at how fast I'm picking it up.

In business you don't start at the top. You have to try things that make you feel uncomfortable, self-conscious and maybe even (gulp), out of control. But keep at it because soon things that gave you the heebie jeebies become second nature.

### **It takes more than good feet to be a good dancer**

So there I was feeling a little cocky because I had all the steps down. I was moving all over the floor and then I looked in the mirror and I looked like CRAP.

My feet were perfect. But the rest of me was stiff as a board. I wasn't moving my arms, hips, head, or shoulders. Nothing. I was only doing 10% of the work, but expecting 100% of the results.

It's the same in business. If you have the perfect marketing plan, but no systems to back it up, it's like you're working at 10%. You need a balance of marketing, sales, accounting, products, staff, etc. Make sure you aren't dancing with just your feet, use your whole body.

### **Why do I have to force myself to do something I love?**

Sunday morning I'm curled up on the couch with my dog, a nice cup of tea and the TV. I love the dance class, you'd think I'd be ready to jump up and head off to class. But no I literally had to force myself off the couch.

Even though you love what you do, sometimes you'll have to force yourself to work. Figure out what motivates you to get going even when you don't feel like it.

### **A group of peers is really supportive**

When there is a really big class we split into two groups so at the end of the class each

group has a chance to really let go without worrying about running into their neighbor. It's great having more advanced dancers to follow in case I forget the steps. Then at the end the group watching claps and cheers – no matter we look like.

Find yourself a group of cheerleaders. Personally, I have a mastermind group, an accountability buddy, and a coach. All help me when I need help with the steps and cheer for me when I have even a small success.

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