



**Young Entrepreneur Council**, Contributor

We advise the world's most promising young professionals.

ENTREPRENEURS | 9/02/2013 @ 7:27AM | 6,529 views

## ***How To Lead From A Place Of Gratitude: Six Lessons***

***As entrepreneurs, our personal happiness, the way we listen to and react to our staff, and the way we shape our own role at work all have profound effects on our companies, and ultimately, on how they grow. But lasting change is difficult. I should know – I recently achieved three major advances that I didn't think were possible:***



Photo Credit: Mashable

- 1. I pushed my wife to create more work-life balance with me,***
- 2. I expressed compassion for a staff member facing personal challenges that were getting in the way of her job, and***
- 3. I redefined my #1 priority with my team at [Round Table Companies \(RTC\)](#) to focus on deepening relationships with potential clients.***

***It wasn't easy, but I had a solid guide. Not long ago, I was playing around on Twitter, searching for people with influential business and leadership profiles who could review and possibly share [my last Forbes piece](#). Author [Robin Sharma](#) read and enjoyed the article, and challenged me to read his new book as a***

**result. After looking at his site, I knew we were in alignment, so I dove into his new book, *The Leader Who Had No Title*.**

**Below are six key lessons I learned from Robin that you can apply to your own business success.**

**1. It's never too early to work on your dream business. While he continued to practice law, Robin would get to his local 24-hour coffee shop at 3:30 or 4:00 in the morning and write until he had to go to work at 8:00. Though the first editor who read his work said he couldn't write, Robin printed 2,000 copies of *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* at Kinko's and kept them in his kitchen as he sold them. Sixteen years later, Robin's books have sold more than six million copies. Early morning hustle pays off!**

**Question: Do you pop out of bed excited for the day, or are you snoozing your way out of opportunity?**

**2. Live from a place of gratitude. Robin's books inspired me to wake up at 5:30 a.m. every weekday morning (for the last 65 days now!) and spend 20 minutes journaling about what I'm grateful for and what I'm dreaming of becoming. That writing sets up my day from a place of appreciation vs. the fear or anxiety that can often drive me as an entrepreneur (maybe you can relate?). Coming from a place of appreciation all the time is a dynamic shift for me. I highly recommend you try it once and see how quickly it can impact your brain chemistry and then your behavior.**

**Question: Do you engage in any kind of ritual to help set up your day?**

**3. Splash ice water on your face (figuratively). As the owner of a million-dollar-a-year storytelling company, when times are good, I am a blast to work with and for. But as an entrepreneur, my moods change as often as Chicago's weather. If revenue dips, or a deadline is missed, I feel anxiety that I take out on our executive team who can repeat the process with our support staff.**

**So, having revealed those negative thoughts, I grabbed another lesson from Robin to deal with them: whenever I catch myself thinking negatively, I imagine getting splashed in the face with**

***ice water. Amazingly, that practice helps me shake off the thoughts and recognize that they are not reality.***

***Question: How much of your day is ruled by worry vs. reality?***

***4. Question your role. Through my gratitude work, I started dreaming about what was possible for my company again, and that shifted me from the role of managing back into my entrepreneurial power zone. It also helped me admit that my strength is not managing. Getting me out of that role was great for me, but also for the spirit of the company. And it just so happened that our COO, David Cohen, was ready to make his own shift into a stronger leadership role. People management comes easily to him, and our staff thrives under his steadfast leadership style. Win-win-win.***

***Question: Is your current role one of choice, or one of habit?***

***5. Take care of yourself. Exercise is important for entrepreneurs because we're desperately in need of ways to manage our stress, but after two years of working out two days a week, I was ready to up my game. I started a difficult conversation with my trainer about changing up my schedule so I could work out four days a week at the same budget through less personal training and more classes. I had been avoiding that conversation out of a sense of guilt. And then, bam! I came from a place of kindness, had the conversation, and got what I needed. As the owner of her gym, she was looking to train less and have more time to run her own business anyway. Another win-win.***

***Question: What do you schedule into your life to ensure you're taking care of your health? Do you respect yourself by protecting that time?***

***6. Challenge others with vulnerable conversations. The conversations I had with my COO, my trainer, and my wife were all uncomfortable for me because I risked the fear of rejection. As entrepreneurs, we experience plenty of rejection, but we also become masterful at setting up our worlds so rejection is limited.***

***To keep ourselves pushing our limits, we have to press up against our comfort zones. Coming from a place of appreciation helped me to approach these difficult conversations with***

**kindness. None of them went perfectly, but I walked away from each of them with great results and also a feeling of pride in how I handled myself.**

**Question: What difficult conversations are you avoiding in your life?**

### ***Small Shifts Add Up to Big Change***

**The most powerful takeaway here is that people like Robin are not superhuman, and they're not just lucky. He put one foot in front of the other, took the risk of leaving a successful law practice, and then set up his life to serve others. And he did it all from a place of gratitude — something all entrepreneurs can achieve.**



Courtesy of  
YEC

**Corey Michael Blake is the founder and president of [Round Table Companies \(RTC\)](#), a storytelling and publishing company that works with thought leaders, CEOs and company founders to create significance and legacy by sharing their wisdom and experiences with the world.**



Courtesy of  
YEC

**The [Young Entrepreneur Council \(YEC\)](#) is an invite-only organization comprised of the world's most promising young entrepreneurs. In partnership with Citi, the YEC recently launched [#StartupLab](#), a free virtual mentorship program that helps millions of entrepreneurs start and grow businesses via live video chats, an expert content library and email**

**lessons.**

---

This article is available online at:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/theyec/2013/09/02/how-to-lead-from-a-place-of-gratitude-six-lessons/>