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# Why You Must Learn How to Overcome Challenging Days



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How you handle challenges is a key indicator of success. Do you walk away, stick your head in the sand, or face it head-on? There is an endless variety of advice about how to overcome challenges, but nobody talks about why you need a plan for doing it.

When you are the business owner, there is nowhere to pass the buck. You are the face of your business. You are the person customers, employees, and partners look to for answers and guidance. The way you respond to stress is both a barometer of how likely you are to overcome

unexpected issues and what people can expect when they work with you.

How you overcome challenging days is **as much about preparedness in action as it is about getting the job done.**

This is where outstanding leaders shine.

The Dyn DDoS attack in 2016 is a phenomenal example of this.

Late one night in October 2016, Dyn's management team was hours away from a multi-million dollar deal with Oracle that would change the company forever. While they waited for the fax with the memorandum of understanding that would formalize the agreement, a hostile player launched a distributed denial-of-service attack on their servers that took down Amazon, Twitter, the BBC, and several more of the web's biggest sites.

This was a major international incident that involved communication with the White House and Homeland Security.

Nobody plans for that kind of undertaking, but Dyn's management team knew how to handle regular issues. The owners stood front and center, providing an open channel of communication with the media, customers, and employees. They already had a strategy for handling smaller outages. Employees knew what had to be done and who was responsible for each task. Everyone did their job, and the company overcame the disruption with their business intact.

Oracle was so impressed with how Dyn handled the incident that instead of losing the sale, one of the biggest organized internet attacks in history helped them seal the deal.

Hopefully, you'll never have to face a test of that magnitude, but there will be days when it feels like it.

The simple fact is, life is challenging. There are an infinite variety of variables that can disrupt your day, and there will be days when it feels like you're getting slammed by all of them.

It doesn't matter whether you're a one-person operation or have fifty employees. **As the business owner, you are the leader. When things go wrong, it's your responsibility to get your head right and manage the situation.**

You can't prepare for every possibility, but you can create an action plan for what to do when things go sideways.

- 1. Take a Break** This is counter-intuitive, especially when you're in a time crunch, but stepping away from a situation is an important step when you're trying to overcome overwhelm. If that's not possible, think about taking a 5-minute timeout to meditate. Meditation is a superb way to help your brain acknowledge all the things demanding your attention and then go so you can focus on the most important tasks.
- 2. Review & Assess** Ask yourself what went wrong and what is salvageable? Once you know the answers to these two questions, it's easier to get back on track.
- 3. Prioritize & Delegate** What has to be done now & what can we do later? Take a page out of Dyn's book and let your team do their job. Even solos can delegate to trusted business colleagues.
- 4. Take Action** Set aside the things you can't control and focus on the things you can. That could mean you commit to touching three things that will keep a project moving forward, or maybe it's focusing on one thing that has to be completed today.
- 5. Communication** The best way to get in front of a situation is to acknowledge it. Keep your staff and key partners in the loop. Let them know what the plan is and solicit their input. If it's something that directly affects a customer, make the call. They may get mad at first, but most people will understand and accept delays if they know you are taking care of them.

None of this is rocket science. If you follow these simple steps, you will put yourself in a position to tackle whatever challenge the day throws at you.

The question is, **do you want to be the person who sits back and complains, or do you want to be the leader who takes ownership and gets things done despite the challenges?**

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