

A Special Technology For Coaches™ Report

“How To Make Technology Work: 5 Secrets For Maximizing Your Tech-Satisfaction”

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Wallpaper your walls.

Go Wild!

**The only thing you can't do is sell it or
change it.**

Special thanks to Seth Godin for this disclaimer language.

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“How To Make Technology Work: 5 Secrets For Maximizing Your Tech-Satisfaction”

The Shoemakers Children Have No Shoes

Most people are great at seeing where other people are going wrong ... and what they could do to correct it ... but we're lousy at seeing it in ourselves. In fact, as coaches and service professionals ... most of us specialize in helping people design supportive environments, of one sort or another. But when it comes to our own environments ... especially our technology environments ... they're sadly lacking. This is one of those '*shoemakers' children going barefoot*'-problems, that seems funny, and relatively harmless at first ... but in truth is a HUGE toleration and energy drain.

Imagine how much more comfortable, productive, and yes, successful you'll be and feel ... if you take the time now, to build your tech environment to really suit your needs.

(Remember the whole point of all of this ... is to automate the things that can be automated so you spend less time doing the stuff you don't like and make more money doing what you love.)

Technology really can save you time and make you money. Seriously – it's possible.

In the past (and occasional present) I've been known to drown a little in technology overwhelm just like you. The difference now is, I have a strategy that helps me navigate the overwhelm ... and a community of resources that I can call on when I need.

Learning In Action

I've taught myself everything I know. (*I majored in theater arts and psychology in college! And while they absolutely prepared me for life ... they didn't exactly prepare me for the traditional job market.*)

And it's not all about how much time or money you invest either. The technology in your business should be invisible ... it should be a solid

foundation on which you can build as big a business as you want. It's about knowing your needs and meeting them – and building both for your business now, and your ideal business of the future.

So how do you do that?

I'm so glad you asked!

The 5 Secrets

“Know Your ‘Big Reason Why’ ... Before You Buy”

Tech Satisfaction Secret #1

I know it's hokey ... and it rhymes ... but seriously, it's important and it's the first step. Before you can know if something is going to meet your needs ... you have to actually understand what your needs are. Sounds simple, right?

What are the biggest challenges and energy drains facing you right now?

Let's take a common example many of us can identify with ... let's say the biggest energy drain in your life right now is a spam-filled email inbox.

Ugh! I hear you!

But we don't have enough information yet. What, specifically, about this is draining for you? We need to know your 'Big Reason Why' before we can find a solution.

Example 1:

John finds his email inbox panics him ... because he feels he's wasting time wading through a bunch of garbage emails to get to the 3 emails that are really important ... he's always convinced that he's missing opportunities that are hiding ... because there's so much garbage it's hard to distinguish the ones he wants to keep ... from the ones he needs to delete.

Example 2:

Keisha, on the other hand, finds her email inbox overwhelming because she finds herself answering the same questions over and over ... and feels like she's wasting time ... The spam is irritating ... but she knows she could reduce it if she had a system that would allow people to email her and get an automatic response.

OK ... now that you've defined the need ... we can look at ways to meet it. And as you can see ... although these people started out with the same problem ... but their 'Big Reason Why' is completely different.

Example 3:

I can't tell you how many times I've heard a coach say, "I need to get a website" ... and when I ask "Why?" ... and they say ... "Because you have to have one!" ... Actually you don't have to have one ... There is no rule. In fact, I suspect that not having a website will soon become a sign of exclusivity ... like having your business phone number unlisted.

In fact, the only things you really *have to have* in order to be a coach is a phone (or office or email – depending on how you actually coach people), a bank account (so people can pay you, if you charge for your services), and a way to track your business, (accounting, schedule, etc.). Everything is else is *'good to have'*, or *'nice to have'*.

OK ... Techie Coach ... climbing down off soapbox now ...

"Know Your Dentistry Quotient"

Tech Satisfaction Secret #2

What's your pain threshold when it comes to technology? Are you someone who likes the challenge of troubleshooting a problem, and figuring out the solution? Or are you a 'Wake me when it's over' kind of consumer.

Also, what's your financial investment tolerance? Do you value software that's one-size-fits-all and easy to use? Or are you more partial to bargain software with a bigger learning curve?

Knowing this is key to your being satisfied at end.

And just to be clear ... one way isn't better or more successful or more productive than the other. There are no 'wrong answers' here ... There are only areas of strength and relative weakness ...

And we want to play to your strengths and interests ... and outsource your weaknesses where possible.

So ... continuing with our spam-filled inbox analogy ... Would you prefer to pay a monthly fee and to have someone else handle it, and just have the important emails sent directly to you?

Or would you prefer to purchase a solution that you set up yourself ... so you can choose the level of spam filtering and what happens to rejected emails (i.e., does the sender get a message back letting them know it's been rejected or not?).

Example 1:

John, whose inbox panics him, really wants to get rid of the whole mess. He wants a solution that completely eliminates the garbage emails in his inbox. He's willing to err on the side of having legitimate people have to email him twice ... as long as it means he doesn't have to make 50 email decisions sifting the garbage from the important email, every flipping work day before 9a.

Example 2:

Keisha, is actually more overwhelmed by doing the same tasks over and over ... rather than being stressed about making the actual decisions. She'd like to find a solution that she can customize and set up to meet her specific needs ... and then once she's set it up ... have it run automatically.

So far you've defined the need, your 'Big Reason Why', and your pain tolerance related to learning curve frustration and price.

“Plays Nicely With Others or Blue Jeans Go With Everything”

Tech Satisfaction Secret #3

Ultimately you want all of your systems to integrate nicely with each other ... keeping the band-aid solutions and the number of hoops you have to jump through to accomplish a task – to a minimum. This doesn't mean that you can't use different programs and use different manufacturers ... just make sure that if you've got the tech equivalent of a DVD player ... you're not coming home with Videotapes ... because you won't be able to play them.

You want to be familiar with what systems you already have in place ... and what formats they work with.

Example 1:

John is very likely to go with a web-hosted hosted solution, which will likely work well with any email system he has already set up.

Example 2:

Keisha will probably opt for a system she installs and runs from her computer, so she needs something that will play nicely with her operating system (Windows or Mac) and what she uses read and file her email (like Outlook or Eudora).

To recap ... we've identified your 'Big Reason Why', your level of technology pain tolerance, and now, the relevant components in your existing technology environment that will need integrate with whatever solution you select.

“What You'll Use vs. What You Want”

Tech Satisfaction Secret #4

You want to make sure you that you're making decisions on what's actually important to you – what you value and you'll use.

Example 1:

John has found two services that both look great.

Company A costs a little less and will only filter his email.

Company B's service not only filters email, but it also includes an online calendar, and a listserv hosting feature where he can set up and host an online discussion group.

Company B is understandably more expensive ... because of all the extra stuff they offer.

The email filters are comparable ... both would do the job ... but Company B's solution looks better because it has so many other features.

The thing is, the other features are only relevant if John is actually interested in having his calendar online and hosting an email discussion group. So far, John hasn't struck me as someone who would enjoy maintaining an online calendar ... and I'm certain he isn't interested in trading a spam-filled inbox with a discussion-list filled inbox. So the 2 value-adds ...actually add no real value for him at all.

Again it's all about what you'll really use.

Example 2:

If Keisha were a Techie Coach client, I'd be inclined to recommend the Norton Anti-Spam utility (assuming she on a Windows system) for her spam problems, and an Auto-Responder/FAQ solution for her other issue.

You can purchase Norton Anti-Spam as a stand-alone product, or as part of an Internet Security/Anti-Virus bundle (which includes a bunch of features, like a firewall, antivirus protection, etc.).

Again, Keisha would need to look at what she'll actually use. If she also needs virus protection, then go for the bundle, but it's just a spam issue, stick with the stand-alone product.

It comes down to ... do you only want the big package because it's bright and shiny and it looks like a great deal, but really isn't that valuable to you?

Stick with what you'll use vs. what you want ... you'll be much more satisfied in the long run.

Example 3:

I have a program that I use to convert audio files from WAV to MP3. The program is really robust, and it can do a lot more than this ... (Like make CD-based Photo Albums and DVDs) ... But I never use the other features. I just use it to convert my audio files.

I have version 6 of this program ... and they now have come out with version 7. I've read all about it. It's much better than version 6. It can do many more wonderful things than the version I currently have.

I *want* version 7.

But here's the deal ... I only use this program to convert my WAV files to MP3s. And version 7 is *not* better than version 6 at doing this. They're exactly the same.

So despite this gnawing feeling I have after reading all the enticing advertising ... telling me that without version 7 ... my life is not complete ...

There's really no reason to upgrade. <*sigh*>

Putting together a tech infrastructure for your small business and making sure you have the tools you need to fulfill your future vision ... is all about laying down the right foundation for yourself. Bells and whistles are add-ins that you can add in later if necessary ... but don't get swayed by them up front ...

Remember, a *working* technology system ... is a *perfect* technology system.

To this point ... we've identified your 'Big Reason Why,' your technology pain tolerance, the relevant components that your solution will need to 'play with', and reminded ourselves to keep our 'eye on the prize' focusing on what you'll use, not the pretty bells and whistles.

“Measure, Compare, Tweak ... Repeat”

Tech Satisfaction Secret #5

Following Tech Satisfaction Strategy 1, you bought with a specific intention. You wanted this technology to do something specific for you.

So here's where we make sure it's actually doing it.

Once you've selected a solution, and implemented it ... you want to go back and make sure that once you're using it, it is actually meeting your needs – the ones you intended to get met in the first place.

If not, and you still have the same needs, this may be time to tweak your system a little more – until your needs actually *are* being met.

Now, your needs will change over time ... and you don't have to stay with what you thought you needed before, but now realize you don't. Changing your mind is absolutely allowed.

This key is really about continually calibrating your vision ... looking at where you are now with where you want to end up. And correcting your systems and course of action if necessary.

So in our examples ...

Example 1:

John has selected Company A, the service that provides spam filtering (and only spam filtering) for a monthly fee. John sent them a list of approved email addresses (the ones he actually wanted to hear from) ... and now the filter only lets email messages from those addresses actually get through.

Everybody else gets a response message telling them that their email has been rejected because the email address was not recognized ... and to please contact John directly if you'd like to be added to his list of approved email senders."

It's probably worded much nicer ... but that's the general gist of what it says.

Now that the system is set up ... John will look again at what end result he wanted to achieve ... his 'Big Reason Why' ... and tweak anything that still isn't quite right.

In fact in John's case ... he'll probably spend some time educating his clients and colleagues, about his system ... letting them know about his new spam filter service ... and to be sure to email him from email address he has on file for them.

Example 2:

As we mentioned before, Keisha has selected 2 separate solutions... Norton Anti-Spam, and a pseudo-auto responder system.

Norton Anti-Spam let's Keisha choose the level of filter she wants ... and also allows her to set up her own 'allowed email' list if she wants.

The pseudo-auto responder system Keisha chose uses the signature feature built in to her Microsoft Outlook. This allows her to write each kind of response only once, (solving the problem of writing the same emails over and over again) and save them as email signatures.

Now when she gets an email asking a question she's answered previously ... she selects the email signature she created with the response ... and it writes the email for her.

This allows Keisha to still give a 'personal touch' that was important to her ... while still solving the repetition problem.

Again, what we're focused on here is making sure your end results are consistent with what you intended. And taking corrective action when necessary.

Checks and Balances

All systems need checks and balances and this next bonus secret is the granddaddy of them all. It's your quick barometer to know whether it's working or not ...

Curious?

“If It Overwhelms You ... It’s Not Supporting You ... Get Help – Or Get Another Solution”

Bonus Tech Satisfaction Secret #6:

Ironically, one of the main things I do as a Technology Coach ... is talk people out of buying technology ... specifically the wrong technology for them. The whole idea with technology is that it’s a supplemental environment specifically designed to support you ... in your business ... in your passion ... in what you do best.

And if it’s not supporting you ... something needs to change.

The challenge is ... many people find technology environments overwhelming, confusing, and isolating. So it’s hard to for them to figure out whether what’s needed is just a small change ... or whether to scrap the whole thing ... and build all new (better) systems.

This is just one of many ways that working with a technology coach can save you loads of wasted time and buckets of money.

Working with a technology coach allows you to leverage the coach’s expertise combined with your own natural strengths so you can:

- ✓ identify shifts that need to be made in your current technology systems, and/or
- ✓ discover if additional technologies are available to further your vision and business goals (and if so, which ones are right for you)
- ✓ help you shorten your learning curve and learn what you need to know ... (with none of the extra fluff that you get from “how-to” books and adult ed classes)
- ✓ provide an ongoing supportive environment so you can confidently move forward, and know if you stumble ... there’s someone who’s there to help you regain your footing.

Doesn’t that sound great? (Man, I wish I’d had a technology coach when I was starting out!)

So now you’ve identified your ‘Big Reason Why,’ understood your technology pain tolerance, noted the relevant components that your solution will ‘play with’, focused on what you’ll use, and measured and tweaked the systems so your end result matches the intention you

started with, and double checked to make sure you're not drowning in overwhelm here, and got some support of you were.

Now all that's left is ...

CONGRATULATIONS!

You're all set!

You and your technology may now live happily ever after.

About Techie Coaching

If you could only do one thing to expand your business in the next month ... don't you already have an idea of what you'd do?

Of course you do.

So why aren't you doing it? Ah, yes, this is the Million Dollar Question.

It's usually because of one of the following 2 reasons:

- 1) You don't know how to do what you know you should be doing.
- 2) You do know how ... but you don't quite feel comfortable yet.

Well, at Techie Coach we offer services for folks at both ends of this spectrum.

Problem #1: Don't Know How

Solution: Techie Coach 'How-To' Workshops

For the first group ... we offer online Technology 'How-To' Workshops to help you acquire the skills and knowledge you need. The most effective way to learn something new ... is to have someone show you how it's done ... and then practice it yourself.

Therefore ... these workshops offer:

An Online Learning Environment

So you can learn at home on your own computer ... which is, after all, the same environment where you'll actually be using the skills. This increases your comprehension, and saves you time and money.

An Interactive and Visual Learning Environment

You can ask questions by chat or voice, resize the learning environment to suit your needs, and the ability to actually see, in real time, what we're talking about. We not only talk about how ... we actually show you how.

A No-Fluff, Adult Learning Approach

As an adult learner ... what you're looking to do is to acquire a new skill ... as a means to end. We understand this ... and have designed our workshops to give you what you really need to know ... with none of the fluff you typically find in 'how-to' classes and books.

2-3 Sessions Each Week

Not knowing how is a short-term problem that needs a short term solution ... so our multi-session workshops typically meet every other day ... so you can quickly get what you need ... and still have time to integrate and implement what you're learning.

For more information on upcoming Technology 'How-To' Workshops go to www.TechieCoach.com or contact workshops@techiecoach.com.

Problem #2: Do Know How, But Still Not Comfortable
Solution: Technology Mastermind Coaching Groups

If you already know how to do what you want to be doing ... but you're still not quite comfortable putting it into action ... then more information won't help ...

What will help is building more support into your environment ... and the best way to do that ... is a Mastermind Coaching Group.

See the thing is ... taking new action ... can feel like a huge risk. And while it's really important to have the support of your family and friends ... your business partners and even your coach ...

Nothing compares to the experience of having a group of your peers, all extraordinary, talented people in their own right, completely believe in you ... and support you in taking action and moving forward.

It's literally the difference between walking uphill in direct opposition to a strong wind ... and having that wind at your back.

The hill's still there. But it's so much easier when you have some support. In a Technology Mastermind Coaching Group you will:

Develop and Implement Your Own Action Plan

Coaching groups are all about action ... you decide what you're going to do ... and when you're going to do it. It's a personalized approach designed to get you what you want and need.

Take The Action You Need To Take

Now that's you've got the action plan ... it's time to move forward. And your group will have your back the entire time. If everything falls apart ... we'll be there to pick you and help put things back together. And if everything works out great ... better than you expected (which is, frankly, what's really holding most of us back) ... we'll be there celebrate with you and cheer you on.

Learn From Others And Share Resources

One of the best things about participating in the group is that you have access to each other's experiences and resource networks. This one aspect alone can save you huge amounts of time and money. It's also a really wonderful experience to be able to share the benefit of your knowledge and expertise the group as well.

2 Sessions Each Month

This is an action approach ... so 2 sessions a month gives you enough support to move forward ... without being too much and getting in your way. And you can always supplement the group sessions with an individual session if you'd like something more.

For more information on upcoming Mastermind Coaching Groups go to www.TechieCoach.com or contact groups@techiecoach.com.

About Techie Coach Beth Lyons

Like many coaches, I did not take a linear path to coaching as a career. I studied theater, music and psychology in college, and then went on to a successful first career as an IT Director for professional associations. A Crohns Disease diagnosis in 1995, forced me to reinvent my life/work situation to support a healthier less 'stress-monkey' lifestyle.

At first I thought I really needed to leave the Techie aspect behind, and strike out in a completely new direction (hence, Kitchen Table Coaching). But as I started participating more in the coaching community at large, I saw a real need for down-to-earth technical support and information for coaches.

With over 15 years of experience helping the not-so-technical among us get comfortable with learn, and then master the technologies they need and want to use, I knew that I was in a perfect position to fill this need (hence, Techie Coach).

Exploring new technologies and how they can be used to expand learning experiences, communication, productivity and profits ... is literally what I do for fun. My philosophies and techniques are self-tested; I find experience is an excellent educator.

I have a gift for seeing implementation and 'best-use' strategies, and communicating them in 'plain english'.

My intention is that you get a strategy, product or knowledge that you can use immediately, and find an ongoing supportive environment to help you realize your wildest business dreams.

Sound good? I'd love to hear from you.

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