

Personal Success and the Power of Reserves

By Mack Arrington, CNP, CPVA, CPBA
Business and Personal Coach

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336.856.1600
thecoach@mackarrington.com
www.mackarrington.com

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What if you could have more than you needed of everything you need? What if you could also have more of what you want? Getting needs met allows us to be drawn, not driven, by what we truly want, not need, out of life. Once we identify our real needs, we can then move to meet them with the power of reserves.

Needs are those things we must have to be able to operate our lives. The workplace is full of aggressive and/or difficult people using their jobs to fulfill their needs, often at your expense and perhaps even the expense of their own business or careers.

Our needs drive us, often in negative and costly ways, until they are met—and they will be met any way they can. Needs can cost us sales, time, money, relationships, freedom, respect and more by sabotaging our best efforts to succeed. Getting needs met is not optional. And needy people tend to attract needy people.

Take an honest look at the needs that drive you—money, success, relationships or _____? What pushes your buttons? What do you find yourself pressing to get? Look beneath the surface, identify the need and see where you could use a reserve. For example, if you're driven to make a lot of money, is it because you need status or security? If you get frustrated and angry because people don't understand you, down deep do you simply need to be heard?

Try to identify 8-10 core needs. Examples include success, appreciation, respect, love, understanding, abundance, freedom, strength, stability, adventure, etc. Note those that make you uncomfortable—is a deeper need attached? Also, make distinctions between needs and wants: you need transportation, you want an SUV. As part of the process, try asking a couple of close friends and associates what they see as your needs.

Once you identify your core needs, pick three and start planning how to meet them outside of work. Needs that clash on the job generate high stress, and can drop a win/win opportunity into a lose/lose disaster in a matter of seconds. Ever seen a sales situation or business meeting where one's need for power clashed with another's need for respect? It isn't pretty.

If you're a competitive type, it's risky to meet your competitive needs using your customers or colleagues. Instead, try engaging in a sport or game away from

work to fill the need. Clearly let other participants know you're using this as a competitive outlet and you expect the same from them.

If you need stability, you can't trust the changing workplace. It's better to implement actions and structures elsewhere such as developing an inner circle of friends who are reliable and trustworthy, or cutting expenses to live well within your income for stability.

In the examples above, note that a competitive outlet is the beginning of a competitive reserve. Reliable friends and a healthy budget help build a reserve of stability. Start where you are, find ways to practice, and then build super reserves to cover your needs. A reserve of time can come from finding ways to make fewer commitments. A reserve of trust builds from keeping the commitments you make. Find a friend who really listens to you to build a reserve for being heard. Save an extra 5% of your paycheck towards building a money reserve. Buy a case of toilet paper... (super reserve).

Imagine what your life could be like when you have reserves to meet your needs. You can come from a position of strength, giving you more power to walk away from unhealthy or unprofitable situations. You behave in ways that are more at ease, not driven or stressed by your needs. You're not as apt to fall victim to the neediness of others. You attract people at a need-less level. You're able to give without being drained of your own success and joy in life.

Along the way, develop other areas that flow into meeting your needs. This includes goal-setting to focus your energies, cleanup of physical and mental clutter that distracts you, not putting up with situations and people that sap your resources and setting better boundaries that raise your standards and attract success.

OK, admittedly this is a sneaky way of getting you into a process of self-awareness. But once you're aware of your needs, you can then move in healthy and constructive ways to meet them, build reserves and position yourself to get what you really want out of life. Start with the question, "What do I really, really need?" Eventually, you should be able to answer the question, "What do you really, really want?" without your needs really, really getting in the way.

Mack Arrington, CNP, CPVA, CPBA is a Business and Personal Coach in Greensboro. His practice includes coaching people to increase sales, time management, career transitions, communication, entrepreneurial issues, project management and how to have balance, more fun and better relationships. He invites you to send coaching questions to him at 336-856-1600 or email thecoach@triad.rr.com.