

7 NAVY SEAL SAYINGS THAT WILL KEEP YOUR TEAM MOTIVATED

By Brent Gleeson



A sleep at your desk? Read this and get going. Whether you are an entrepreneur, working in corporate America, or building a start-up, it is imperative to continually seek new ways to stay inspired and driven. Being a self-starter is a fantastic quality, but we are all human and get distracted by the minutiae of our day-to-day responsibilities.

Here are seven Navy SEAL sayings I keep top of mind while moving toward achieving my personal and professional goals.

1. THE ONLY EASY DAY WAS YESTERDAY.

This is one of the more well-known sayings of the SEALs. When constantly pushing yourself to excel, there will be challenges that make every day a battle.

As an entrepreneur, this concept keeps me motivated, because it puts things into perspective. If you wake up knowing that every day will pose new challenges and that you are ready to face them head-on, you will be well equipped to achieve any goal you set.



2. GET COMFORTABLE BEING UNCOMFORTABLE.

One exercise in SEAL training is “surf torture.” You link arms with your classmates and stand, sit, or lie in the frigid Pacific Ocean until your body reaches the early stages of hypothermia. During the initial phases of training, you do this daily.



Then you cover yourself from head to toe in sand and stay that way for the rest of the day. You might follow this with running the obstacle course, weapons training, or classroom time, but you are expected to push the discomfort aside and stay focused on the task at hand.

There have been many times as a business owner that I have been in very uncomfortable situations. That could be a difficult conversation with a team member, a lawsuit, or dealing with a demanding board member. Discomfort comes in many forms. But the more you embrace that as a reality, the wider your comfort zone becomes. This boosts confidence and provides the tools for facing even larger challenges down the road. So as we like to say, “Embrace the suck.”

3. DON'T RUN TO YOUR DEATH.

In the SEAL teams, this is not a metaphor. When conducting raids that put you in close-quarters combat scenarios, restraint is often the best approach. Once you breach and gain entry to the

target, being slow and methodical often wins the race. Hence the phrase, “Don’t run to your death.”

Knowing when not to act is as important as knowing when to push forward. Restraint is crucial for business leadership. This is especially important if you are running or managing a rapidly growing business. Growth is fantastic, but smart growth is even better. Have a good plan, slow down, grow intelligently, and never, ever, run to your death.

4. HAVE A SHARED SENSE OF PURPOSE.

A shared sense of purpose is hard to continually communicate. The economy changes. New technologies emerge. Employees come and go. There are many moving parts, which is why it’s critical for the leadership to always be communicating the reality of the situation and what the “win” will look like when you get there. And, most important, what everyone’s role is in helping the team achieve that goal.

5. MOVE, SHOOT, COMMUNICATE.

As a SEAL, you must be able to perfectly execute these three functions to ensure mission success. Move: You have to be able to work as one well-maintained mechanism with the ability to have constant fluid motion. Shoot: That's self-explanatory. Communicate: All good teams have frequent, open, transparent communication. When the bullets start flying, everyone needs to know what the next move is.

The same philosophies apply in the fast-paced world of business and entrepreneurship. The team has to have the ability to communicate effectively to adapt to changing environments. Which takes us to the next saying.

6. NO PLAN SURVIVES FIRST CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY.

This is from Helmuth von Moltke, a German field marshal from World War I. Similar is this sentiment from Mike Tyson: "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the face." That is why preparation and training are even more critical than planning.

When you have a team of the right people doing the right things, they will know how to adapt when the you-know-what hits the fan. And they will adapt with composure, not panic. This is why ongoing training and professional development are so important.

7. ALL IN, ALL THE TIME.

I wanted to close with another one of the more well-known SEAL sayings. Just being a good performer won't cut it to make it into the SEAL teams. You have

to give everything you have just to make it to the next day. Just like managing stress, you have to focus on one piece at a time. So don't worry about the test you have in the afternoon. Your goal is to make it to breakfast. Then lunch, and so on.

Whether you are building a startup, leading a team in a large organization, being an active parent, battling cancer, or training for a triathlon, it's got to be all or nothing. Mediocrity and moderation won't get the job done. Give everything you do everything you've got.

My heart welled with pride when I heard my 8-year-old son's flag football coach give the team one last piece of advice in the last couple minutes of its championship Super Bowl game. He said, "Now is the time to dig deep. Leave everything you've got on that field. If you do that, win or lose, you will be the champions!" So whether you are 8 or 58, get comfortable being uncomfortable, get well prepared, and be all in, all the time.

About the Author

I am a passionate speaker, entrepreneur, Navy SEAL combat veteran, and the Co-founder and Chief Marketing Officer at Internet Marketing Inc. (IMI), one of the fastest growing digital marketing agencies in the country. IMI specializes in analytics and data-driven integrated online marketing strategies for medium and enterprise-level clients. IMI was recently named #185 on the prestigious Inc. 500 list of the fastest growing private companies in the country. I earned a degree in finance from Southern Methodist University, studied English and History at Oxford University, and have a Master's Degree in real estate finance and development from the University of San Diego. I'm also a public speaker and TV personality, recently appearing on NBC's reality series 'Stars Earn Stripes'.

