



Troublemaker School

Set big, bodacious, change-the-world goals, then believe that you can accomplish them. Allow no limits to the audacity. It's essential that you must believe that you can achieve a goal, or you will never get there. To set a new world record, an athlete must be able to 'see' himself doing the thing that others regard as impossible.

Study the great troublemakers of the world: Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Churchill, Lincoln, Franklin, Washington, George Marshall, Robert E. Lee, etc. They were all people-shrewd, they all used their intellect in dealing with people, and they were all masters of communications.

State your case in simple, easy-to-understand phrases, like headlines in an advertising campaign. Learn how to create memorable phrases, words that will forever stay in the minds of your listeners. These phrases are your most powerful tools.

Pick your fights wisely. Only get into fights that you have a good chance of winning and that are worth fighting, because you will pay a price. Then don't wear gloves. Beat the living shit out of your opponent.

The conduct of a dispute is the art of persuasion in a confrontational situation. To be effective, your arguments must always resonate with the average person, not the hotheads who already are believers. Keep emotion out of your arguments, because people always side with the calmest voice, even if that person is wrong. Every lawyer knows that the most dangerous adversary is the perfect gentleman, so base your arguments on logic, and refrain from personal at-

tacks or name-calling. Ghandi said "When you are right, you have no need to be angry. When you are wrong, you have no right to be angry." Never argue with an idiot.

Most fights are won by out-thinking the other party. You have grey matter between your ears—use it!

Make yourself into an unstoppable force. If someone gets in your way, go around them or run over them. Do it kindly if you can, ruthlessly if you must.

Democracy evolved by shifting power from a few people to a larger group, from the king to the noblemen, then to the common man, then women's suffrage, etc. In each case, there were four stages: (1) the people in power said the people who were proposing the change were crazy, (2) the people in power said the people who were proposing the change were dangerous, (3) the people in power went silent for a while, and (4) the people in power came out and said they were in favor of it all along. The lesson: you always want people to think you're a little crazy because that way they underestimate you.

Be willing to be hated. People who cause change to happen are routinely hated by other people, even if they like the change you bring about. It's part of the process, and you must accept it as a price you will pay.

Turn to people you respect often for advice. Listen to them. If you're a man, listen to the women in your life—they've got life figured out a lot better than men, and they rarely let their ego get in the way of their thinking.

See criticism as a friend and never take it personally. Whenever I'm on the receiving end of it, I always remind myself that criticism is a form of showing interest in a subject and that you can learn a lot more from your critics than you can from your good buddies. Criticism is easy to take when it's offered by someone you hardly know and it's about a product or 'thing' that you are working on. It's very, very difficult to take when it's offered by someone close to you or involves yourself as the object of the criticism. If you're conducting a dispute, you are the product and the 'thing' that must be improved to make yourself more effective, so work hard at not taking it personally. Lincoln always saw himself in this way and never took criticism personally. It is a sign of greatness.

Find out who you are and be yourself. No one ever achieved greatness through imitation.

Know when to stop. If you win, don't declare victory. If you can't win, accept it and move on. Remember Churchill's words: "In war, resolution. In defeat, defiance. In victory, magnanimity. In peace, good will."

Have a plan of action of what you will do if you win, and that you might not be in that picture, because often the best revolutionaries do not make good managers or leaders in time of peace.

As you start to win, you will gain power. Power can go to your head, you will become arrogant, you will begin to abuse your power, and you will fall. The more power you get, the more gently you should use it.

Alfred Scott

Alfred Scott got his start as a troublemaker at an early age. As a small boy at Bible school, between sessions of singing "There's a joy, joy, joy down in my heart" and "What a friend we have in Jesus", he hurled a rock at a passing pickup truck and, to his surprise, broke the windshield. He raced into hiding in the woods above the church and waited until the truckdriver had departed the scene. And thus he learned a basic tenet of troublemaking: Never accept responsibility for your actions.

He's been making trouble ever since. His big, bodacious, change-the-world goal is to run AutoCAD out of business. The way he sees it is that AutoDesk is the fourth largest software company, doesn't listen to anyone (you can't even talk to anyone there) and has a typical big-company bureaucracy that kills innovation. So he figures he's got them beat already, and it's just a matter of time before everyone else finds this out.