

Everybody lies ... and
we americans like it.
no, really.

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Just like countless other Americans, I have been actively following the presidential election and have concluded that all current candidates for president are liars or, as some people prefer to say, “ fabricators.” My belief? The candidates are systematically fabricating reality to fit the message their audience wants to hear.

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Are you familiar with the *Tampa Bay Times* Pulitzer Prize-winning project? PolitiFact checks to see if a candidate is telling the truth or not. The exceptional number of fabrications during this political cycle has rendered PolitiFact almost irrelevant.

Witness: Of the site's " Pants on Fire!" rated lies, just since the beginning of this election year, Clinton has logged five as of this writing), and Trump, 36(). (Last night's debate had not yet been analyzed.)

Last year, PolitiFact Trump the winner of its 2015 Lie of the Year award, noting that the competition wasn't even close. Of the 77 Trump statements Politifact checked for that year, 76 percent were determined to fall into its " lies" assessment category.

but you get the picture. Of course, the current candidates aren't the only ones who have been nabbed with telling lies. So have presidents Obama, Bush 1 and 2, Clinton, Reagan, Kennedy, Johnson and Truman. As far back as you go, politicians have lied to the populace -- so, apparently, we Americans must like it.

Politics is not the only place where facts are ignored. Think about the internet. Many of the stories that go viral are later proven to be false. Pictures also go viral and are proven to be doctored or "Photoshopped." Does this slow the spread of the picture or story? Nope. True or false, if people like it, they will share it with other folks who feel the same way.

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The same thing happens every day in our personal lives, in a multitude of ways. Lovers lie to each other. Friends lie to you, also. Your employer lies to you. You are surrounded by lies every day. Why do we allow this? First, we may want to avoid hurting a person's feelings.

But, more importantly, we all like to believe that our preconceived ideas are correct. The philosopher Nietzsche said that, " People prefer illusion to truth." When a fabrication conforms to our predetermined view of the world, we wrap our arms around it. In essence, we think we can make the illusion true if we believe in it enough.

As , I see people doing this all the time with their choice of franchise systems. A few weeks ago, a couple called me to ask my opinion of a particular franchisor. They were interested in a company that as yet had no locations, no track record and what I regarded as poor leadership. I explained that this would not be a wise investment.

They went ahead, anyway.

Later, I asked them why they made that decision and they shared lots of reasons why the facts did not matter and why they had " felt" things would
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be different for them. I had a similar experience with another couple three months ago. These two were looking at a large, well-known franchise system with an exceptionally high failure rate in an industry that is shrinking. I shared the facts. They did exactly the opposite and joined the system -- anyway.

The fact that these two couples did not follow my advice is irrelevant. I understand that people will make their own decision and I am okay with that. However, refusing to acknowledge the facts is a much bigger problem and almost always leads to disappointment.

In short, it is critical that you don't lie to *yourself*. Those who seek confirmation and affirmation instead of the unadulterated truth when they explore business opportunities are exponentially more likely to struggle.

If you are going to be a successful business owner or investor, it is critical that you separate fact and fiction. Successful businesspeople will accept fabrications in many areas of their lives, but when it comes to investing, they quickly put their personal feelings to the side and seek out reality.

They may start out by "liking" or "disliking" a business idea, but if the facts are different from their preconceived ideas, they immediately evolve their thinking. In other words, when the information does not support the illusion, they follow the facts.

We all live in our imaginary worlds and listen to people who support our perception of reality. However, if you want to be successful as a *business* owner, you need to be able to separate fact from fabrication and be willing to adjust as reality changes.

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In regard to our politicians, they will stop lying to us when we decide to stop believing their lies.