



A NEW DIRECTION IN INVESTMENT

"What new direction in investment have you made in developing You, Yourself Incorporated?"

An interesting question to ask your corporate clients. Your next question could be based on the observation that most corporations invest heavily in "systems" to run their businesses, and rarely do any of these systems develop the individuals that work within the company.

"Before one can truly review this issue, one should ask the question, "Who is ultimately responsible for the development of the individual? Is it the parents, who helped create the individual, the school or educational institution which taught the individual, the organisation which employs the individual or, perhaps, the individual them self?"

The answer to this question is primarily based on how you feel about the word 'responsibility'. Experience tells us that many people would prefer to transfer the responsibility for their success or failure to someone else. A smaller number would prefer to transfer only their failures onto someone else, and only a handful of people are prepared to take total responsibility for causing the effect on their lives.

"If we view as significant, the disastrous effect of the stock market crash on business, then why not view an epidemic of depression in our personal lives as being of equal, if not greater, significance?"

"We have all heard the word 'hype' as used in conjunction with the word 'motivation'. Some of us will realise that hype is almost impossible to sustain, whereas 'real' motivation, which is said to come from within, is nearly always sustainable. Perhaps hype is of greater value to people who wish to transfer the responsibility for the effects on their lives to someone else. Someone else is needed to hype me up, whereas the real success in business and in private life comes to those who have got into the driving seat of their existence and have taken full responsibility for their future.

"Knowing what to do when you are in the driving seat is what separates success from failure, and if you combine a fear of success with low self-esteem then failure is guaranteed. If you wake up in the morning feeling that today could be a disaster, then you will certainly realise, by at the very latest midday, that you have severely under-estimated the level of disaster.

"I wonder if people realise that it's possible to accept that your success today is in your own hands and, as such, you are responsible for it.

Let's say you travel a huge amount in your profession. People may ask "how do you feel about the amount of travelling your business requires you to do"? The answer is very simple. Tell people you really enjoy the travelling, because you have choice about whether you enjoy your travelling or not. As such, you would take full responsibility for your feelings towards your travel. While writing this article I must say to you, the reader, that there was nothing else in the world that I'd rather do than write this article for the "Personal Success". You see, my reason for making this statement is simple: while writing this article there was nothing else in the world that I could do! The choice was mine and I chose to enjoy it.

"You see, many of us - and even some of you reading this article - will always want to be somewhere else than where you are. So it doesn't really matter what happens to you; it will never be right. You will blame other people and your existence will revolve around the two words, 'if only ...' 'If only I were taller, fatter or smaller, life could be a lot better. And if only my parents were better, tougher, more compassionate and understanding, I wouldn't be the way I am.'

"I once read a poem entitled, 'If I Had To Live My Life Over'. This poem was written by a woman who was dying of cancer at the super age of 85. For those of you who run your lives with the words 'if only...', perhaps you could use some selected components of this poem to review your position in life. Are you making things happen? Are you watching things happen? Or are you constantly saying, 'My God, what happened?'

"The poem, If I Had To Live My Life Over, makes the following critical observations.

"If I had to live my life over, I would make more mistakes next time.
I'd relax, I'd limber up, I would be sillier than I have been this time.
I would perhaps have more actual troubles, but I certainly would have fewer imaginary ones."

"Perhaps it's worth taking responsibility for the fact that you may choose your problems. In fact, it is perhaps fair to say that some people have so many imaginary problems they have little or no time for the real issues in life. The poem went on to say:

"You see, I'm one of those people who lives sensibly and sanely hour after hour, day after day.

Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had to do it over again, I would have more of them. In fact, I'd try to have nothing else, just moments, one after another, instead of trying to be so many years ahead of each day."

"Perhaps many of us run our lives so much by the future that we lose the enjoyment of each and every moment. On the other hand many of us so run our lives by the past, that when we confront a menu in a Chinese restaurant we will nearly always choose the food we have previously tasted. The danger is obvious. You may never get a chance to taste the greatest dish on that menu because your past won't allow you to.

So the question of responsibility for investing in developing yourself lies with every individual and probably every business because the greatest asset any business has is its people and it is not possible to ever equate the value of people in a business to the value of its business systems. The systems will only ever be as good as the people who choose to make it happen.

It is fabulous from where I sit, to see a great desire by businesses in the 90's to review and question their commitment to their people and to encourage the development of the individual both collectively and personally. The definition of the word motivation makes it all immensely clear. It is **"the incitement of people to action"** and I trust that reading this article will incite all of you to get back in the driving seat for the rest of your life.