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At the time of this interview, Hunter Wood was the Director of Business Development at Digital Century Capital, a New York City based investment firm specializing in the technology sector. Hunter

professional

What are top 3 principles for success in your industry?

Probably the most significant character trait that I've had to embrace is endurance and perseverance, which are almost synonymous. But basically there were many steps along the way or many obstacles along the way where you feel like giving up. Where this is beyond me. I'm not really fitting into this groove. I'm facing all kinds of challenges that I didn't expect. So I've had to suffer through, stick through those times and fortunately, in most cases, I've come out on the other side having learned and adjusted and grown and expanded so that I was able to succeed and achieve in things such as raising capital. Dealing with clients, cold calling, meetings, giving seminars and presentations, in all these things you have to learn the skills. You have to learn confidence, courage. You have to learn your product. You have to be an expert in the financial markets. There's all kinds of data you have to package together in order to be well presented. It takes years to put together all the knowledge and the skills sets where you're comfortable dealing with almost any type of sophisticated institutional or very wealthy investor. I went through a period where I was selling a product that was very, very hard to sell. The product wasn't doing well and investors weren't buying it. I didn't know because I couldn't sell it. The results weren't there. It was a very discouraging period and you wonder if it's ever going to end. But, in fact, it did end because I found a new product which I thought was attractive to the market place and it sold like wildfire. The product has been good, but I've also done a much better job selling it. And it's raised hundreds of millions. You really have to keep trying, to keep persevering until you latch onto your niche.

Who are your heroes and why?

One of my heroes in life is a man named Joshua Yu. He is a dear friend of our family. He is a Chinese man who for 21 years was imprisoned by the Communists in China. I think it was the 1950s through the 1970s ... early '70s. He was imprisoned because of his faith in Jesus Christ. Seems shocking to us as Americans to imagine that, but the fact is, he survived 21 years of starvation, of freezing winters, never enough warmth, never enough food, very hard labor that actually killed. Over 50 percent of the inmates died in the first year from the hard labor. But Joshua is one of my heroes. He's a friend of mine today and I look at his life and I try to comprehend how this man could withstand that kind of suffering, only to be faithful to the God he believes in, when it was so easy to renounce his faith and be set free. I found in Joshua a man with such principle. Something he was living for that was so real to him, so strong and powerful to him, that he would literally give his life for it. Very few of us in this life find something that we have so much passion about that we would not only be willing to live for it, but we would be willing to die for it. Frankly I try to ask myself, what in my life am I willing to die for? I know things I'm willing to live for. That's why Joshua is my hero because although he did live, he was near death many times during those years and yet he endured.

What are the 2-3 most valuable lessons you learned in your career?

The first lesson for any young man or young woman to learn is the principle, slow down and get there faster. The fact is young people, including myself, want instant gratification. We want immediate success. This is the age of the dot coms where young people are striking it rich overnight. It's almost a generation that feels its entitled to success. But I have found that the road is long and the journey is hard. Therefore I've tried to slow down, knowing I'll probably get there faster if I slow down. We're driven by this desire to want it now and to want it immediately: success, achievement, status, position, power, all of these things. That's what creates such disconnect and a lack of peace and a frustration and a disappointment in the



lives of young people. The other lesson I've learned is youth shall be served, generally roasted. I have had my share of roastings, over the past eight years and youth is a period of learning difficult and painful lessons. I definitely feel I've had to earn my stripes and be willing to humble myself and appreciate the wisdom of those who are older than me and have gone on before me.

How did you get involved in the career you are in?

My interest in finance started in college. Actually it probably started before college. I grew up with a grandfather who taught the whole family about the stock market and the importance of the family preserving capital and knowing how to grow capital for future generations. My grandfather was an avid investor in the stock market as well as oil and gas and real estate. My parents were investors in the stock market and I always had a natural interest and inclination to the financial markets. Then in college, I read a book called "Market Wizards" and that is really what set me off. "Market Wizards" is a book about very famous traders and investors who have achieved great performance records. When you read the stories, they're very inspiring. After I read "Market Wizards" I said, "This is the industry that I want to be in." I may never be a market wizard or maybe ... who knows. But I enjoy the challenge and the excitement of the industry.

p e r s o n a l

How do you define success? How has your definition evolved?

Success in this life can only be defined by understanding that there is a next life. In other words, there is such a thing as eternal life and therefore, certainly success in this life has to be understood in the context of what comes after this. If this life is all there is and I'm only living for 70 years and if I'm fortunate maybe more, then of course if there's nothing after this, then maybe you define success in this life by wealth. Maybe you define it by possessions. Maybe you define it by power. Maybe you define it by beauty. But if there is another life and there is an eternity, then my perspective of success in this life is totally altered. Now if success is only defined by material possessions, then everybody's wanting. Because there's always somebody richer. There's always somebody more powerful. There's always somebody who does something greater. But the fact is God has given me in this life all I can ask for. I'm not in need and I'm not in want. Therefore, I think you have to consider those things when defining success. Success, to me, is if I had a life that was balanced and whole. If I become obsessed with any one area, like money or my career, which are probably the two that men, especially young men, would gravitate toward. If I become obsessed with any particular area, then I think I lose a proper understanding of success. But if I can have a balanced life in terms of my faith, in my relationship with God, my marriage, my family, my children, my professional life, my career, being a good steward with my finances that God's given me, being a faithful friend and building great relationships and having fun and enjoying life, if I can live a balanced life in those areas, where my life is touching all of those areas but it's not consumed with any one of them, then I have a success in life.

My life is already (good job, cars, girlfriend, money). Faith in God may work for you but why do I need him?

No matter how good your life is at the moment ... if you have any experience in life and you have any sort of long-term track record ... you know that these periods of prosperity and happiness don't last forever. The fact is, we're getting older. Every day we get a day older and we are heading for a sure end. So it's fine if people want to go through their life ignoring God. For a season of time that will work. But the day will come when all of a sudden you realize, oh, my gosh. I'm balding. Oh, my gosh, I'm getting fat. Oh, my gosh, money doesn't make me so happy anymore. Oh, my gosh, I don't have meaningful relationships in my life. Oh, my gosh, I've ruined three marriages. Ultimately it catches up and that's the day when you realize God is our hope. It may take some longer than others. But the fact is we are all guaranteed a certain end in this life. And meaning will not be found apart from recognizing our mortality in light of God's immortality. So there's not a whole lot I can say to someone who has a perfect life. I'm happy for them. Great for them. But the day is coming when God will be needed.

s p i r i t u a l



How has God changed your life? How has your choice of faith in God changed your life?

It was really about 11 years ago that I woke up, if you will, to a real and desperate need for God in my life. It was in college and it came because I reached a point in my life where I realized that I had a lot of sins. I don't need to describe them all to you right now, but I reached a point where I realized I had addictions or habits that were controlling me. In other words, it was not fun and games. Whatever the sins might be, these things actually possessed power over my life and if I wanted to stop, I couldn't. I tried to stop and I couldn't. That's when I became scared and realized that if I didn't have a power greater than myself, I was without hope. And that's when I turned to God for strength in overcoming bad habits in my life. It was a process of time, and slowly but surely, God gave me freedom. Whether that's drinking or cursing or any type of immorality, God did indeed set me free.

How does your faith help you in your professional life?

I've been forced to grow in my faith. Life seems to have this way of always putting a little bit more pressure on you than before. Our faith is almost in a sense forced to expand and grow, and to learn how to overcome new obstacles and challenges. I definitely, over the last 11 years, can look back and see, maybe not on a month-by-month basis, but a year-by-year basis, what God has been doing in my life to nudge me and push me towards a growing faith. I can see where my faith has grown in many areas. It's been a vital key to certainly whatever I've accomplished, both professionally and personally and spiritually. One of my favorite scriptures is in Hebrews. It says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." What I have really learned from that particular scripture is that God really desires faith from His children. We all tend to think that God wants us to perform rituals or make these kinds of sacrifices and so forth ... and those things have their place, but ultimately God is after faith from His children. In my life I know many times it's much easier for me to offer some type of rote prayer or sacrificial service rather than truly believe that God is working in this circumstance, even though it's painful for me or maybe not painful. Faith is the key.

How has God /faith changed your perspective on fulfillment, significance and success

I don't closely associate spiritual faith with volatility in a financial market. When you're an investor, you have to have an investment process. And your investment process really dictates how you should respond to volatility in the markets. I think that faith relates more to how we might handle making or losing money. Faith reveals if money is our real god or if in fact, we're willing to make money or lose money. But it's not going to make or break our life, one way or the other. I'm a long-term investor, I know there will be volatility in the markets and my investment plan is to be X or Y. I do think faith affects how we handle volatility in our career, how we handle volatility in our personal life. Faith certainly has everything to do with where we're putting our hope. And if my hope is in the market, then my hope is off base anyway. Therefore if the market crashes, my hope's going to crash with it. But if my hope is in God and the market is just simply a tool throughout my lifetime, I'll invest in the market. My hope's not in it, but I'll invest in it because I want to grow principle. So the two are almost, in one sense unrelated. What's wrong is when people begin to put their hope in the markets. Because then when they crash, you crash with them.

How much faith can you put in yourself versus faith in the eternal?

It's certainly faith in an external God. Faith is only faith if it's in something outside of yourself. I'm not sure if faith in yourself is necessarily a leap of faith at all. It's just self-reliance. But when I have faith in God who is bigger than me, greater than me, more powerful than me, but yet I can't see Him. He's not visible to me. That takes a step outside of myself to say I'm trusting in a God that I can know in my heart, that I can know in my spirit, but I can't see Him. I do believe that God is real. God is living. He is with me, and I pray and talk with Him and I pray and talk with you. It's a very natural relationship. But whenever I start relying on myself, in my own abilities, I can get a certain amount of the way, but inevitably I find my own weaknesses and my own shortcomings. I definitely look outside of myself to put my hope in God, who is greater than I am.