

ESBA

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING
RELATIONSHIPS

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

My number one takeaway from this video

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THE OILMAN VS. THE OIL GIANT

There once was a man of very humble beginnings. The man worked hard. He went through the ups and downs of the oil booms and busts, never having much but always having enough. He raised a family and grew a small business of his own.

Many people began to seek out this man as his reputation of being a man of the land and a man of his word grew. Big, powerful men and their company engineers sought out this oilman for his ability to 'speak' oil, gas and machinery.

One day, one of the biggest Giants came to see the oilman. "Fix my problem and I'll bring you on as partner," the Giant said.

The oilman was excited to partner with a Giant like this one. He worked as hard as he had on every other project before him - for that's all this man knew how to do - and when he was finished...

The Giant took the man's work and was quite pleased. But he didn't want to pay the oilman. What did HE know about being a GIANT? The Giant ROARED with great strength and tried to scare the oilman away.

Though he had nothing left, for he had spent his money paying for all the work he put into this Giant's hands, the oilman stood firm.

But, unbeknownst to the oilman, he was quite wealthy.

Word about what this Giant had done began to spread.

Other Giants and oilmen began coming to the oilman's aid. Said one, "I've heard about you for years. You keep your word. You have integrity."

Said another, "Your reputation is that you do what you'll say you do."

Yet others, "You always pay what you owe."

"You're always on time."

"You helped my family when..."

"You've always shown me kindness / respect / help when I needed it."

And finally, "This Giant cannot take what you've done. I'll help hold him accountable."

The Giant was angry and brought sneaky attacks and lawsuits and more. And yet, the oilman - and his wall of 'wealth' (his family, friends, colleagues and strangers) - stood firm.

And the Giant - with all the money and reputation and ferocity - lost.

This is a true story. This man really lived and still does today.

And the Giant truly tried to manipulate facts, bully, twist the legal system...and yet, he still lost.

And the oilman? His reputation has only grown deeper and stronger since then; although, were you to go see him today, he'd tell you he's just a simple oilman.

Why was this oilman able to succeed? He had been accountable in his work. He worked with integrity. He documented his steps. He worked with others and he invested in others.

You can be like the oilman.

THE SECRET TO SUCCESS

No matter how much technology changes the way we do business, small businesses continue to succeed because they do something that technology cannot render obsolete. They create relationship through the business exchanges. Even though not always easy, they become cornerstones of their communities, simply through consistency and longevity.

Relationships are the secret to success.

Relationship is not determined by how others relate to you but by how you relate to others.

This is not about how you are connected with someone but rather, how you relate to them - how you give account to them.

In business, you'll find that you have plenty of opportunities to be maligned, misunderstood, slandered or praised.

How you choose to respond in these moments defines your success more than any dollar amount ever can or will. This is why knowing and keeping before you at all times, your core values, matters so much.

Writing things down and displaying them keeps you, and others, accountable.

Implementing processes and standards causes adherence to the framework.

FIRE ESCAPE ROUTES

The word 'if' can be one of the scariest words for people. Because it finds its roots in fear, 'if' can stop decision-making. It can paralyze you. This is why knowing your core values and beliefs ahead of time and putting procedures in place is invaluable. Much like you map out a fire escape plan with your children, you do the same in business with policies.

What things am I already doing to create community in my business

With contractors / employees

With clients

Through marketing

What things can I do to further build relationships?

How will I react if¹

- **Someone lies about me**

¹These scenarios are real-life scenarios that we've either experienced personally or witnessed happen in the lives of others we know.

- **Someone cheats me**

- **A close trusted friend betrays me**

- **I can't deliver on a promise to a customer**

- Or fill in your own:

When I must fire a contractor or employee²

When someone takes clients from me in a surprise move

² Reflect on your policies and procedures; your operating guidelines. Implement them here; identify any weak areas in your documentation procedures and correct them now.

What I'll say when someone questions my integrity _____

How I'll respond to holding others accountable _____

When someone threatens me with or files a lawsuit _____

NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

Investing in others is a quick way to find out where your perspective *really* is regarding relationships. Giving of your time or finances quickly identifies where your true valuation is found - in yourself, your self-perceived value, your finances. False humility and stinginess are often exposed in this way.

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.”

Abraham Lincoln



Investing in others

One way to avoid the pitfall of wrong attitudes is to keep your priorities, goals and blessings, your 'rich life', written down and in front of you at all times.

Beginning your business with a spirit of generosity does two things:

- Blesses your business
- Helps protect you from greed because you learn to let go early on

When it comes to giving:

- **How are you giving? (e.g., time, money, both)**

- **Who are you giving to and why?**

- Are you generous or miserly?

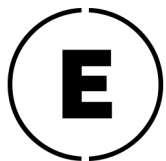
- Is your giving done privately or for public reward? (check your motivation)

- How is your attitude when giving?

- How is your attitude when volunteering?

Like the oilman, you're creating your own legacy. Remember the quote from Viktor E. Frankl:

"The one thing you can't take away from me is the way I choose to respond to what you do to me. The last of one's freedoms is to choose one's attitude in any given circumstance."



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