

Tough Times Never Last, Tough People Always Do



Great Ways to Handle Tough Times Ahead



.....Think STRETCH, RISE to the challenge and KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE GOAL.....

Ms Jan Beeton: VECTRA team member: Johannesburg: South Africa

Growing people, developing businesses, supporting projects

Lean times..... mean times..... end times down turn..... recession..... back to the wall..... tighten your belts..... *2009 is going to be much, much worse than 2008..... The messages are grim.* Happy New Year! Tell you what, how about looking at some of the great sayings we all know, and maybe some we don't know, and turning our faces to the sun- there's plenty of that in Africa (now there's an attitude of gratitude). And that's actually a great Maori proverb. It goes something like this: *'Turn your face to the sun and the shadows fall behind you'*. Mike Lipkin, a South African writer and motivational speaker, used this proverb in his book of success insights called 'Phila', to advise that we keep our eye on the magic not the tragic.

When the Blues Bite, Take Five and Let the Good Times Roll!

For those of you who are old enough, you'll remember the song- not a bad idea to play it and other songs like it when times are not so easy. And how about going dancing too? It's important to take time out for yourself and to spend time with those you want to be with when you're having a tough time. Have you ever noticed how things don't seem so bad when you're having some fun and enjoying yourself? And your productivity levels will definitely improve.

Rise to the Challenge

There's many ways of saying this one, but the message remains the same: when times get tough, the tough getting going..... to get past it, you've got to go through it..... And all things pass..... But if you simply can't, take a break, don't quit. To let myself off the hook at times like this, I always say some days it takes all I've got just to keep up with the losers- be kind to yourself, tomorrow truly is another day. You know the expression 'give yourself a break', that's what it means literally, hang loose, sharpen your mind, take time out to renew, attack it again in the morning.

Stay in the Present

It's amazing what staying with today can do for you. Forget about yesterday, don't think ahead, take it literally one day at a time, but GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT! At the heart of this one is recognising that I can do something for 24 hours that would horrify me if I thought about doing it for the rest of my life. This is such a good one. Get up in the morning and tackle your day, but truly tackle your day, with goals in mind for the next 8-10 hours — and really make sure you tackle them and reach them day by day. One way I make sure my day is goal oriented is starting with exercise — running on the spot is a good one- increasing the number of minutes you do it, gradually placing the goals a little further out and consistently achieving them.

Future Potential is always greater than Current Performance

Think STRETCH — there is no gain without pain..... often our nightmare challenges turn into our greatest gifts and blessings- how many time have you not seen this in your life? Just believe it, accept it, have faith, and take that leap of faith. *Leap and the safety Net will appear.* Set your goals BIG, even in bad times, but not so way out that you will never achieve them.

Obstacles are those Terrible Things you see when you take your eye off the Goal

Keep your eye and mind on your goals, focus more than ever on your vision — keep your eye down the road beyond the current obstacles Have a BIG DREAM and let it keep your engines fired up. Rest if you must, but never, NEVER quit. Think short term for survival but long term for growth - that's the definition of person with a strategic attitude.

You Can't Win the Race unless You Are in It

This is one of my favourites. The temptation is strong when down, and maybe even out, to retire from the race- that's the time when you should dust yourself off and GET BACK IN IT. Good ways to do this are to READ everything, DO MORE RESEARCH — of markets, customers and competitors- FIND THOSE GAPS - and KEEP VISIBLE. Visibility is about communication- networking, keeping in touch with markets, customers and colleagues. Make sure people know you are there, RIGHT THERE. Keep up with business and social events, hold your own and attend others' - GET OUT THERE. *If opportunity doesn't knock, build the door.*

The Future is Not Some Place We Are Going, but One We Are Creating

Henry Ford said *'Whether you think you can or you think you can't you're right.* The future you create is in your mind, your thoughts, your words and actions. It's up to you.

Ask for the Help You Need — A Problem shared is a Problem Halved

Johannesburg has a problem — I don't know about other places - whenever you ask people how they're doing, it's always *'great thanks'*. A colleague of mine recently called it 'performance anxiety'. A great way to describe it, don't you think? IF YOU'RE NOT DOING WELL, YOU'RE NOT DOING WELL. IT DOESN'T MAKE YOU A SCHMUCK. You need to be careful what you share, how you share it and with whom of course, always, but if you don't open, others can't help. So reach out, engage, get the support you need — you can get some really great ideas from other people, if you can just be a little vulnerable. It also keeps you REAL and gives others the opportunity to share with you. One of the best learning methodologies on the planet is Action Learning- it starts from a position of *'we don't know the answer to this challenge'*, so let's avoid the external 'experts', let's be our own experts and work on it ourselves until we know the answer.

My personal all time favourite? We all have just 24 hours in a day

This is about the only thing that makes us equal in my books..... no one has more time than another, some just make a lot better use of it than others. And I don't mean working round the clock! Find ways to keep a balance between what's IMPORTANT and what's urgent. Consistently be PRODUCTIVE, interrogate your day – DID I DO ANYTHING TODAY THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE for my customers, for my business, for myself and others? Know the value of time all things do indeed pass.....

THE TOUGH TIMES WILL END- WILL YOU BE READY WHEN THEY DO?

THE ENTREPRENEUR'S CREDO

I do not choose to be a common man
It's my right to be uncommon - If I can
I seek opportunity - not security
I do not wish to be a kept citizen, humbled and dulled by having the state look after me.
I want to take the calculated risk, to dream and to build, to fail and to succeed.
I refuse to barter incentive for a dole;
I prefer the challenges of life to the guaranteed existence,
The thrill of fulfilment to the stale calm of utopia.
I will not trade my freedom for beneficence, nor my dignity for a hand-out.
I will never cower before any master nor bend to any threat.
It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act for myself, to enjoy the benefit of my creations and to face the world boldly.