

“What helps people, helps business.” — Leo Burnett

THE NINTH PRINCIPLE: Give Away The Business

Corporate Charity

Charity is in the spirit of business, starting with those within our organization. While writing these principles, I contemplated where our company stood on these different concepts and realized that, just like individuals, we strive to be good corporate citizens and witnesses to a higher order of values and ideals. Even though we usually fall short, the divine is something our spirit longs to re-claim. One way to demonstrate that greatness is through service to others through giving.

The New Webster’s Dictionary defines charity as, “Love for one’s fellow men; leniency in judging others or their actions; the private or public relief of the poor; a charitable act or work.” To me, charity is not a handout. It is not giving people fish to feed them, but rather showing them *how* to fish. In business, that might include providing opportunity for good part-time jobs, as well as full-time career positions that include advancement opportunities through a system of evaluation, training and development, and recognition and awards. Giving help to others less fortunate than ourselves is one of life’s fulfilling achievements.

By Helping Others We Help Ourselves

When Admiral Hyman Rickover was asked about his climb from obscurity to Chief Naval Officer in charge of nuclear operations, he simply pointed to those in great need, the

imprisoned, the homeless, the poor, and said, “There, but for the grace of God, go I.” We are blessed to be in a place where we are building our own business. That is Grace. Grace also comes into our lives by helping others.

Helping one another starts at home, in our own family, as well as with our family of employment. Are you a benevolent company with caring people doing good deeds to help others?

It was October 4, 2003. I normally do my annual giving in June and December. But this year was different. I had moved. I sold my house in Mystic, moved onto my boat and rented an office in New London. Although I got the biggest single check in my entire life when I sold the house, I knew that I had to live on that money and my savings because at the end of May, the buyout funds from Adams and Adams had ended. I had invested over \$120,000 in Life Without Limits without seeing a return on my investment. The move to new quarters had cost \$2,000 and a new roof at the Farm was going to cost \$9,000. Attorney’s bills for corporate reorganization would cost in the neighborhood of \$3,000. I got hit with a back tax bill on my sailboat “Miracles” for \$3,900.00 and I was scheduling surgery for a possible malignant tumor in my nasal passage that would cost over \$8,000 out-of-pocket, because my medical insurance had attached a pre-existing condition rider. On top of that, I knew that printing costs for the first run of *Miracles at Work*, which I self-published, would run in the neighborhood of \$5,000 by the end of the year. As I watched my savings dwindle I kept postponing my avowed donations for mid-year because of a deep fear of not having enough. Then I redrafted this chapter on giving and abundance. The stack of charitable requests had been sitting on my credenza since we moved at the end of July. I knew my money drain had to do with my giving and its connection to abundance. I started digging into

the donations, beginning with the ones I felt strongest about. They were also the most expensive. I wrote a check for \$500 to buy a “Happy House” for a Haitian Family through the Haitian Healthcare Foundation—a local grassroots charity. Then I wrote a check to the LionHeart Foundation, which is run by my good and dedicated friend, Robin Casarjian, who teaches prisoners how to handle their emotions and free themselves from within. This money came from my savings and I saw the balance shrink below what it was when I sold my house. Yet, that was a feeling of release and trust.

Even though I faced all these huge bills, within the next six weeks, my account balance started to grow. My stocks and investments in mutual funds took off. I stopped losing ground and realized once again, that the miracle of giving had taken hold. Again, I was reminded of the power and validity of the Principles of Upside-Down Thinking and the Practices of Business Success.

The 10% Rule

Throughout my life, I have heard that by contributing ten-percent of your income to charity and ten-percent to savings, you would never want for anything. I scoffed at that concept until in 1994 it came up again in a book I was reading called *The Greatest Salesman in the World*, by Og Mandino. That ancient tale repeated this idea, once again, so I decided to try it.

Soon after I started, I found that for the first time in my life, I had a surplus of money. Then, due to a turn of events during the last half of that year, I felt that I was not able to put aside ten-percent. Almost immediately, my cash reserves evaporated. I resolved to return to

that ten-percent devotion. Since then, financial abundance has returned to my life, even through hard times.

Believe me, this works. Try it for a year. Even if you think you are living on the absolute minimum possible, find a way to take what is left after withholding taxes and dedicate ten percent of that net income to giving and ten percent to savings. If you don't cheat and put that money aside, you will never lack for money.

The Concept Of Abundance

This is not a selfless approach to giving, but a self-centered way to enjoy grace in your life. The most important ingredient in the concept of abundance is the intent of your gifts to others and to yourself. By taking care of others, you take care of yourself and vice versa. It is another paradox of the paradigm of *Miracles at Work*. There is no sacrifice. If the intent comes from your heart, the result will be divinely manifested. Deepak Chopra writes, "When your actions are motivated by love, your energy multiplies and accumulates – and the surplus energy you gather and enjoy can be channeled to create anything you want including unlimited wealth."

If we are pursuing a goal because of its intrinsic spiritual value rather than its extrinsic worldly value, the pursuit can be effortless and blissful because we will come from a place of abundance rather than scarcity. The non-spiritual world has created increased demand without equal increases of supply. This results in depletion of goods or products and the increase of their perceived value and price. In the world of Spirit, there is always plenty to go around. As a matter of fact, the more you give, the more you get. The more love you give, the more you get back. Kindness brings forth more kindness, and service to members

and customers brings true loyalty and devotion. The Course in Miracles® states that, nothing real can be increased except by sharing (P.64). In other words, the everlasting expands by giving.

Stories Of Abundance

Two biblical stories remind me of this concept of abundance. The first is the story of Hanukkah. A group of Maccabees, meaning “hammers,” led by the Jewish priest Mattathias and his sons, attacked the immense army of Antiochus, the King of Syria. Mattathias and his small group succeeded in reclaiming their temple from the Syrians (165 BC), but when they went to light the altar lamp, they discovered that they had only enough oil for one day. Miraculously, the lamp burned for eight days and nights, reaffirming the trust and faith they had in their covenant with God.

The other biblical story is that of the loaves and fishes. Jesus had his disciples distribute five loaves of bread and two fish to feed a crowd of more than five thousand gathered in the desert. “Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, He gave thanks and ...they all ate and were satisfied.” (Matthew 14:19,20; Mark 6:41,42; Luke 9:16,17.) They were filled not with food alone but with the spirit of God.

Islam is based on the five principles or pillars that guide the life of a Muslim. The third pillar is charity. A tax representing one fortieth of the value of all an individual's possessions is levied and then distributed to the poor. That tax represents two-and-one-half percent of annual net worth. I was in Egypt during the winter of 2000, at the time of the Feast of Ramadan. All the children, no matter what their economic status, were wearing new

clothes—gifts from their parents or if they could not afford it, from the community. It was a powerful example for me of the power of giving.

In The Spirit Of Giving

In a company, the more you give to your members, the grander your enterprise will grow. Once again, it is the intent of your gifts that matters. It is similar to the spirit of our giving at Christmas, Hanukkah, or Ramadan. The intent of the gift transforms it from an item of limited, worldly value to a priceless present. The gift takes on the spirit of your giving.

Once we accept this principle, we realize that sharing the profits of our company can lead to even greater wealth for ourselves. Isn't that the way the stock market is supposed to function? Investors place money and trust in a company. In return, the company owners give up a portion of their equity. Even though the owners now possess less ownership in the business, sharing ownership enables them to grow. The violation of stockholder trust by Enron, the Arthur Anderson & Company, World Com, and others makes it even more important for public companies to regain the faith of their investors. Investing in a stock is based upon the faith and trust we have in the vision and ideals of the company.

Sharing Our Company

Sharing our company with others also involves risk, trust, and faith. Our members must be willing to invest resources of time, money, or labor in return for a share of the business. If there is not a willingness to put more into their jobs than labor for pay, members cannot expect to realize more than a market-driven salary and benefits. If an equity-sharing program is devised, company members must be willing to accept times of profit and loss,

success and failure. These are the members who have joined in your vision and have faith in your company, and the ones who will create the greatest returns.

Our company vice president, and now owner, came to work with Adams and Adams five years after we began. He risked everything to take a chance in this fledgling cleaning company. He had a belief not only in our vision, but also in himself. He did not put in a typical eight-hour day, five days a week. He gave more than one hundred percent, often working beyond my own physical and mental capabilities to keep up. At new jobs he often outlasted me at the initial cleanings that took us into the wee hours. He invested more and took a risk. When I saw the value of his contribution, I set up a plan to share twenty-five percent of the equity of the company with him. Rob eventually was able to convert that twenty-five percent into one hundred percent—total ownership—which set me free to take on my next career of sharing *Miracles at Work*.

There are a lot of people who have the potential of Rob. Each member of our team has the capability to do great things for our company. It is up to us to discover their passions and what will lead them to fulfill their greatness.

The “gifts” we give to our members are tributes to ourselves that will come back to us many times over. They are tributes of eternal value, not necessarily material wealth. The intent of our gift from the soul of our company creates the meaning that will result in lasting value.

In this chapter we have been reminded that to give and receive are one. We saw how abundance is a matter of belief and attitude, and that the intent of our giving is what determines its result. *“The more your business gives to others, the more it gives to itself,” is the antithesis of the greed is good attitude we have seen in many businesses.*

In the next chapter, we see how we mirror one another and perform the role of teacher and student at the same time.

“Doing well is the result of doing good. That’s what capitalism is all about.”
— Adnan Kashoggi

*“How well do you know when you are completely enlightened?
When you look out and see that everyone else is enlightened.”*

— James Twyman