

How much are you worth?

Like most humans, when I see something I did a few years ago, I invariably see ways I could improve it; I didn't see those possibilities 10 years ago, but I can see them today. It means I've grown, that I'm better, that I'm a more effective person today than I was 10 years ago. I'm worth more today, and if I continue, I'll be much better and worth a lot more 10 years from now.

Nightingale puts forward an interesting idea:

"Before the atomic age, chemistry professors used to say that a person's worth, from a strictly chemical standpoint, was about \$32 on the going market. In the atomic age scientists calculated that, if the electronic energy in the hydrogen atoms of your body could be utilised, you could supply all the electrical needs of a large, highly industrialised country for nearly a week. These scientists said that the atoms of your body contain a potential energy of more than eleven million kilo-watt hours per pound. The average person, by this estimate, was worth about \$85 billion. Moreover, the electrons and the atoms of your body are not just particles of matter, they're waves of living energy, and these waves ripple out and spread themselves in patterns of light, and as they move, they shine.

"If you stand in front of an infrared television camera in a completely dark room, the screen will show you from top to toe as a glistening, radiating, dreaming form. In short, you're a whole lot more than meets the casual eye. Add to all this the fact that to try to reproduce your mind mechanically

would cost many billions of dollars, and you begin to see yourself for what you really are – an amazing, infinitely valuable creature. You're unlike other any other human being who ever lived, or ever will live. You are unique."

He goes on to ask what you are selling all this for. All human beings are priceless, but the payments, tangible and intangible, you receive from life vary greatly. The point is for you to decide just what you're worth as a human being right now on the market, in today's society, and what you intend to be worth, say five years from now. In the last analysis, every person is in reality in business for himself or herself, and they're building their own lives, regardless of who happens to write their pay cheque.

Nightingale encourages us to think of ourselves as a business where you are the CEO. You're responsible for the success or failure of the business. You and your family are shareholders in the business that is you and it's your responsibility to see that the value of these shares increases over time. Your family has faith in you and it's your responsibility to live up to that.

Running a business is complex but Nightingale reduces running the business of you to four basic functions.

Number 1: finance;

2: production;

3: sales;

4: research.

Without proper financing there would be no production – you can't manufacture anything without money for machines and materials. Without production you'd have nothing to sell. Without sales you couldn't keep on producing and without research your business couldn't hope to keep ahead of the competition or the market.

If any one of these four functions isn't healthy, your business can't be healthy. An unhealthy business can't last long.

Finance, the money part of the business, is straightforward. Let's focus on

research, production and sales; the head, hands and legs of your company. The head handles research, the hands manage production, and the legs get sales. Cut off any one of these parts and the business can't survive. How many once large companies have now disappeared completely? Arcadia Group, Laker Airways, Wilko... I'm sure you can think of more. They all failed to keep these four, crucial functions in balance.

What about research in the business that is you? Research in a company should look for ways of improving its present products or services, production and sales and look to develop new products and services, new methods of production and new methods of marketing. All the while you have to maintain production to meet the demand of sales. You have to look to the future while meeting the needs of the present. How successfully you meet the challenges of both the present and the future will determine your progress and your growth.

Why do companies worry about growth even though they're doing well today? It's because nothing in the world stands still. Physics tells us that a body in motion tends to remain in motion until acted upon by an outside force. A growing company will tend to continue growing while a company which is shrinking will tend to continue shrinking until acted upon by an outside force.

Unless a company is growing, it's in danger. You're the CEO of your personal company and you need to know that the same law applies to you. Consider the next 10 years keeping in mind that few people predicted 10 years ago where we would be now.

When Earl Nightingale was writing in the mid-twentieth century the world was on the cusp of an economic explosion. The bulk of spending in more economically developed countries was to be on things, products and services over and above the necessities of life (food, shelter, clothing, transportation, medical care). Today that applies to less economically developed countries too. He correctly foresaw the consumer market doubling with spending worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Looking back, his predictions were conservative. He also foresaw massive expansion in building and research and development offering the individual incredible

opportunities; an unlimited future. Today unlimited growth is not seen as desirable or even possible (the World Bank has predicted the rate of growth will be 2.2% to 2030) but there are still great opportunities for those with the right attitude and clear goals. The next generation of consumers are interested in sustainability and the ethics of the companies they buy from. This is where your integrity comes in; the honest and principled business will win with Gen Z. Your attitude is essential. Will you be defeated by the more challenging climate or look for the opportunities to serve your community, to provide them with what they need and want? What will the growth of the metaverse mean for businesses by 2030? What opportunities does AI bring?

Much of what Nightingale wrote in the 1960s still applies today. He said:

“Our population, too, is getting a lot smarter. Educational advances during the past 30 years have been remarkable; during the next 30, they'll probably be amazing. The customer is getting smarter every day, and if we're going to continue to meet his or her demands, and sell him or her our products, we'd better get smarter every day too. The market will be characterised by diversity, not uniformity. It will also be dominated by taste, not necessity. There will be an increase in the quality, as well as the quantity, of consumer choices. There are many signs of the rising urge for the better things in life. Many millions of adults are interested in after-hour study programs, and this number is growing by millions each year.

“Each of us, as president and unquestioned manager of his own corporation, can decide what to do about these changes. We can either grow with it, or go backward. We cannot stand still, even if we'd like to. This gives us an opportunity to stand back and look at ourselves and our futures objectively, as an intelligent stranger might. Ask yourself, “How much am I worth, right now, today, as a corporation? What's my value today to myself, my family, my company? If I were an outside investor, a stranger, would I invest in this corporation?”

“A company growing at the rate of 10% a year will double in size in about eight years. What attention are you giving to the production of your personal corporation? Can you grow and improve as a person at least 10% year? Of course you can.

"I've seen reports from people who have exceeded their previous performance to an almost unbelievable extent: people in management and in production who multiplied their effectiveness many times; students who moved from failing grades to straight A's; people in sales who found they could, through the proper management of their abilities, minds and time, sell as much of their company's product in single month as they previously sold in an entire year. Think what that means; it means they were 12 times as effective. Getting back to the law of cause and effect, putting in 12 times as much service guarantees receiving eventually 12 times the reward.

He reminds us:

"If we do twice as much, we have to receive twice as much, and nothing on Earth can keep it from us. And the same thing applies if we triple our effectiveness. You and I know this; everyone should know it. But remember that 95% of people do not know this. Think of the advantage this gives us. It isn't that we want to take advantage of anyone, and we're not, but it dramatically demonstrates the truth of the saying: Knowledge is power."

The number of people who stop learning when they finish school or graduate from university is shocking. Apart from things they have to read for work like company manuals and policies they read very little of real value. I have never stopped learning: I have studied at London Business School, Harvard Business School, Oxford University and Stanford University in California. I've learned from mentors like Bob Proctor. I've read the ideas of Napoleon Hill, Wallace D. Wattles, Thomas Troward, and many others including Earl Nightingale whose ideas I'm sharing with you here. What I have learned has improved my life immeasurably. Continuing to learn is vital if you want to stay vital. There's so much to learn in the world, and school only touches on a fraction of it. One of the most important skills we can learn is how to get along with people. We can only do things, we can only win, through people, and that is a skill we can develop and hone throughout our lives. It isn't taught as a formal subject in school yet it's so much of how we socialise young people and expect them to work with their peers. The ideas in this program are seldom taught

whether at home or in school. Go through Regent's catalogue of programs carefully, and you can put together an ongoing education program for many years to come.

Tomorrow is a new day. All of us have the same, 24 hours, it's the great equaliser. Today start to think of ways you can begin to increase your effectiveness, raise your production. You know that you'll be rewarded. Each day you have a chance to write the story of your life. Don't worry about the past or missed opportunities, grab each day and commit to use it as best you can.

Wasting just one hour of productive time a day adds up to about 250 hours a year. That's 250 hours that the business that is you is shut down. What is your time worth an hour? Multiply that amount and count what you're wasting. Make more of that time, invest it in you.

Enjoy your life. Value the time that you have now – don't wait for something sometime in the future to make you happy. Your life, your time is precious. Every minute should be enjoyed, cherished, whether it's with friends or family, or doing something you love, or improving yourself. Our lives are all just minutes, hours and days added together. We've all been given the materials, it's up to us to what we build.

Nightingale asked us to imagine ourselves as a business, a company or corporation. You have an advantage over a corporation: it's far easier for you to change what you do. Have you been looking after the vital functions of your business: finance, production, sales, research? Do you know where your industry and your career is going? Can you go about your work better? More efficiently? How about how you sell yourself to others? Are your interactions with your colleagues, your family, your neighbours great? If your career is in sales, can you see more people every day, or improve the effectiveness of every contact? Making one extra call a day adds up to 250 calls a year. How many sales might that be? That's the difference between being average, or above average, the difference between being good or great.

This new, active approach to life brings peace to our minds, absolute security to our future, great new stature as human beings. In this world we

can look toward reaching full maturity. With this attitude toward life, we need never for a moment concern ourselves with its outcome; it will begin to become successful tomorrow, and will pour abundance upon us for the rest of our years.”

This lesson challenged you to commit one hour a day to improving yourself. You're more likely to be successful and build the habit if you make a clear commitment. Commit to an hour each day this week.

	Time	What I'm going to do in the hour	Completed: Yes/No
<i>Day 1</i>			
<i>Day 2</i>			
<i>Day 3</i>			
<i>Day 4</i>			
<i>Day 5</i>			

Reflection:

Did you spend an hour a day improving yourself? If yes, what helped you to stick to it, if no what was the problem? How can you achieve five hours of self-improvement next week and the week after?