



September 6 2008: Archive

Facing Current Reality -

Confront The Brutal Facts.

When faced with a problem in business or in our personal lives, only one thing is certain. That is if we are to overcome this problem then we will have to make change.

This often causes big problems for all concerned. Change is difficult. Change requires courage. Change is uncertain.

If you have made the commitment to make change it is imperative to ensure that you have a clear picture of your current situation, personally and commercially. If change is implemented at the wrong time it will probably fail. Change therefore requires strategic planning and honest evaluation. In the book I refer to this a process of facing the current reality. To do this properly it is essential that we confront the brutal facts of our current situation. We must do this honestly and objectively. We will serve only to deceive ourselves if we approach this from any other perspective.

In confronting the brutal facts some objective self-evaluation can be helpful. The following are seven techniques I have found to have been invaluable when working with clients in the past.

1) Take a Self-Assessment Test.

There are many well-recognised and respected tests available to you. A self-assessment test will ensure you develop a business and personal plan that is catered towards you and your personality. These tools will help you identify your strengths, your weaknesses, your preferences and your ways of thinking.

Some of the most popular personality profiling tests are outlined below. Contact me at [Pragmatica](#) if you wish to pursue this and I will happily organise for you to take a test. We can then help you implement a path that suits your specific requirements.

[Keirseey Temperament Sorter](#)

[Myers Briggs Type Indicator](#)

[Strengths Finder](#)

Remember you do not need any particular educational qualifications, just an open mind and a willingness to answer the questions in an honest manner.

2) Document Your Personal Goals:

You should develop the habit of documenting your personal goals on a short, medium and long-term basis and be willing to revise these goals on an ongoing basis. In an objective self-evaluation it is critical to pay some attention to goal setting. There is a story purporting to come from Yale University often bandied about to support the argument that one should document ones goals. It would appear that this story is an urban myth and it apparently has no basis in fact.

It goes like this:

In 1953, researchers surveyed Yale's graduating seniors to determine how many of them had specific, written goals for their future. The answer: 3%. Twenty years later, researchers polled the surviving members of the Class of 1953 -- and found that the 3% with goals had accumulated more personal financial wealth than the other 97% of the class combined!

Someone once said that if this story is not true then it should be!

Fact or fiction, the crucial thing is to accept is the spirit of the argument. Setting goals and documenting them is a critically important discipline. Remember a goal undocumented is nothing more than an aspiration.

3) Next Create a Development Plan:

Now create a development plan. You set the goals and the timelines. Then act and focus on your goals and plan. A development plan should include short and long term goals. Sometimes the goals may not all be clear, but they will come to you as you stay on purpose.

Short-term goals are often more effective and attainable. Long-term goals are your long term visions. Your plan should also include action steps, outcomes and a plan for analysis. You will want to see if you are meeting your goals or revise your goals and timelines accordingly.

Own your plan. Write it out, post it where you can see it daily and create affirmations to keep you on track with your plan.

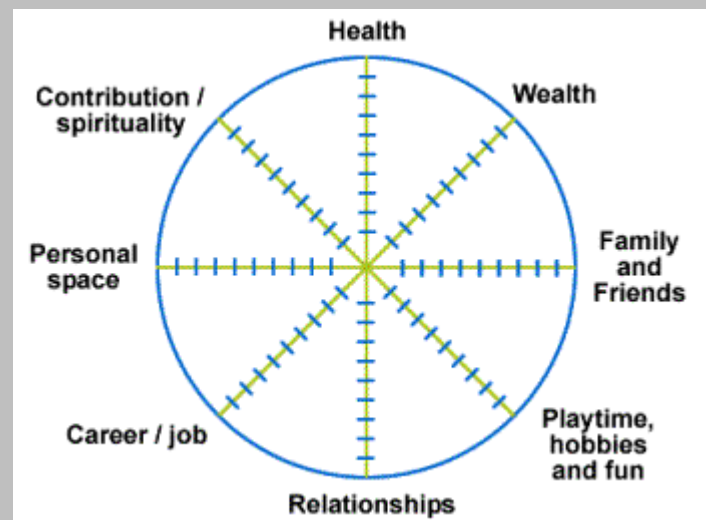
4) Find a Mentor or advisor:

A mentor could be considered to be a person that provides a suitable sounding board for your ideas and one who can effectively and constructively play devils advocate for your ideas. Mentoring differs from supervision. Finding a mentor means seeking development and input from someone you respect and feels has experience or expertise in what you are pursuing. Your life partner is unlikely to be an effective mentor. Mentors can be friends, bosses, consultants, authors, ministers etc. We meet mentors every day! Just open your eyes to them!

5) Evaluate The Balance In Your Life:

The Life Evaluation Wheel is a very useful tool in attempting to get a handle on life's balance, it helps you consider each area of your life in turn and assess what's off balance. And so, it helps you identify areas that need more attention.

The Life Wheel is powerful because it gives you a vivid visual representation of the way your life is currently, compared with the way you'd ideally like it to be. It is called the "Life Wheel" because each area of your life is mapped on a circle, like the spoke of a wheel. This makes it easy to use and easy to read.



Using the wheel of life is a simple process. All you need to do is work from the inside or hub outward and score each of the spokes from one to ten. You then draw a circular line through each point and examine the resulting shape.

For a balanced life the first aim is to have a reasonably circular shape, one that has no major peaks or troughs. If you have a major spike for example then the wheel is telling you that you may have to examine the time or energies that you are putting into this area of your life, as it appears that it may be out of balance.

Secondly the aim is to develop a strategy within your life to extend the circle outward towards a consistent ten figure for all of the spokes. This indicates that you are achieving both a balance in your life and are growing as an individual in a balanced fashion.

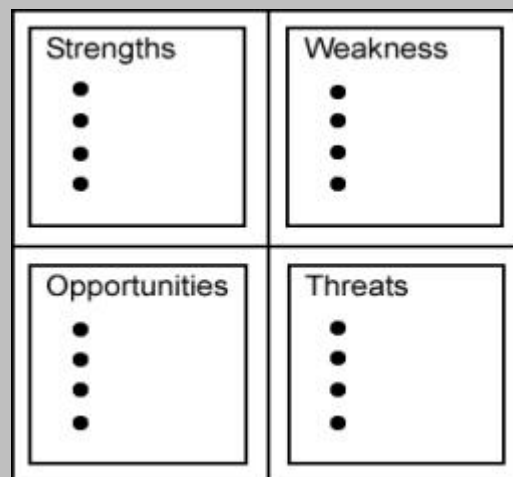
Remember that you can include or exclude any spokes that you see fit, as no two people have the same ingredients in their lives. I have just covered the rudimentary areas that would appear to be representative of most people. Your wheel should be reflective of your life at any given time and should be unique to you. It should be used as an indicator for you to see if perhaps you need to put some time and effort into taking stock of your current situation or as I term it 'Face the current reality.'

When initially taking steps to face your current reality the results are irrelevant. What matters is that you are taking action.

What is relevant is to take stock of your actual situation, objectively and honestly. There is no recognised development programme or development guru in the world that does not commence the development process by an evaluation of the current situation.

6) SWOT Analysis: A useful method for facing Current Reality:

I can unreservedly recommend the humble SWOT. It is the simplest of concepts. Everyone is aware of it and yet few use it properly. The SWOT analysis is a basic building block of all business programmes. It is taught at even the most basic programmes. It is taught for a reason. This reason is because it is an immensely powerful tool.



It is effective and simple. It can be applied to all situations and will unearth the current reality if properly executed. In due course it will become second nature should become a key competitive advantage of yours.

Lets get the difficult stuff out of the way right now. You will probably display a much larger list in the two right hand quadrants. This is not necessarily a bad thing. You are after all only commencing the process of positioning yourself.

Indeed it is probably true to say that if you do not have a comprehensive list of negative issues to address it is highly unlikely you have had an objective and honest evaluation, in other words you have failed to face the current reality. In order to take effective remedial action to face the negative situation that have arisen you must face reality and use this as your starting point.

7) Make a start and do it now!