



# ENTERPRISE



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BOAZ ADHENGO



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**ENTERPRISE**

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Printed in Great Britain by  
Adhesh-Kapur Colour Press Ltd, Gosport, Hampshire

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**eBook ISBN: 978-1-71657-108-4**

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*Dear Reader:*

*This book is written for everyone wanting to build their organization or return it to a rock solid foundation of Biblical principles that sustains success and transcends fads, trends, and best practices that are in vogue one year and out the next. When uncertainty reigns, it is natural to feel a sense of emptiness and disillusionment with the direction of business and the world and start looking for something more reliable, tested, and tried. The bestselling book of all time, the Bible, answers the call. Although it is common to read the Bible for spiritual truths, I have found that many business leaders don't realize the vast wealth of wisdom available throughout its pages that would help them to hire and train the right people; hold them accountable; create vision, values, and performance expectations for their organization; elevate their own character and people skills; and manage their money.*

*The Bible can make many people feel lost. They want to read and understand it but they don't know where to start. They become intimidated by its length and confused by its verbiage. My goal in this book is to take principles that might take you years or decades to discover on your own and put them in a workable, hands-on, easy-to-apply business format that you will internalize and implement with confidence and certainty. Although the Bible offers thousands more lessons to learn than what you will find in this book, what I've presented should suffice to dramatically change the results in any organization when applied as prescribed. You'll also be relieved to know that this book neither promotes nor disparages any particular denomination, but instead it presents the facts for you to evaluate and interpret using your own good sense. Enjoy!*

*B. A. Adhengo*

**Boaz Adhengo**

Am grateful to Rukia Weisheit Abubakar who found me when my world was crumbling; to not only give me hope of a new beginning but courage to discover my purpose in God. Fortunately, I discovered Jesus Christ in me and truly, God works goodness to those whom He has chosen. You have never bothered me despite our different cultures, yet our son never lacks. May you also find Christ Jesus and witness this goodness as I do.

Mentorship has been a keen step in transforming my mind and God brought people into my life with whom am still growing. Much thanks to Steve Elzinga for your strict business model with which in struggling to catch up, am blessed to gain knowledge; am also grateful to Henry Reyenga who speaks directly to my inner heart at times when am lost for encouragement and in this walk, am never to forget David Feddes and Bruce Ballast. Indeed am gifted and will always be grateful to God for all the glory belongs to Him. Amen.



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## Introduction

In Frankfurt, some argument is brewing, some disgust accumulated from a natural event. Rukia Weisheit has just confirmed that she is pregnant, her mother knows and the grandfather is amazed in rage that the *would-be* born child is to be a minority; a child from an indigenous African of Kenya descent. Now this was news.

We had been fornicating for a long while, all in time as a game of love; our cultures meant nothing apart but this emotion was just spontaneously real, sparking some new reactions that made even the adventure not ideal but a vigorous reality. In my memory, I remember talking to Rukia's grandfather, and he stated bitterly that am one lucky bastard, so brilliantly lucky to have impregnated his *grand-daughter*. He told me that in Germany, the academic systems were clear on the line of separation, that only the male were allowed to propagate the seed; women would and should only seek German equals and not stoop out of line to propagate inferiority. This was one of my lucky moments, for Rukia even left their home to come live with me the entire duration of her pregnancy in promise to give birth which she did and left me a single father; for she had to fulfil her eugenic call. How pathetic for some ideology to divide humanity, all in the name of racial idiosyncrasies.

As I was thinking about this book, my historical past of having had a fruitful life changing relationship with a German woman stormed my heart; but in pain am left to think how cultural confusions can break emotions. It was saddening to be told that "*such a child will not survive in Germany and that if you were to be in Germany, yourself would be dealt with into knowing your place*". Yet God works good according to those whom He has chosen; we accepted our different directions and left the path of eugenics to those who understood them best. I have raised my child ever since he was two years old and at the time of this writing, am about to celebrate the twelve years of parenthood. Is this not God working in us?

In anyway, *be fruitful and multiply the earth*; am sure this must be a command given to Adam in Genesis. Our human nature is geared to obedience of this purpose, to ever seek growth and positive development in whatever good deeds we accomplish. The enterprise of life as initiated by God our creator is an eternal endeavour, to which we serve and glorify Him. Perhaps, although at such a time when I was still seeking God, He had already found me and guided me towards His purpose which am realising amidst loads of struggle till when am made to understand that as humanity,

we are all equal in image to God. In such struggles, I have enjoyed leadership positions to clubs and associations, and in such struggles, several business ideas have come to me as visions of a better reality; in trying such ideas and in realising that all belongs to God, am happy to write such testimonial success; that in sharing my point of view about entrepreneurship, perhaps someone somewhere will be blessed; knowing that the secret to success is recognizing the providence of God. I have had two businesses that have transformed my livelihood, and I would say rightfully, that the spirit of enterprise has been in me all along; it started when I was twelve. At such a time, I could charge a few shillings to anyone who wanted to ride my bicycle, a small distance around the neighbourhood. Twelve, yes twelve.

As we go through our daily work, there is a lot of biblical learning that takes place; it is all about God's love for us and God's love in us amidst an ever changing ecosystem that needs a responsive mind to technology. This technology that has created a new common sense, a whole new reality; this reality that is always out there for us to perceive it. Yet in so doing, we must learn to seek excellence in all that we do and intend to do.

If you are good at what you do, if you are meant to do it, the money will find you. Most important things start as a small fact of a huge promise and can become significant in our lives if we believe in those ideas. Innovation is about economics. Capital follows ideas; understand your role in the ecosystem and organise the economics for it, thus we might as well affirm that entrepreneurship is delivery of the innovation to address the societal needs.

Perhaps for me to be able to get a German partner, it was the hat I was putting on at that time. How did Rukia Weisheit see me? Was I attractive? How did she forego her freedom to bond into becoming a parent? Such questions in seeking to understand that hat I was putting on has made me see that she was attracted to my honesty, ambition and thoughtfulness. This was the hat of love that mysteriously transformed into leadership potential.

The solution to global poverty is Christians going into business not to make money but to serve each other. We serve God and glorify God, but also serve the crown of His creation, the humanity. This goes beyond our racial or ethnic categories; we are image bearers of God irrespective of whether our mutated bodies look different or original.

Branding Your Potential

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**Chapter One**

The word brand comes from the burning stick or branding iron used to mark an animal (*or a criminal*) more than a thousand years ago. By the 19th century, the brand mark began to indicate ownership not just of animals but also of wine, beer, and other commodities. If you are an entrepreneur, you'll want to think about how a logo and a distinct look sets your brand apart. You'll want a logo and brand imagery that will help you stand out in the marketplace.

Powerful brands touch people. Brands today are not about the product but about the relationship between the brand and the target market. We form the strongest bonds with brands we like, identify with, and feel emotionally connected with in our lives. Powerful brands make us feel more in control, more self-assured.

Branding is about soft power. For companies today, it's not the hard things - *tangibles like bricks and mortar, equipment and inventories* - that contribute the most to a company's value. Its soft things - *the brands and company reputation, the ideas and intellectual capital, the consumer relationships and business alliances* - have the most value.

It isn't the hard, quantifiable things, like educational credentials, experience, and job titles that contribute the most to success. The real power lies in harnessing soft power - *strategy and tactics, image and visual identity, words and verbal identity, visibility and reputation, and other branding ideas* - all the things that will help attract people to you.

Business success, like brand success, depends on what other people think about you. If people think you are a dynamic business leader, you are. If people think you're a B player, you are (*until you change their perceptions*). It doesn't matter what is objectively true. Perception is reality.

Creating positive impressions in the minds of other people is the work of self-branding. It used to be about “*Can you do the job?*” Now, many people can do what you do. So it has to be about something more. Above all, branding is a strategic process. The goal is to provide that something more to succeed in a changing, highly competitive business environment (*and to be authentic and even to enjoy yourself in the process*).

You are your most important asset. In a sense, you are your only asset. And your ability to maximize the asset that is you is the single most important ingredient in your success. That’s why self-branding is so valuable. For people, branding is about achieving greater success, as represented by money, fame, self-esteem, or whatever measure is important to you; but am also talking about becoming who you were meant to be, which means that success includes becoming who you truly are. The trick to effective self-branding is to devise a strategy that works in achieving professional and life goals yet also is true to you - *that brings more of you into the equation*.

Branding for people is about finding your Big Idea - *your unique selling proposition* (USP). You want to represent something special - *a belief system you stand for that sets you apart from others*. This could be made up of your point of view, your vision, your style, even your mystique - *the X Factor that makes you special and relevant*.

Branding for people is also about packaging the brand that is you and using branding strategies and principles from the commercial world to enhance your identity and communicate your USP. It also means developing a personal marketing plan for reaching your goals, tactics to get from A to B (*and through all the other letters of the alphabet, depending on your goals*). And it means engaging

your target audience without seeming self-promotional and obnoxious.

Looking at yourself as a brand has enormous advantages. The truth is that being good, by itself, doesn't guarantee success. We all know talented people who are underemployed, underpaid, or even unemployed. With branding, you learn how to look at yourself as a product in a competitive framework. Branding is the process of differentiating that product – *you* - from the competition and taking action steps to get where you want to go.

Branding also requires that you target a market. A market is any group of people that you need to engage with in order to reach your goals. Clients or customers are a target market, as are the prospects you are pursuing. If you work at a company, you should view your colleagues and direct reports as target markets. Don't overlook your boss. In any company, your boss is probably your most important target market. Recruiters, industry leaders, and even competitors are also markets for your self-brand.

Branding shows you how to attract a market. Don't think in terms of what you want to say and do. Flip it. Think in terms of the reaction you want from your target market. And what you have to do to get that reaction.

Self-branding is not just good for you personally, it is good for the company, too. Branding teaches you how to be more strategic by staying relevant to the market and the latest thinking. It teaches you how to use advertising techniques to build a powerful verbal identity to express your ideas through signature words and expressions. Branding teaches you how to package your ideas for a strong visual identity, too, so they will break through and be remembered. And it teaches you how to use other branding techniques to build consensus and lead in today's competitive

global marketplace. The first thing you need to do is to commit. You must take an active rather than a passive role in defining yourself and your future.

Before you can develop a successful self-brand, you need to decide what you want. You need to ask and answer questions about who you are, where you are now, and what you want to do with your life and career. You should build your professional identity around your authenticity: who you are and what you can be, not who you want to be like or who others want you to be. You need to find out what's different about you and your abilities. And capitalize on it.

Self-branding is about making the most of what you've got. It's about daring to put forth a different idea. It's about responding to changes in the marketplace. Many of us keep doing the same things long after they are not working anymore; self-branding is about playing an active role in your career and life and learning how to position and market yourself to maximum advantage.

The first secret of personal branding is that the magic is in you. You can take charge and harness your passion and drive. Become emotionally and intellectually engaged in your professional and life journeys. Start to by understanding your Godly purpose. Seek your own solutions as inspired by God.

The more self-reliant you are, the more you discover about purpose and solutions. Start developing options for yourself rather than waiting for them. A surge in self-esteem is one unexpected benefit of finding your own solutions to your situation. And stronger self-esteem will make it easier for you to enact them.

Branding is a competition. It's a competition over what you stand for versus what someone else stands for. It's a competition over ideas. In self-branding, you're searching for your different idea, a

different idea that resonates with your target market. You're searching for a different idea that will help you compete and win. Each person's situation is unique, but the self-branding process involves analysing the facts in the marketplace and looking at ideas and options. But it also involves trusting your instincts and tapping into your intuition as you mould your future. You must use both your brains and your gut instincts as you focus your brand. There is no one right brand identity, benefit, or message, although some will be much more successful for you than the others will. Find the things about you that are remarkable enough to meet real needs in the marketplace. Focus on your different idea, create a different brand experience, but above all, do something.

Self-presentation (*your visual identity*) is important because of the link people make between what something looks like on the outside and what is on the inside. This attitude has a long history. The ancient Greeks and Romans felt that beauty of the body was synonymous with beauty of the spirit. We do this even today despite all the familiar admonitions, such as "*Beauty is only skin deep*" or "*Don't judge a book by its cover.*" The fact is that looks have a profound influence on our judgment of a brand or a person; visual identity tells us whether a brand is expensive or cheap, fun or serious, unusual or commonplace. A brand's visual presentation sells to us as adeptly as any salesperson does, sometimes even more so.

A good way to start developing your visual identity is by doing a personal visual inventory. What is your best feature? Worst feature? Explore what's different about you (height, shape, hair, features, and other expressions). What should you emphasize? Or de-emphasize?

Everything communicates visually - *from your shoes to the watch you wear, your hairstyle to your smile (or frown), your home*

*address to the car you drive.* All these things say something about you and contribute to the perceptions people form about you. Visual identity is such a powerful competitive tool today that even manufacturers and retailers of low-priced brands are turning to well-known artists, architects, designers, and celebrities to spiff up their products. That's why symbols and logos have always been powerful in translating ideas, establishing identity, and building communities. Religious symbols like the cross and the Star of David are full of meaning. They express concepts and emotions that most of us would have difficulty expressing in words. Yet a religious symbol can do it in a flash.

A Calling to Work

A decorative graphic consisting of a thick, dark grey L-shaped bar. The horizontal part of the bar is positioned above the text 'Chapter Two', and the vertical part extends downwards from the left end of the horizontal bar.

## **Chapter Two**

The seven characteristics of a calling - *awareness, apprenticeship, practice, discovery, profession, mastery, and legacy* - are not a formula. They are a description of the path you are already on; yet the experience of finding your calling can be both mysterious and practical. It takes effort but also seems to happen to you at times. What I've come to understand is that finding your purpose is more of a path than a plan: it involves twists and turns that you never expected. Ultimately these surprises lead you to your destiny. And once you arrive at what you thought was the destination, you realize it's only another leg in the journey.

Everyone, it seems, is searching for a purpose, for something to satisfy their deepest desires. I believe this "*something*" is a calling. Yet what is a calling? Quite simply, it is the reason you were born. A calling is that thing that you can't not do, an answer to the age-old question, "*What should I do with my life?*"

The word vocation comes from the Latin root *vocare*, which means "*to call*." It was originally used in a religious sense, as in a call to the priesthood. And for centuries, people thought of it as just that - *something reserved for an elite group of people, for those special few who were lucky enough to be called*. But what if that isn't true? What if a calling is something everyone has?

Before the call comes, we must possess some sense that awakens us to our purpose. Awareness, then, is what prepares us for the call. Before you know what your calling is, you must believe you are called to something. It doesn't matter if you know what. In order to cultivate awareness, you must be willing to act, to step out and see what happens. And once you are convinced that purpose will not find you, that you will have to go in search of it, you are ready. Most people waste the best years of their life waiting for an adventure to come to them instead of going out and finding one. They succumb to the status quo and dream of life being different

someday. Plagued with indecision, they wait, unsure of the right path to follow. And as they wait, they miss an opportunity to live.

Each of us has had surprises and setbacks in life, disappointments that have disrupted what we thought was the path of life. And we're left with something that looks less like a personal purpose and more like a mess. We can't control what life throws our way, but we can control how we react to it. As we do, maybe we come closer to a meaningful life than any plan could ever take us. To do this, though, we have to let go of what we think we deserve and embrace what is, which just might lead to something better than we ever could have imagined. We often think of a calling as something that comes to us, an epiphany that arrives when we least expect it. But the truth is, in some ways, it's already come. You already have some sense of what you're supposed to do with your life, even if you aren't sure what it is. The trick is to find your vocation hidden in your life. *What is your self-brand?*

What would you do if you could do anything? Everyone has an answer to that question. You might spend all day with the kids or travel the world or finally write that book. You might dedicate some serious time to a business idea or perhaps with the right resources buy a new camera to take photos all day at the park. Or maybe you'd just sit back and sip coffee on the porch with your spouse, embracing all the little things in life. If you pry hard enough, everyone has an answer to this question - *and that's an important clue*. The problem is so few of our lives look anything like what we want them to be. What prevents us from living the life we long for is fear. We fear the unknown and what we might lose - *our security, our reputation, our lives*. This is what keeps us from our life's work and what numbs our awareness to the call - *mystery*. We are afraid of what we don't know. But the truth is you will never have clarity.

Fear is a powerful deterrent, but it can also be an effective motivator. The fear of failure or rejection can be unhealthy and irrational, but fear of not telling your loved ones how much you care is important. So that not all fear is necessarily bad. Some people, though, let fear run their lives. They avoid risk, hoping to minimize the chances of failure, and in effect move in the opposite direction of a calling. The trick is to know when to listen to your fear and when to not.

If you pay attention to your life and the lessons it can teach you, you won't feel so lost. Your story will seem less like a series of disjointed events and more like a beautifully complex narrative unfolding before you. You will understand each setback, inconvenience, and frustration as something more than what it appears to be. And perhaps, as you listen to it, your life will speak. It may call to you in the early morning or late at night and tell you what you are meant to do with your gifts, your passions, and your abilities.

As you avail yourself to how your life may be speaking, you too must decide. Will you wallow in regret, wondering why such a thing has befallen you, or will you choose to act, making the most of your obstacle, and allow it to evolve into an opportunity? Listening is where finding your calling starts, but it's not where it ends. Our ears can only take us so far before our hands have to do the rest of the work; yet throughout this process of finding your life's work, you must be willing to look for mentors in unexpected places. Your friends, long-lost relatives, even old relationships that have dwindled down may become the sources of inspiration you need. Each person serves a purpose: some will arrive at just the right time to cheer you on, while others are there to identify with the struggles you're living. And even others will show up when you need them the most; all of these people in their own way are mentors, contributing to your apprenticeship. Samuel in the Bible

didn't know God was speaking to him until his mentor Eli helped him understand what was happening. The boy, according to the story, was hearing from God and still needed help. This is why apprenticeship is so important. Often, discovering what you're meant to do with your life doesn't happen until you have spent significant time serving someone else's dream. We learn what a calling looks like from mentors and predecessors before we can even begin to trust our own voice of calling. Only after you've put yourself in the shop of a master craftsman can you understand what your craft requires. This is the utmost step to your self-branding, that of apprenticeship towards discovering what works best for you.

An apprenticeship is designed to give you guidance from an expert, knowledge in a given field, and experience in a challenging environment, all of which prepare you for your future. But such an experience, as promising as it sounds, is not easy. It takes a lot of courage and tenacity to not only find but also finish an apprenticeship.

Every place you go, every person you meet, every job you have is a chance to gain greater clarity in your self-education. Life is the classroom, and if you are paying attention, you can recognize the daily lessons available. Each day is a new page in a textbook you never complete, and as you sit in the student's seat, you realize the apprenticeship has already begun. Our natural talent may not be enough. Neither is practice. Some skills will seem to come naturally while others have to be developed. We can try a lot of things, but some we will do better than others, and some failures are not challenges to overcome but signs of what we shouldn't be doing. But what we must have before any of this is an initial spark, that moment of inspiration when we light up.

Life is complicated and messy; not often looking like what the textbooks told us. Most of us struggle to find our way, and we are

desperate for guidance, which often seems unavailable. It can be tempting to check out and choose a seemingly safer path. The chance to do work that matters is a choice. Opportunities to learn and grow are available, if we're willing to look in the right places and humbly accept what we find. True practice is not just about learning a skill; it's about investing the time and energy necessary to discern if this is what you are meant to do. It's about using difficulty to discover what resonates and what does not. And as you see what does, you will take one more step in the right direction; success is a process of persevering through difficulties, but it's also about knowing yourself.

Every calling is marked by a season of insignificance, a period when nothing seems to make sense. This is a time of wandering in the wilderness, when you feel alone and misunderstood. To the outsider, such a time looks like failure, as if you are grasping at air or simply wasting time. But the reality is this it's the most important experience a person can have if they make the most of it. A calling is not merely a moment; it's a lifestyle, a constant progression of submitting to a larger purpose. When you are first called, whether it comes as a whisper or a roar, what you hear is only part of the big picture, a shadow of something bigger. And as you move toward your life's work, you must deepen that awareness, looking for signs to hone your understanding and for opportunities to change direction along the way.

We are caretakers of our vocations, stewards entrusted with a vision that is bigger than us. Our responsibility is not to hoard our gifts but to use them in challenging ways so that others can benefit. In short, your calling is a gift, one that is intended to be given away. A calling is conduit for life, allowing us to bring our skills and passions together in a satisfying, meaningful way.

Every person faces the ultimate insufficiency of their work. Every worker knows the limits of their labour. And every person who is called understands that there is danger in such a compulsion; the work can consume you if you let it. There is something in a compulsion that makes a person creative - *it is the will to not quit, obsessing over a single phrase or paint blotch until it is just right.* That thing that makes you stay up late or get up early or spend an inordinate amount of time on that project that no one will see - *that's what makes the work great.* But there is also an implicit warning in such compulsions.

What good, then, is it to pursue a calling if the pursuit may destroy you? How do we balance this tension between the ceaseless call of work and life itself? We must recognize what we don't know.

Responding

A thick, dark gray L-shaped graphic element consisting of a horizontal bar extending to the right and a vertical bar extending downwards from its left end.

## Chapter Three

Owning a small business has much more to do with vision and boldness than it does with profits and losses, which are a means to an end. In fact, the business itself is a means to an end. We start a business because we have a dream, a destiny fulfilled by creating a sustainable, beautiful business we love. Yet we are not always successful in this endeavour but still, it is this vision of creating something special, of making the world and our world better that drives us.

The bad news about starting a new business is that good ideas are not really that hard to come by, but oftentimes not that easy to implement. Every business you see when you drive down the street was once someone's beloved inspiration. But what did it take to turn that great idea into a successful business? How much time, effort, and money were involved? You can bet that the entrepreneur who started that busy business on the corner probably had no idea how difficult it would be to turn his vision into reality. So finding a good idea is just the beginning; in fact, it is the easy part. The trick is being able to successfully implement that idea. That is much more difficult.

Entrepreneurship is the world's oldest profession, known as a popular employment feature of the pre-industrial revolution era, which persisted throughout the 100-year industrial revolution and has been expanding ever since. A major explanation for entrepreneurship's steadfast persistence through the years is its ability to change and re-change form, renew itself, adjust to the demands of a particular time and place, and reinvent itself through the development of economic, technological, social and regulatory conditions. Today, the entrepreneurial society is still expanding but it is also continually transforming and redefining itself, such that the market and society as a whole can no longer imagine a world in which entrepreneurship would not exist.

Entrepreneurship means different things to different people, but the entrepreneurial personality is a crucial success factor to any new business. These traits are also increasingly in great demand at established multinational corporations.

Entrepreneurship is about what entrepreneurs do. Entrepreneur is a French word first appearing in the 1437 *Dictionnaire de la langue française*. Three definitions were listed in the dictionary, with the most common meaning referring to ‘*a person who is active and achieves something*’. The verb *entreprendre* means ‘*to undertake something*’. At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, an entrepreneur in France was viewed as *a person who takes risks*, but not all people who undertook risks were considered entrepreneurs. During the 18th century, a person who was contracted to perform a certain large task, generally for the state, for a fixed price was regarded as an entrepreneur.

Until the 18th century, there was no equivalent to the French entrepreneur concept in the English language. A Dictionary of the English Language from 1755 reported the following definition: *Adventurer, he that seeks occasion of hazard; he that puts himself in the hand of chance*. Over time, the concept of entrepreneur in English became more broadly defined and related to ‘*situations where one person engaged in projects involving risk where the profit was uncertain*’. By the end of the 18th century, the undertaker concept was replaced by the capitalist concept of a businessman.

The evolution of research into entrepreneurship began in 1730, when Richard Cantillon, a Parisian banker and economist, introduced the term entrepreneur (*literally undertaker in French*). His pioneer *Essai sur la Nature du Commerce en General* presented his first definition of entrepreneurship as self-employment of any kind. He stated that entrepreneurs buy at certain prices in the present and sell at uncertain prices in the future. The entrepreneur is

a bearer of uncertainty, he concluded. Following this, the French Jean Baptiste Say (1880), inspired by Adam Smith's economic theories, joined a group of laissez-faire economists known as the *idéologues*, who sought to relaunch the spirit of enlightenment in republican France. Say emphasized the essential nature of entrepreneurship to society as a whole, and defined the entrepreneur as *the agent who unites all means of production and who finds in the value of products, the re-establishment of the entire capital he employs, and the value of the wages, interest, and rent he pays, as well as profits belonging only to him or her.*

Christians have a somewhat schizophrenic view of entrepreneurs. We see them as something of a necessary evil; we recognize their value to some extent but also view them with scepticism and distrust, especially those who become wealthy. They are frequently viewed in a certain accusatory way, as though their wealth has come at the expense of others. This view stems from an incomplete understanding of what entrepreneurs do, how they function, and the role they play in God's order. Entrepreneurs are vital to fulfilling God's purpose. They are creative people who provide people with a way of serving others. In that sense, they display a divine characteristic. Furthermore, entrepreneurial activity is not restricted to commercial activity. Properly understood entrepreneurship is a special kind of stewardship, something to which we have all been called.

Genesis tells us that man is the only creature created in God's image. This is a wide-ranging statement and applies in many ways. We have an eternal part, we have the ability to commune with him and socialize with each other, we can reason and think as well as love and worship, and we have the ability to choose and act on those choices. It also means we have the ability to create. The first thing we are told about God is that he is a creator; creation is a

divine act and when humans create, they are displaying a certain part of their image-bearing nature.

The Bible tells us that when God began his creative work, the world was “*without form and void.*” In the Hebrew, the English phrase, “*without form and void,*” is *tohu wa-bohu*, and can accurately be translated as wilderness, chaos, emptiness, and darkness. God’s creative act brought order out of chaos and nothingness. While human creation is not as dramatic, there is still a sense that it brings order out of chaos and nothing. The blank canvas becomes a painting, the uncut stone becomes a statue, and the empty page becomes written music, but it is broader than that; the field of weeds becomes a garden, the stand of trees becomes a home, and the swamp becomes a city.

Human creation emulates the Genesis story; it is the same impulse at work put there by the master creator. God created heaven and earth *ex nihilo*; out of nothing. Man does not create out of nothing; he has resources with which to work. Some of these resources are natural and some are manufactured, but the point is that the entrepreneur takes the same resources that are available to everyone else the same twenty-four hours a day and creates a way to make life easier and better.

Besides our God-given instinct to create, we are also called to create; it is a duty. While each person is gifted in certain ways to perform certain work, we, as a race and as individuals, are called by him to be creative in whatever task he has for us. From the very beginning, Adam was given the task of naming the animals and was told to work and take care of the garden. While these assignments may not sound like creative acts, we are examining them after the fact. At the time, this was all new and required significant creativity. Adam was delegated some tasks as part of helping creation flourish; and in reality, we are all delegated such tasks.

One such creative activity is entrepreneurship. The common conception of an entrepreneur is a person who starts a business, but the definition is broader than that. An entrepreneur is an agent of change. *Entrepreneurship is the process of discovering new ways of combining resources.* There are several parts to this definition and not all of it is specific to activities in the commercial sector. Also, not all of it is tied to action; part of entrepreneurship is psychological. This definition could be seen as being out of order because before one takes a risk and becomes an agent of change, one must discover the new ways of combining resources. This does not necessarily mean forming a business. Some forms of entrepreneurship lead to the formation of an organization to capitalize on the new discovery, and many of those organizations are businesses, but that is not always the case.

Recognizing the broader definition is vital to seeing entrepreneurship as a creative act. As such, it fits nicely into God's order. Once a person has discovered a new way to combine resources, he becomes an agent of change which may include forming a business and managing it. But it all starts with an act of discovering. This seems to imply that these new ways are just waiting to be found and anyone could do it; yet being an entrepreneur is different, it is a *mindset* of always being alert; that is, always looking for new ways to do things. *Being an entrepreneur is a way a person sees the world coupled with the desire and perseverance to make the change he sees become a reality.*

Creativity, for the purposes of entrepreneurialism, is the envisioning of new combinations of resources and market realities, often through the questioning of conventional wisdom, the discovery of new knowledge with respect to market needs, technology, or the availability of vital resources, and finding new applications for pre-existing knowledge. Founding a new business, developing products

and services, or exploiting new organizational or business processes requires creativity, as a certain degree of thinking ‘*outside the box*’ is needed to transform the business, products or services into ones that are not simply ‘*more of the same*’ but at the same time remain appealing and attractive to potential clients. Creativity as an attribute is based on the prevailing social, cultural, economic and political climates, as these determine the direction that creativity will take.

Taking risk and discovering new ways to combine resources, however, is not just a traditional business activity. It may be most easily seen in the commercial sector but there is a rising awareness of the value of *social entrepreneurship*, the creative talents of people starting non-profit-type organizations. We have had this for years with groups like the Red Cross, but now there is a growing body of research and professional literature about *political* and *social* entrepreneurship.

Since entrepreneurship is primarily about discovering new ways, being agents of change, and being alert to new opportunities, then we must conclude that entrepreneurial activities are not exclusive to business formation. In other words, it is the entrepreneurial process, the God-given ability to create, that makes us human and differentiates us from other animals.

We are all commanded to be good stewards of that which is entrusted to us. In Jesus’ parable about the wealthy man who leaves monetary talents with his servants, the man punishes the servant who simply preserves the money without investing it. Preservation is not the goal; it does not please the Lord. The faithful servants were entrepreneurs - *or at least had entrepreneurial moments* - and were able to significantly increase their master’s wealth. They used the talents which put them at risk of loss but ultimately met the goal of improving that which was given.

Many people, including Christians, approach the environment as a preservation issue. This is a tempting approach, but it can lead to waste. At the very least, it is the equivalent of the disloyal servant in the parable, who buried the talent entrusted to him; a good approach to environmental stewardship is to use the resources to improve the earth. By using their entrepreneurial talents and creative impulses, people leave the ground in better condition than when they found it.

An analysis of the environment is one of the most important elements in weighing whether to launch a venture, in that it helps determine if, when and how to launch the business. Environment is a multifaceted entity that comprises different types of sub-environments (*economic, sociocultural, technological, etcetera*) and understanding the importance of analysing the environment prior to launching a business is therefore critical. Each sub-environment is characterized by distinct local conditions.

An artist may measure success when his art makes people think differently about something. For an entrepreneur, however, success is measured in profits and that implies commerce. It is true that one measure of profits is when revenues exceed costs but some of the misunderstanding surrounding entrepreneurship may be tied to a misunderstanding of profit and loss. Jesus gives us a broader and more biblical way to think about profit as a non-monetary concept when he asks, “*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul?*” Paul does the same when he talks about how dying would be gain. Both are focusing on true gain as opposed to temporary gain but that, after all, is what a true priesthood of every believer is all about.

Entrepreneurial culture is a multifaceted concept. Broadly speaking, rather than a job or a livelihood, entrepreneurship is a *mindset* and a *lifestyle*, and it is much more than just including ‘*we are entrepreneurs*’ in a mission statement. The entrepreneurial culture

is an inherent entity steeped within and directly affected by the environment in which an entrepreneurial venture exists. It is based on values and norms that guide the general activities and processes of the venture, and it activates the development of new, entrepreneurial-oriented values and norms for use in that same venture. As such, an entrepreneurial culture enables the business to be dynamic and adaptable by inventing and reinventing its internal activities and processes.

The economic environment of a new business is the main factor determining its chances of survival; it is therefore the most relevant and concrete dimension. Studying the pertinent data and information and the particulars of the local economic environment will facilitate penetration into the market of the product, and of the venture itself.

The sociocultural environment constitutes the sub-environment of potential customers for specific products and services. Entrepreneurs should acquire information about the potential customers' profiles in terms of their demographic and social characteristics, i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, economic status, familial status, and who the main consumers of the product are (*adults, families, children*). Such information enables the entrepreneur to adjust the products, services or complementary services to the potential consumers' needs. For example, in a shop for women's fashion, where most of the potential clients will be women, including mothers, a nursery where children will be taken care of while their mothers shop is a complementary service that is very relevant to the business's goals: such a service can only be planned by tracking the potential clients' characteristics.

The business's entrepreneurial culture must be led, nurtured, constantly monitored and adjusted. Much like preparing a culinary dish, establishing an entrepreneurial culture requires a combination

of the right ingredients and the right pace, to ensure that it develops and manifests itself in the business as expected and supports the business and entrepreneur's goals. Identifying the entrepreneurial culture that is best suited to one's intentions is thus crucial for the business operation.

Prior to launching a venture, entrepreneurs should conduct research on both the market and the environment in which they are planning to operate. They must have a thorough grasp of their potential clients' behaviours regarding similar products or services and be aware of the major trends in terms of the active clients' profiles and their motivation for purchasing the product to be offered. Thorough familiarity with the market is a valuable advantage at the prelaunch stage in either preparing a marketing plan that will attract clients already engaged with existing businesses (*for example, one that will attract people having dental treatments in one clinic to a new clinic that is planned for launch in the same area*), or to adjust the products or services of the planned business so that it will attract a different target clientele or answer different needs than those provided by the existing businesses (*e.g., the new dental clinic can offer a twenty four hour emergency switchboard or employ experts in dental treatments not available in the specific area*).

Entrepreneurs have been found to be creative and enthusiastic about the fruits of their creativity, and to have a zeal for the challenge of inventing new products and exploiting new ways of marketing. They are restless, and even the most successful ones are never fully satisfied with their accomplishments: they tend to continually look for additional and different paths to achieve their goals and realize their vision. Sustaining goal-directed action and utilizing coping strategies when faced with obstacles are also traits identified with entrepreneurs, as is tenacity, which has been consistently identified as a typical trait of both inventors and entrepreneurs.

Creativity

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## Chapter Four

The entry into the labour market of women, ethnic minorities, very young people, and retirees has enlarged the spectrum of human abilities and contributed to market viability. The market benefits from the unique characteristics and strengths of these new groups, as well as from their differences. Their entry into the market has also necessitated changes in both the organization of the workplace (e.g., *on-site cafeterias, work-out rooms, nursing rooms*) and work schedules (e.g., *flexible hours*). The employment of members of minority groups has led to changes in welfare rules, and employment of the physically or mentally challenged has necessitated the provision of services and facilities to enable their participation in the labour market. All of these require ongoing innovative and creative thinking for planning, designing and implementing methods and practices that will match the different and constantly changing needs as they arise.

Today's entrepreneurs may be highly educated, uneducated, or even illiterate; they may be trained professionals or lacking any trade or occupation; they may be very young (*adolescents have established their own enterprises*) or old enough to be out of the workforce; they may have had formal preparation for entrepreneurship or have learned about it along the way; yet more and more women have entered the field of entrepreneurship as the constraints of work and home have become less limiting for women in most countries.

Women are commonly believed to have more communal qualities relating to expressiveness, connectedness, relatedness, kindness, supportiveness, and timidity. Conversely, men are assumed to be associated with more agentic qualities such as independence, aggressiveness, autonomy, instrumentality, and courage. With regard to descriptive stereotypes relating to how men and women are, and prescriptive stereotypes relating to how men and women should be, there are commonly *gender-typical* roles and consensual beliefs. Men are generally viewed as more agentic and competent

than women. From a sociocultural perspective, stereotypes about women and men can relate to *gender-typical* social role stereotypes. Women can be viewed as homemakers. However, men are widely seen as the breadwinners. These assumed roles heighten consensual beliefs about the attributes of women and men. Culturally produced and socially learned gender stereotypes can manifest themselves in a perceived incongruity between the feminine and the entrepreneur leader role, and the attribution of entrepreneurial abilities. People generally associate masculine characteristics with entrepreneurs. This is termed *gender identification*. The phenomenon of ‘*think entrepreneur, think male*’ tallies with the concern that entrepreneurial theories are created by men, for men, and applied to men. Women can face prejudice. This prejudice can occur in situations that heighten perceptions of incongruity between the feminine gender role and the entrepreneurial leadership role.

Female entrepreneurs are over-represented in services and retailing, but there has been a growth in entry into the construction, wholesaling, and transportation sectors. Traditional service sectors are associated with high levels of new firm entry because of their low barriers to entry and lower resources required, as well as high levels of new firm closure. Many of the performance differences between female-and male-owned businesses can, in part, be due to choice of industrial sector rather than real differences between female and male entrepreneurs.

Today, anyone can be an entrepreneur, be they young or old, male or female, with formal preparation for entrepreneurship or thrilled to explore this path with no previous knowledge, with concrete or amorphous visions. All have a common drive; they are keen to develop themselves into their own, extant venture. Yet entrepreneurship is quite a difficult matter: it confronts individuals with various vague, risky and uncertain business situations. Some people find entrepreneurship a satisfactory, self-fulfilling career

path as it provides them with their desired livelihood matches their aspirations and fits their independent, free-spirited psychological characteristics; others are attracted to entrepreneurship as it fulfils their need for commitment and identification with their own creation, their own venture; yet others find it the best path for a protean career. Entrepreneurship fulfils different needs in different people as a preferred job and way of life.

The launching phase of a new enterprise is the entrepreneur's first contact with the nitty-gritty of the business world and the encounter between expectations, dreams and ideals and the actual market rules which can come as a '*reality shock*'. Such encounters are often totally unexpected, and even when known in theory, they may lead to disappointment and frustration. They may turn into an insurmountable hindrance preventing the entrepreneur from realizing his or her ideas. Entrepreneurs have to organize and systemize all their personal or acquired resources and to base them on accepted, practical models in order to manage the business from the very beginning. Those entrepreneurs who leave the management to more advanced stages then find themselves in many difficult situations because they did not standardize their management from the start. Hitherto, entrepreneurs are characterized as being creative, innovative, restless, and willing to take risks; professional managers are characterized as capable of organizing tasks and directing others through regulations, norms and procedures; and since professional managers see maintaining the company as their main goals, they are generally wary of risk-taking.

Enthused by their inventions and ideas, novice entrepreneurs are likely to underestimate the practical processes; they may lack sufficient knowledge of the basic facts and issues associated with venture creation (*the nitty-gritty of the business world*) and thus endanger the potential growth of their planned ventures. The implementation of an idea is far different from the preceding stage

of creative and inventive flowering of novel ideas. Implementation necessitates a thorough understanding of the industry and the sector where similar products and services are active, recognition of an opportunity, assessing the market's needs for the new products or services, clients' demands, and the market's saturation point.

Creativity is known to be an innate personality trait but it is affected by and reacts to the individual's family, social, cultural and economic environments. The interaction of all of these leads to creation and thus creativity is essential for the generation of novel ideas. Creative ways of thinking, interpreting and problem-solving, and using one's imagination, intuition and feelings on a day-to-day basis at work, are among the creative means of stimulating ideas. A useful example of how creativity functions can be found in music, literature, the arts and cinema, where it is clearly seen as a cyclical process: new artists borrow from the works of their predecessors and create new ones to be valued or appreciated in their own time and in the future. In the ensuing years, rising artists may look back upon and be inspired by these latter works and create newer and even more innovative ones.

The word entrepreneurship was adopted into the English language from the French *entreprendre*, meaning to *undertake*, launch or found something. Entrepreneurship, however, is a term that covers a much broader range of actions. '*Launching*' or '*founding*' is only the first stage in the creation of a venture, while entrepreneurship includes its successful and profitable continued existence. To launch and successfully run a venture requires certain critical resources, skills and abilities, one of which is creativity; with which in many entrepreneurial situations may appear in the form of innovation, inventive thinking, novel ideas, visions and dreams, or even curiosity, among others. Creativity is, in its totality, an expression of the unique ability to meld together into a working

relationship both the tangible and the intangible resources required throughout the existence of a business.

Entrepreneurs and their teams become more creative when they are motivated and enthused about their work, when they have passion and an interest in what they are doing and when they feel satisfaction with the challenge posed by the situation, their ideas and their achievements. Although some people probably possess more creative skills than others, a creative atmosphere that is developed and introduced into the business may intensify the creativity there. However, the first step to developing a creativity-stimulating atmosphere is knowledge. Any type of creative work must start with research into what already exists; then stimulating and creative atmosphere can be crafted.

A creative idea arises, or perhaps springs up as a vision or phantasmagoria, and evolves during its incubation period in the individual's subconscious or semi-conscious (*or even fully conscious*) mind. It is during this stage that connections are made between the existing elements and imaginary ideas, some even seemingly contradictory, unsuitable or unrealistic. The incubation phase has both mental and emotional aspects: it is not enough to have or to acquire the ability to make mental connections between the real and the imagined ideas or situations; there has to be an emotional driving force that fosters creativity.

Creativity is a major component in the complex process of venture creation, and it should be practiced by entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs in order to maintain mental flexibility and prove themselves capable of coping with, and utilizing, different ideas. Creativity can and should be implemented throughout the entrepreneurial process, including creation of the business plan and the differentiation processes. Creativity embedded within these seemingly non-creative processes confers a competitive advantage

to the entrepreneurial business. To foster such ongoing creativity, the entrepreneurial business should establish environments that will stimulate creativity among its staff. In order to maintain their creativity, entrepreneurs should be accepting and tap into that side of themselves that is the dreamer or the visionary, and not be judgmental or self-judgmental about creative ideas. This means accepting the need to think freely and boundlessly, to try out new possibilities, and to play with new ideas.

To fuel their creative drive, entrepreneurs should establish rituals or a discipline that incorporates time for creative thinking: these may include teamwork, allocating weekly '*time out*' for activities that stimulate creativity; analysing brainteasers, figuring out complicated dilemmas, or even solving high-quality riddles and puzzles.

Entrepreneurial businesses become successful by filling the market's existing needs, interests and insufficiencies. Opportunities to start new businesses that will meet such needs exist everywhere, yet any given entrepreneurial opportunity is not obvious to all entrepreneurs. Some individuals are more sensitive to market needs than others and can identify such opportunities more easily. To exploit opportunities, the entrepreneur should be able to add extra value to the existing identified opportunities, and this is dependent on the knowledge corridor which allows certain individuals, but not others, to recognize certain opportunities. Alertness and prior experience or knowledge of markets, customer problems or their needs advance the process of identification for some individuals.

Social Enterprise

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**Chapter Five**

These days, new venture creation plays an essential role in renewing the economic and social fabric. In most societies, new ventures are regarded as the main contributors of innovation, creating jobs and providing added value. The wealth of a nation depends on its ability to generate innovation, and most of that innovation is the product of new ventures.

All entrepreneurship is social. As a mentor of mine once said, *“unless you’re trading illegal or harmful substances, you’re producing positive social outcomes by creating jobs, building the economy, and advancing human capacity.”*

The reason we use the terminology of social entrepreneurship, and the reason it has developed into a field of its own over the past decades, is that despite all the commercial entrepreneurship out there, despite all the industry and business and enterprise, there are still huge chunks of the human population without basic human needs. Water, sanitation, education, and basic health services and knowledge, which most of the world’s population take for granted, are still today, in the midst of the third millennium, inaccessible for over a billion people.

Understanding the social challenges we are facing; co-creating solutions with the community; creating products and services in contexts not currently served by the markets; building resilient business plans around those products and services while adhering to the social mission; mobilizing financial, human, and other resources; and building initiatives and organizations that work to maximize social impact; these are the basic frameworks we have seen to maximize the chances of success of a social venture.

The concept of social entrepreneurship is, in practice, recognized as encompassing a wide range of activities: enterprising individuals devoted to making a difference; social purpose business ventures

dedicated to adding for-profit motivations to the non-profit sector; new types of philanthropists supporting venture *capital-like* investment portfolios; and non-profit organizations that are reinventing themselves by drawing on lessons learned from the business world. In the past decade social entrepreneurship has made a popular name for itself on the global scene as a new phenomenon that is reshaping the way we think about social value creation. Some of these practices are uniquely new however many have been around for a long time having finally reached critical mass under a widely endorsed label.

While commercial entrepreneurship often responds to a market opportunity, social entrepreneurship often tackles a market failure; and when the bottom line of a commercial enterprise is financial profit, the bottom line of a social enterprise is the social impact it creates.

Social entrepreneurship is a form of social service and, like all forms of social service, is a path toward positive social change to improve the conditions, livelihoods, and standard of living of populations and ecosystems. Positive social change comes through multiple pathways, which can include advocacy, lobbying, awareness campaigns, policy papers, research, teaching, legislative changes etcetera. Social entrepreneurship is simply one of these pathways and is characterized by the application of business methods to providing social products or services.

While financial viability is a key to success, in social entrepreneurship, it is considered a means to an end and not an end in itself. The end goal and the only bottom line of a social venture is its social impact. What are the characteristics that determine whether the social impact is effective, sustainable, and scalable? An effective social venture is built around a solution that is evidence based. This can begin with an idea that has not been tested and that

has been developed through a small pilot project to determine what works and what doesn't before scaling into a larger growth stage. This involves collecting data to measure the social impact, in order to deliver the social product or service using the formula that has been proven to work best for the target population based on current knowledge.

To be effective, the social venture must be accessible to the target population. No matter how effective a solution is in design, or how powerful a new technology is, if it does not reach the last mile, it will not have a social impact. Oftentimes, this last mile can be quite literal, such as in the case of health products or services that cannot be delivered to the patients who need them because of inadequate roads. In other cases, bridging the gap between the intervention and the target population requires changing the design, cost, and other features of the product or service to meet the sociocultural and economic characteristics of the target population. This is also part of making it acceptable to the end user, within the local context and culture.

Many of the skills needed to start a social venture are very similar to those needed in starting a commercial enterprise. These include building the organizational structure, business planning, accounting, marketing, project management, human resource management, communications, stakeholder analysis, and building external partnerships. In addition to these basic business skills, social entrepreneurs must further be able to characterize the problem they are trying to solve by collecting information on characteristics of the affected population, existing obstacles and infrastructure, and past attempts to solve the problem and why they have failed. A process to co-create the solution with the community then takes place to ensure that it is accessible, affordable, and acceptable by the community. Social entrepreneurs also set measurable objectives to monitor and evaluate the social impact they set out to create.

Thus, the skill set required by a social entrepreneur includes skills from the worlds of both business and social services.

Characterizing a social challenge consists of two points of view: seeing the problem and seeing the opportunity. The problem is the issue you would like to change. The opportunity is the part that you think you can change about it. Sometimes, the opportunity is staring you in the face! Other times, you have to work hard for it. The reason it's important to understand these two aspects is that it's not uncommon for a social entrepreneur to start by seeing an opportunity first. You might see an untapped resource, and think about ways to mobilize that resource to solve a social problem. An example of an untapped resource that could be turned into an opportunity is a human resource, such as young people who could volunteer to improve their environment or society; or a group of women working in the same village who could be brought together to form a social fund. But even when you are working to meet an opportunity such as an untapped resource, you need to trace back the social impact you want to create, to the social challenge you are addressing. Understanding why the problem exists and the channels through which it manifests itself will allow you to more strongly build your solution around the problem. The reason it's important to start with the problem (*or trace back the opportunity to the problem*) is that there is something about the world that you are hoping to change. Understanding what that is and putting it at the heart and core of your social venture will help ensure that all the work you are putting into this will in fact create the impact you are trying to achieve.

Why is it important to spend so much time characterizing the challenge? It may seem like a waste of time to many readers at first, who are eager to take action. We know the problem exists, you might be thinking studying it to death will not help anyone; we need to start solving it! This is very true, and this book embodies the

essence of taking action to solve social problems. However, it cannot be emphasized enough that before diving in to take action, time must be invested in ensuring that the social entrepreneur has all the information at hand. Data is power. The more you know about a situation, the higher your likelihood of success in making changes which result in tangible improvements to the affected population. It is absolutely not an option to start your social venture without taking the time to review the available information, synthesize it, and think about what changes are feasible to make and how.

As a social entrepreneur, feel free to unleash the visionary in you. Acknowledging the importance of having an in-depth understanding of why things are the way they are today does not mean putting aside the ability to imagine how they could be different. If you have a vision of how things could be better, that is a good place to start too. The main recommendation here is that you first ask yourself why things aren't like that already and what the challenges are that people face today, and then you can be better equipped to make things into what you think they should be.

It goes without saying that most social and environmental challenges are multidimensional. Environmental deterioration, poverty, lack of social safety nets, and unemployment are all due to multiple causal pathways that cannot all be solved with the same intervention. Many humanitarian organizations, foundations, private investors, and other funders often search for a *silver bullet* that will solve a problem with one solution. If only it were that simple! Social and environmental outcomes are multifaceted and there are no silver bullets. Social entrepreneurs working together to tackle various causal pathways will have a transformative cumulative impact if they can identify the exact challenge they are tackling, the pathways they are zeroing in on to tackle it, and the impact they will demonstrate as a result.

Is it just another buzzword or catch phrase to say “*start by characterizing the challenge*”? What exactly does this mean?

Characterizing the challenge means knowing exactly what you are facing. Narrowing it down to a manageable scope thus becoming an expert in the topic you are working on: both a subject matter expert and a field expert.

Next, write down who is affected by this challenge. Try to think of the different groups of people. Does it affect certain ages more than others? For example, some social challenges affect vulnerable populations, like the very young and the very old, the most. Air pollution is one such example: it affects the heart and lungs of infants and the elderly more than the average adult. Does it affect certain genders more than others? For example, some social challenges affect women more than men, or vice versa. Lack of access to water is one such example: girls and women in remote rural settings around the world spend hours each day walking to the nearest water source, collecting water, and walking back. In many cases, this has a detrimental effect on girls’ ability to attend school. Age and gender are examples of what we call “*sociodemographic indicators*.” These are descriptive data that indicate population characteristics. Other sociodemographic indicators are income level and occupation: many social challenges disproportionately affect those with low incomes or those with certain occupations.

In addition to the sociodemographic distribution, you need to define the geographic distribution. Where is this problem observed? How widespread is it? Does it affect different people in different places, in different ways? Answering these questions will help you to think about where you might have the opportunity to change it. Don’t be afraid to dig deep. Oftentimes, data are available only at the aggregate level. This means that you might easily find global averages, regional averages, or country averages. But there is so

much variability at the local level; you need to look beyond the surface.

Another tricky aspect you need to think about in terms of geographic distribution whether the causes and the symptoms observed in the same places. Knowing that there are multiple causes for each problem, it might help to ask the question: which causes are localized, and which stem from far away?

This brings us to the root causes. Understanding the root causes is the foremost important part of this journey. This is not to say that you will always be able to tackle them at the roots. But keep digging until you find the roots, and then you can step back and ask yourself how deep down your solution can go. Most social entrepreneurs would agree that if they have the opportunity to tackle a challenge at its root, they would go for it. If it is not feasible, then they would at least go as far down the causal pathways as possible, in order to maximize the resulting impact.

Don't be satisfied with just listing the root causes without understanding as much as you can the mechanisms by which these causes result in the outcomes you are looking to change. Tracing the pathway of each root cause to its associated outcome is one way to do this. You might end up with a lot more information than you signed up for, but this is okay. Remember our mantra, *data is power*.

Try to think in as many dimensions as you can. This might sound abstract to you, but think about a circle you might see from far away. If you get closer and try seeing the circle from different points of view, you might find out it's actually a sphere. That changes the nature of the object entirely. Same goes for anything in life. When understanding a social challenge, it's important to think about its different dimensions. The depth of impact is one example.

Is this a problem that's faced by many people, affecting different people in different ways? Could there be a small number of people who are strongly affected, versus a large number of people who are impacted to a lesser degree? The spread of the challenge versus the depth is one important dimension for you to think about when getting to know your challenge.

Knowing yourself is the first step to becoming a leader. While we are dynamic beings and our strengths and weaknesses evolve over time, assessing your current skills and characteristics can help you think about what you have to offer. Are you a person who enjoys research, digging up facts, and exploring different options before you take action? Are you an ideas person, who gets excited about potential solutions but may not always follow through on your leads? Are you a great communicator, do you enjoy working with people, or do you prefer to work quietly in a less social setting? All of these characteristics can be extremely valuable (*there is no one winning formula*). The reason it is important to assess yourself is because in choosing your topic, you are effectively matching yourself. Are you well matched to venture into a tropical forest? Are you well matched to code software that can be used for a mobile app? What activities do you excel at? It is completely okay to get out of your comfort zone and tackle a challenge that might not be an easy feat for you, but it's important to know your propensity so that you can surround yourself with the people, knowledge, and other resources needed to complement your skills and strengths.

Now that you've zoomed in on the challenge you're addressing and learned everything you can about it, the best people to figure out a way to solve this challenge are the ones most involved and most affected. You can help facilitate, organize, and bring resources to the solution, but you can't create it from scratch all by yourself.

Ideas are easy to come by, but implementable ideas are not always as straightforward as you might think. To find the idea that has the best chance of succeeding, it's important to first live and experience the challenge yourself. The best way to ensure that your solution is feasible and helpful to implement for a certain target audience is to develop it hand in hand with that person and that community.

A community is a social group bringing together individuals sharing one or more things in common. They could be either living in the same place and facing the shared challenges and opportunities associated with that place, or they could be a subpopulation with a shared culture and way of living. Within any community, there are always diversity and variability. A community is a good starting point to understanding the social challenges faced by different groups of people and how each group interacts with that challenge. Once you are immersed within a community, you will gain an understanding of the individual variabilities that lie within.

In most cases, you will discover that the solution you are seeking to formulate is neither mysterious and elusive nor necessarily a complex or sophisticated new idea. Rather, the most likely solution you will find is a simple one that brings together existing pieces at the community's fingertips. As the social entrepreneur, you are adding value by bringing together the pieces of a potential supply chain that already exist in some shape or form. The solution is out there; its different components are already in the community or an arm's reach away, and the job of the social entrepreneur is to build a new vision of putting them all together.

One of your most important roles is to serve as a connector; keenly observing the different resources, stakeholders, opportunities, and gaps in your community and finding ways of putting them all together. Keep your eyes open for those untapped resources, talk to as many community members and stakeholders as you can, and

build your base of supporters who will champion your solution. Also keep in mind which of these characteristics you have and which you'll need to look for in others whom you want to recruit into your team. By connecting the existing pieces of the puzzle, you are acting as a catalyst. Just as an enzyme brings together different molecular components and catalyses the formation of a new molecule, the connector brings together different people, ideas, and resources and catalyses the formation and implementation of a new social solution. *“The closer an idea or product comes to a connector, the more power and opportunity it has.”*

The key point to remember here is that you need others. The enzyme is only serving to bring together the components of the molecule; without these components, the new molecule is not created. Just as we rely on connectors to put us together with new people, we rely on others to put us in touch with information and other resources.

Before you venture out to collect more information on your challenge and the people it affects, put together a starting team. This team will change and grow as you add members of the community and other players to the picture. It will continue to evolve as you search for specific talents and skills along your journey to help you formulate your solution and build your venture. But for now, what is your starting point? Don't go at it alone. It could be colleagues, classmates, friends, or other contacts. It could be local leaders, grassroots organizations, and other social networks. As you think about what steps need to be taken, think about who needs to be by your side to help make sure you don't drop the ball.

If you're starting out on your own, what existing groups and resources can you tap into? These could include interest groups, study groups, youth groups, faith groups, professional networks, or a multitude of other social structures bringing together like-minded

people. Is there anyone you've worked with or volunteered with in the past who might be able to help?

What skills do you need? Look not only for those whose interests match yours but also those whose skills complement yours. If you are a numbers person, you'll definitely need to take along a people person - and vice versa! Look for diversity in age, background, gender, and other characteristics because it will help you to have multiple people looking at the situation with multiple perspectives.

Social entrepreneurs are both visionaries and the ultimate realists: they are restless people who *want to change the world*, concerned with the practical implementation of their vision above all else. They act as agents of change for society, seizing opportunities, identifying global problems and improving systems, inventing new approaches, and creating solutions, all to change society for the better. A deep unwavering belief in their innate capacity to contribute meaningfully to economic and social development and a passion to make that happen, drive social entrepreneurs to manage their ventures towards social change. They typically measure their success in terms of the impact they have on society; however, although seeking primarily to generate social value rather than profits, they manage their ventures in a business-oriented, practical fashion, often using market principles and forces.

Marketing

A dark gray L-shaped graphic consisting of a vertical bar on the left and a horizontal bar on top, meeting at a right angle. The horizontal bar extends to the right, underlining the text 'Marketing' and 'Chapter Six'.

**Chapter Six**

Every venture has a mission, vision, and core set of values. These drive the work of the organization or initiative, and every person, process, decision, or output related to the venture always refers back to these driving factors.

You've already started to form a vision of how things could be different from the way they are today. Now, that vision is starting to take shape. It's time for you to start thinking about how you will put into a clear, concise statement a description of the world you are trying to create. This helps ensure that all stakeholders are clear on what you represent and why you are doing what you are doing. Most importantly, it helps you and your team keep your eyes on the prize.

Your value proposition captures how this vision, mission, and set of values translate into benefits for your end user. What are you offering people? How will you make their lives better? Quite literally, what value are you proposing? Why should people give you their attention, time, and money?

Your value proposition is the added value you're contributing to peoples' lives. It is important to be able to clearly and concisely describe what your product and service are, who your end user is, and how you are making their lives better. This is because you are going to be building the components of your social market strategy around this value that you are trying to create. This is how you will take your solution to market.

As part of articulating your value proposition, make sure you've captured your unique selling point (USP). What makes your product or service better than the alternatives? What are you offering that no one has offered before, or how is what you are offering better? Is it more affordable, is it more effective, is it more user-friendly, is it all of the above? Is it simply the first of its kind, with data

demonstrating the demand? Your USP will explain why your end users should turn to you, rather than the best possible alternative out there.

The main advantage you have compared with others who have tried to build social solutions in the past is that you've built it with your end user. By now, you know that people will likely not be interested if you just come up to them and try to introduce a product or service by informing them that this will make them healthier, more productive, or replenish their environmental resources for the future. The thing about social outcomes is that they are long-term concepts. People are focused on their immediate needs and their lives in this moment.

Social outcomes arise from the establishment of the cultural identity of the firm, the opportunities for social interaction generated by the new venture, the creation of new organisational networks and the formation of *inter-organisational* trust. In addition, the establishment of a physical base from which to run the enterprise has the potential to make a positive environmental contribution to the community and region in which it is based.

An important part of building your business model is estimating the number of people you are trying to reach. So far, we've thought a lot about who your end user is and what their characteristics are. Now it's time for you to calculate how many people you're targeting.

This is different from what you did at the start of your journey while characterizing your challenge. At that stage, you were researching how many people are affected by the social outcome you're addressing, but now that you've developed your solution and are working on your business model, how many of them do you think you can reach?

Estimating your market size is extremely challenging, but it's critical to know what kind of denominator you're dealing with here. Billions of people around the world may be affected by the social challenge you're addressing. Are you aiming to reach them all?

Measuring and optimizing your costs will be key to your success in both maximizing your customer base and ensuring your financial sustainability. Your goal is to make the product or service as affordable and accessible as possible, and that means offering the value needed to produce the desired social outcome in the most affordable manner. If making it low in costs results in a lower quality or durability product, which does not result in the desired outcome, then it defeats the purpose. So when thinking about affordability, think beyond lowering costs. Sometimes, your end user can't afford a low-quality, low-durability product; they might require other aspects that will get them to where they need to go in terms of escaping a poverty trap.

Affordability isn't necessarily always contingent just on how you manufacture your solution; it can also be attained through financing the product, for example, through creative payment schemes or through creative distribution schemes. These multiple aspects should all be reflected in your marketing plan and your business plan.

While the cost refers to what you're paying to produce, promote, and distribute your product or service, the pricing component refers to what you're charging your customers or clients. Not only the price you set but also how you'll communicate it is part of your marketing strategy. After all, you are pricing and promoting this product or service in a way that will allow you to penetrate your target market to the largest extent possible. Your target market is the end user you've described in your customer section. In most cases, a social entrepreneur's goal is simple, to make the product or

service affordable for as many people as possible. In this case, the pricing is a reflection of the cost of production and distribution, adding only the administrative costs of running the organization to make sure that you break even.

In certain cases, you can price your product or service below the cost of production, if you're able to subsidize it with other activities or sources of revenue. These may include donations from fundraising, corporate sponsors, or the addition of multiple revenue-generating activities that can cover the costs of one another. An example of the latter is when an organization offers multiple products or services to multiple customer bases, some with higher profit margins than others. This is called differential pricing, and it allows the organization to cross-subsidize the lower-priced items using the profits from the higher-priced items.

If your research suggests that your end user is willing and able to pay more than the amount resulting from the previous formula, then you might want to consider charging more. This does not necessarily conflict with your mission, as long as charging a higher price is reflected by a corresponding increase in your social impact. If you're able to produce a product or service at extremely low cost but want to value it at a higher price depending on the purchasing psychology you're experiencing in your target audience, this increased profit margin may in fact allow you to scale your operations and reach more people. If you're not sure, you can go back and conduct market research similar to the community-driven research you conducted at the start; it's all part of the co-creation process. What do people want, how much will they pay for it, how would they like it packaged, and where would they like it sold? Listen to your end users and you will find the answers. If you're dealing with a diverse target audience and some may be able to pay more than others, you may consider differential pricing.

Understanding your competition is part and parcel of understanding your customer. Even if you think your product is unique and is fulfilling an unmet need, there is most likely another organization or service provider your target audience is turning to at this very moment. You want them to come to you instead in the future. If you've conducted your community-driven research thoroughly, you'll have all this information at your fingertips already. If not, go back and put yourself in your target audience's shoes.

Literally, physically go to the other organizations and service providers, or call them on the telephone. Find out exactly what they are offering, how much they are charging, and the other costs associated with accessing this product or service (*transportation, time off from work, etcetera*). Ask your target audience who they go to, and why. Would they be interested in your product or service, and what characteristics would make them become your customers or clients?

Oftentimes, your product or service is truly unique and is offering a solution for the first time to this target audience, that no one else has offered before. Still, you're competing with something else for their time and money. What alternatives have they been turning to, to deal with this social challenge and related co-challenges? Even if it's been a *band-aid* rather than a solution or on the flip side, something that has been making it worse; you are asking them to abandon old practices and develop new ones. Getting to know people's activity patterns and decision-making processes is part of characterizing your customer and also part of characterizing your competition. Where are they putting their time, thought, attention, and money right now, which you want them to be putting on you instead?

If your solution is competing with existing products or services or with other alternatives that people turn to in the absence of a

solution, people will choose you if you can convince them that you offer more value. This is why you need to understand who your target customer or client is and how they make their decisions. Are they looking for the solution that's the easiest to understand, the easiest to access, the most effective, the lowest cost, or more likely, some combination of these? Who else is offering them related solutions, and what are you offering that others aren't? It helps to compare yourself with other alternatives via a positioning matrix. Filling out a positioning matrix will help you see who your closest competitors are. These will be the ones literally positioned the closest to you on the matrix. It might help to start with just a two-axis grid comparing price and quality to first do a kitchen sink analysis of all potential competitors. Then, once you've identified your closest competitors, you can do a multidimensional analysis to figure out where your USP is that distinguishes you from them.

Important to know is that the strongest convictions in marketing is if it contributes to business performance and sustainability substantially more than any other organizational strategy. In the context of entrepreneurship, this conviction is even more compelling, as success depends on the customers' perception of the products and services offered by a business as the highest value proposition available in that market; thus entrepreneurial businesses must create constructive, mutually beneficial exchange relationships with their customers to build this perception, thereby ensuring an advantageous market position and competitive advantages. This is the core of marketing. While entrepreneurship means leveraging innovation to create products, processes, and strategies that better satisfy customer needs, marketing is the constant pursuit of opportunities to create additional value for the customers through innovation of the business products, processes, and strategies. To do so, entrepreneurs should master the marketing-plan process and determine, through market analysis, the various factors of the market that are related to their product and services (*e.g., legal,*

*economic, and technological considerations*), identifying their active and potential customers, and defining the best route to reach those customers, as well as identifying their competitors.

Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Marketing is not only an ongoing activity for entrepreneurs: it is one that involves various combinations of marketing techniques and strategies.

Marketing techniques and practice include product development and improvement, pricing and re-pricing, special sales, public relations, advertising, packaging, distribution and development of new promotional campaigns, among others. All of these are based on the entrepreneurs' (1) understanding of the customers' needs; (2) promise of value for the customer; (3) communicating this value to the target market, and (4) facilitating acquisition of the products and/or services. Simply stated, marketing is everything entrepreneurs do in order to bring their products and/or services to the notice and into the hands of potential customers.

Marketing is more than simply selling a product. It is based on selling a concept that plays to consumers' unvoiced question: 'What will this product do for me?' It is based on potential customers' needs and demands combined with their perceptions of what the product can do for them, and their readiness to purchase it even when it is clearly unsuitable.

Operations



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## **Chapter Seven**

Developing a market strategy is not enough to get your solution across the last mile. Careful consideration is needed on the nuts and bolts of operations and distribution. This is where many social interventions have failed.

Management of the different pieces of the supply chain is what we are referring to when we use the word operations - *it's the functioning of your social venture, the processes required to get to the outcomes you're aiming for*. Operations refers to the day-to-day activities required to produce and deliver your solution. These will depend on your distribution model and other aspects of your multidimensional market strategy.

Prototyping and *pilot-testing* an idea are completely different from rolling it out. How can you create systematic processes through which you provide your social product or service to your target audience? This not only helps you ensure the results that are so critical to reaching your social impact targets, it also helps you set up your venture in a streamlined way, minimizing resources and maximizing output.

Process mapping refers to the clarification of how exactly the moving parts of your product or service will flow between these different components to get to the final end goal. The result is literally a step-by-step description of your core operations, similar to a recipe or instructions manual for your team. This includes distribution. At the start of your journey, you defined the “*last mile*,” that missing gap that is preventing your end user from overcoming this social challenge. How are you going to get your product or service across the last mile? The process map includes each and every step taken from A to Z.

As your organization grows, you might end up having more than one process map for the different departments and subsections of

your venture. But for now, let's focus on your main operation, the primary product or service you offer. How is your social product or service produced, how is it offered to the customer, who is involved at each step, where does it take place, and when?

Process maps can help you make sure that nothing falls through the cracks; they also help you chart out the resources you'll need and the room for growth. Process maps need to be revisited in the future as your organization grows to figure out what redundant steps can be eliminated, enhanced, or improved. They may also change as you refine your distribution channels. Going into the nitty-gritty details of how it will all work will help you ensure that you don't drop the ball when it comes to delivering.

The simplest model of distribution entails taking the same package (*your core product or service*) and offering it to more people. To do this, you'll need to carefully think through the processes this would entail. Do you have enough resources to reach more end users? How will the increased operations affect and be affected by economies of scale? What geographic areas do you aim to cover, and will you need to tailor your package to the local context as you spread? Even if you have created a standardized package that does not need tailoring and can be replicated across subpopulations and geographies, you may have to customize your marketing, pricing, or other aspects that vary across location.

Now that you have a more concrete and detailed idea of what needs to be done, you need to make sure you have the right people surrounding you to execute it. Your starting team and your design team might not necessarily be the same people who will launch your venture with you. This is one of the hardest parts of building a social venture. It depends on who's invested and who has the right skill set.

By “*who’s invested*,” we mean who is in this with you for the long haul. You will get financial investors at a future stage to fund your venture, but that’s not what we’re talking about right now. If you are going to do this, if you are really committed to make this happen, then you may likely not get paid for a while. There will be a lot of sacrifices you will have to make. You need to make sure that the people who have been by your side up until now are committed to making those sacrifices.

By “*who has the right skill set*,” we mean who can be a true partner in complementing your strengths and weaknesses. You will get a lot of compliments for your work, but that’s not what we’re talking about right now. You need to think about the competencies needed to build a venture and make sure your founding team includes those competencies: someone who can be outward facing and build bridges, someone who can be inward facing and build systems, someone who’s good at the business side, and someone who’s good at the programmatic side. It’s time to start thinking about who is going to take this dive with you. The composition and structure of your team moving forward is one of the most critical factors which will determine your success. Finding the right people is not easy.

Resourceful entrepreneurs transform the advantages they find into opportunities, and the opportunities they find into advantages. To do either or both of these requires the ability to see operable innovations; that is, to have a fresh way of looking at things. It also requires the entrepreneurs’ persistent and proactive search for all of the expertise related to the proposed product or service. They must also search for reliable and relevant information on the development and trends of the targeted market, and on the tastes and demands of the potential consumers. This is of immense importance because the emergence of a new idea is not automatically an applicable innovation, nor can every applicable innovation be transformed into a successful entrepreneurial business. The immediate utility and

necessity of the product or service, or the anticipation of its future utility, should first be established.

The entrepreneur of today is not only a creative inventor, but also the salesperson that will have to personally promote his or her innovative ideas, or directly oversee the agent entrusted with this important phase. Since people are generally resistant to change, entrepreneurs who create new ideas have to engage in an ongoing process of promoting their ideas by convincing others of their value. Entrepreneurial success is never guaranteed, even in the case of the most promising, innovative entrepreneurial businesses or those having already cooperated with investors.

Networking is based on a peer assistance approach, in which entrepreneurs feel free to ask the members of their networks questions, even those exposing their ignorance in certain areas. Entrepreneurs usually express their problems and dilemmas better in front of their peers (*other entrepreneurs*) than in front of professionals and, most important, they better understand their peers' suggestions, as they are clear and simple and are not fraught with professional jargon or tools. Moreover, it is a *give-and-take* process, and thus entrepreneurs who cannot afford any supportive assistance can benefit from their network's experiences and suggestions free of charge. People attached to networks often hear the question '*How can I help you?*' and know that the people asking it are more than happy to supply answers, by sharing their experiences and expertise in a '*givers-gain*' approach. These elements can improve entrepreneurs' performance as well as their businesses' performance at many different levels. In addition to the potential for improving firm performance when participating in a network, members may meet other members who are their competitors, and profit from getting to know them better and establishing relationships with them that are founded in trust and honesty.

Before you seek funding, make sure you're surrounded by the nonfinancial support that you need. Your internal team should be composed of people who are in it for the long haul, just like you. Of course, once you secure funds, you will be able to hire others. But your cofounders and founding team are those who have skin in the game and are willing to take risks with you, sweat with you, and pull all-nighters with you, if needed. Asking people to put their name on a start-up means that you are asking them to have a vested interest. This applies not only to your internal teammates but also to those who you assemble around you for guidance and mentorship.

The success of a new venture often depends on an entrepreneur's ability to establish a network for the mobilization of financial resources. One of the most important key benefits of networks for the entrepreneurial process is the access they provide to information and advice, which may lead to better financial resources for the business. The reliance on networks is not constrained to the start-up stage. Entrepreneurs continue to rely on networks for business information, advice, and problem-solving, with some contacts providing multiple resources; effective networks have also been found to affect both survival and financial performance of entrepreneurial. Trustworthy ties with suppliers, competitors, distributors, customers, or financial organizations can be important as conduits of information and know-how and can lead to reliable information flow, advice and beneficial business exchange.

Every entrepreneurial business longs to make better valuations, choose the right financing sources, avoid costly pitfalls and determine the best financial strategy for sustainability and growth. Yet entrepreneurs are often unqualified in identifying, choosing or evaluating the financial processes that will best fit their businesses; moreover, they consider the process of financing the business a one-dimensional 'assignment' to be accomplished.

Stewardship

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## Chapter Eight

For Christians who believe that merely doing what you're being paid to do is enough, you'll find a call to the second mile in **Luke 17:7-10**: *“And which of you, having a servant ploughing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat?’ But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me ‘til I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink?’ Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”* Did you catch that? According to Jesus Christ, if you do only what you are required to do, your performance is nothing special and is unworthy of acclaim. This standard by which your behaviour is to be judged takes away going the second mile as an option and makes it mandatory for any leader wanting to lead according to Christ's loftier prescription.

Part of the leadership maturation process is being able to look in the mirror and know what you're good at, as well as acknowledge what you're unfit to do, and to be at peace with both realities. You simply must surround yourself with people who are good at the things you are not. When they stay in their zone and you remain in yours, the entire organization continues to move forward.

Paul shared great wisdom concerning the importance of a diversity of talents and the vital role each plays for the good of the whole team when he wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:17-26**:

*If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the*

*eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; nor again, the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, on these we bestow the greatest honour; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honour to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

**In 1 Corinthians 12:4-11** is a great analogy of how complementary gifts benefit the whole church. This same explanation applies equally well to demonstrate the benefit of a complementary team to your own enterprise:

*There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another gifts of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*

You're unlikely to ever become a great time manager if your primary objective is to determine how much work you can do personally. What's more important is that you learn to get work done through others. Frankly, what you can accomplish on your

own is finite, but what you can achieve through a well-directed team of competent co-workers is nearly limitless. If you don't make the vital transition from doing it all yourself to accomplishing more through others, you'll be like an octopus on roller skates: lots of movement but very little forward progress.

Moses was eighty years old before God called him to lead His people out of Egypt, but he still had plenty to learn about time management. In the eighteenth chapter of Exodus, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, gives his son-in-law a lesson in knowing what not to do as Moses was personally settling the disputes amongst his two million member flock! Jethro's advice is leadership gold: And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening. So when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, *“what is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?”* And Moses said to his father-in-law, *“because the people come to me to inquire of God, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws.”* So Moses' father-in-law said to him, *“this thing that you do is not good. Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself. Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. Moreover, you shall select from all the people, able men, such as fear God . . . And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you.”* (Exodus 18:13-22)

Most people never get a handle on God's will for their lives because they want to understand what it is first and then decide if they'll commit to it. But that's not how it works. You can't try to understand and then decide to commit; you must commit first and then you begin to understand as God reveals the right course to you. If you're unclear on what it is that you should be doing, where you should be doing it, or with whom you should be doing it, then you've probably had the commitment/understanding sequence backward.

Paul understood the importance of knowing God's will when he wrote from prison to the Ephesians: "*Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is*" (**Ephesians 5:15-17**). Paul suggests that without knowing God's will you are likely to engage in evil, destructive, or foolish pursuits, just as those who are categorized as 'unwise' do. It is your responsibility to be careful with regard to your use of time because it is a clear issue of your foolishness or wisdom, obedience or rebellion. In order to make the most of your time, you must have a clear understanding of what God's will really is. Just as "*whatever is not of faith is sin*" (**Romans 14:23**), so anything that is other than the will of God is a waste of time.

An important aspect of leadership is being able to lead up. This means that you add value to, positively influence, and publicly support your leader. Leading up also requires that you don't try to change your leader. Rather, help him or her shore up their weaknesses by assuming duties that make both you and your leader more valuable. Honouring the leader above you is easier when the leader is moral, decent, and competent. But what if he or she is selfish, insecure, and filled with character flaws?

You honour the leader above you by being publicly loyal to him or her while confronting differences privately. You look for ways to make him or her look good. You volunteer to take on tasks that may not be within his or her strength zone but are a better fit for your own. You refrain from gossip and never conduct an *'If I were in charge around here'* conversation with subordinates. Even if you do not like the person, you respect his or her position and authority over you. If your leader performs illegal acts, then you must leave the organization. As Paul warned the Corinthians, *"evil company corrupts good habits"* (**1 Corinthians 15:33**). Trust God to deal with the person and to elevate you to a better place, either within or outside of the organization you're already in. Continuing to work for a corrupt leader because you profess that you want to change him or her is merely a rationalization for doing what is temporarily convenient rather than what is morally correct. Don't kid yourself: You can change yourself but you cannot change another human being.

Paul had the right idea concerning authority: *"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality"* (**Colossians 3:23**). It's important to keep this perspective and to render unto your leader as you would render unto God. You wouldn't stab God in the back, would you? Would you try to nudge God out of His position and manoeuvre yourself into it? (*Satan tried this and was cast out of heaven along with one-third of the angels, who were his collaborators*) You wouldn't try to make God look bad or mock His rules or decisions, would you? If not, then don't do it to your leader, either. And neither should you listen to the voices of others who encourage you to do these things to your boss.

The apostle Peter, when writing from Rome to all five provinces in Asia, said something similar in **1 Peter 2: 18-20**: *“Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.”* One final thought in this regard: Don’t worry if you’re not getting enough credit or if you don’t think anyone notices your good performance. God sees and He notices and, when you work according to His will, He will make things right.

Jesus was a people person! He walked slowly through the crowds and connected with others. He asked questions; He met needs; He displayed compassion and concern and maintained a servant’s *mindset* throughout His ministry. Jesus demonstrated three critical success factors you must emulate to develop great people skills: **(a)** You must genuinely care about people. **(b)** Value people-work more than paperwork. **(c)** Learn to be efficient with things but effective with people.

One of the great inhibitors to developing people skills is pride and arrogance. Enhanced people skills are essential to running your business by Biblically. They help you to build stronger workplace relationships and serve as a catalyst for higher morale, enhanced teamwork, and employee retention.

As a leader you have the responsibility to use the workplace as a platform to positively impact others and help them reach their potential. But you are only able to maximize this opportunity if you have the people skills necessary to convert employees from compliant subordinates into committed followers. Without these skills you are likely to rely on rules rather than relationships to get

things done and reap a banquet of going-through-the-motions mediocrity. Sadly, nonrelation bosses breed a brood of followers who feel more like personnel than people. They make themselves too busy with *administrivia* to spend time with people, opting instead to pore over reports, crunch numbers, and send hourly email directives. They build and maintain only surface relationships with their employees because they don't truly value them as individuals - *seeing people primarily as automations necessary to get the job done, a means to an end called profit*. And although profit is important, the pursuit of it should not make relational casualties of your people. In fact, you'll find that the more you love money, the less you'll love your people.

The fact that Christians could assume an ineffective and unhealthy outlook toward human beings in the workplace runs totally contrary to the attitude Christ projected when interacting with people. Christ came to impact, to sacrifice, to meet needs, to teach, and to serve. We are to imitate His example. The good news is that with intent and dedication great people skills can be developed. Once your heart is right, motives are pure, and *mindset* is humble, you'll become more charismatic, respected, and esteemed. As a result, you'll convert your employees from feeling like driven stakes into thinking and acting like stakeholders.

One of the highest purposes for which God allows difficulties in our lives is to conform us to the image of Christ. As you learn to respond as Christ would to whatever situations you face at work or away, you develop His characteristics, including patience, endurance, compassion, discernment, wisdom, humility, self-control, and many other important qualities. Emotional balance concerns the strength and quality of relationships you have with friends, family, and co-workers. When relationships go bad, the ensuing stress and pain can be ongoing, tortuous, and, over time,

unbearable. Relationships take work and must be sustained over time.

Broken relationships often result from selfish motives. When one person in a relationship is the perpetual taker, the other party begins to feel used, manipulated, and underappreciated. The Proverb writer nailed it when he wrote: “*The leech has two daughters - give and give!*” (**Proverbs 30:15**). A one-sided relationship misses the mandate of Christ to put others first and meet their needs. How strong a relationship do you have with the person that you never hear from until they need something? Along the same lines, if you are the taker, don’t be so naive as to believe that the person whose pocket you pick, time you waste, passion you drain, and ear you exhaust hasn’t figured out that your idea of a relationship is more of a “*me*” fraction.

Whatever we have comes from God; don’t let the blessings you receive from God cause you to forget about Him. God is in control of all things. Nothing happens without His awareness and permission, not even the falling of one sparrow. Therefore, we can be sure that God is fully aware of everything that happens to us.

Business as Missions



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**Chapter Nine**

There is a wave of thousands of Christian business people from all continents who are experiencing a dynamic move of God as part of a renewed call to His kingdom work. God is on the move in Africa, Asia, Europe, America and the Pacific regions, calling His global church to rediscover His heart and intention for business.

God established the institution and practice of business as a means of fulfilling His creation mandate to steward and care for all of creation. He is releasing the power of business to aid in the task of fulfilling the great commission making disciples of all nations. God longs to be glorified through our business activities.

Business people are being challenged to look anew at their business activities as an expression of their calling and service to God. They are being affirmed in their vocation as business people and used as instruments for extending God's kingdom. God has led a growing number of business people to think strategically about how they can integrate their skills and experience in business with the task of world mission. God is calling many more business people, from all nations to go to all nations, in this new paradigm of mission.

One term being used for this new mission movement is *business as mission*. Business in and of itself is the ministry and instrument of mission. It is about releasing the entrepreneurs and business professionals within the church in order to transform the world through their business activities.

Kingdom focused business has been called a strategy of choice for the 21<sup>st</sup> century mission. In many countries where the name of Christ is least often heard or understood, Christians are better welcomed as business people, not missionaries. Business is about relationships in the context of everyday life and provides numerous ways to bless individuals, communities and nations, thus breaking new ground in the task of global evangelisation requires new

methods and strategies. There is a growing need to provide models for mission that are financially sustainable and will strengthen local churches and national missionary movements. Business as mission is one response. It is crucial that Christian business people are equipped and supported to take up their key role in transforming their own nation and beyond.

Kingdom businesses start from the theological premise that all Christians have a calling to love and serve God with all of their heart, soul, strength and mind, as well as to love and serve their neighbours. God calls people to work for His kingdom in business just as certainly as He calls people to work in other kinds of ministry or mission ventures.

Business must be financially sustainable, producing goods or services that people are willing to pay for. Sustainability implies that the activity is profitable. Profits are an essential element of all businesses, in all cultures. Without profit the business cannot survive and fulfil its purpose. Accordingly, *businesses as missions* are real businesses that genuinely exist to generate wealth and profits. Business as mission does not view profits as inherently evil, bad or unbiblical. Quite the contrary, profits are good, desired and beneficial to God and His purposes, as long as they are not oppressive, or derived from gouging customers or selling products and service that do no honour Christ and His gospel.

We cannot understand our purpose and mission in life unless we understand what God's purpose and mission is. God acts for His glory. He created the cosmos that reflects His glory and goodness (**Psalm 8, 19**). Although this creation has been marred by sin and its consequences (**Genesis 3**), God continues a redemptive relationship with creation through ongoing creativity and the sustaining of all things. God the Father, has made men and women in His image (**Genesis 1:27**). He embraces His children in loving-kindness, and

is concerned with our holistic redemption. God the King is in a kingdom relationship with all humanity as individuals and as nations (*peoples*). God's purpose is to receive glory from among every people (*nation or ethnic group*) by holistically redeeming those who know, love and worship him (**Psalm 64, 1Timothy 1:15-17**).

Business as mission keeps four things in mind: **a)** God is at the centre; **b)** The scope is global; **c)** Peoples (*nations, ethnic groups*) and people (*individuals*) are the focus; **d)** Glorifying God is the outcome.

Work and business offer many opportunities for sin. Exploitation of the poor, greed, dishonesty, and idolatry are just a few examples. But this does not mean that Christians should not engage in business. It is equally true that there are also many opportunities to glorify God; yet work is something that is simultaneously both deeply divine and deeply human. It is a tangible act that reveals a human-divine partnership in creation. Work, is not to be understood as a curse or consequence of the fall. Rather it was a blessing and commandment given to Adam and Eve before the fall. Work is a human activity that flows from God's delegated mandate of stewardship over creation. God gives us the creative capacity, wisdom and tools (*gifts and talents*) to do it. God took pleasure in the physical aspect of His creation. We too can delight in creating useful and excellent products and services.

The biblical idea of stewardship not only encompasses the care of creation, but the responsibility of personal stewardship of both talents and wealth as well. Business provides an opportunity for those talented in enterprise (*entrepreneurs*) and others (*employees*) to use their particular gifts in service to others as unto the Lord. In its capacity to provide employment, business sustains not only those who establish enterprises, but also those who are employed or

benefit from the goods and services provided. Business enables needs to be met and to bless others as a consequence, notably; business conducted in accord with biblical principles of stewardship offers numerous opportunities to glorify God. For a Christian, business is a vocation, to be conducted in the spirit of the kingdom of God.

God prepared for a restoration of creation, including work and creativity, through Jesus Christ. Our mandate continues to be stewards of creation and of our personal talents and the wealth our talents generate. We are called to play a role in God's restoration process by helping to restore the inherent dignity and value of work. We are to be ambassadors of God's kingdom in the market place, to be salt and light in and through business. As salt and light we are to bless peoples from every culture, through God-honouring business enterprise and the reformation of unjust economic systems.

Business is about relationships with others: employers and employees, buyers and sellers, producers and consumers, suppliers and distributors. This creates a whole arena where those who know Christ can share their faith and witness to those who do not know Him. Christians in business become *salt and light* to people in their working places since discipleship is demonstrating the ways of God through the course of every day relationships. God is glorified when Christian business people: work as unto the Lord; fearing God; by hating dishonest gain, corruption and nepotism; love and respect others; demonstrate Christian values (*showing integrity, stewardship, accountability etcetera*), by sharing the gospel in word and deed.

Kingdom businesses operate on moral and ethical principles of the Bible. These can be followed by all business people to their benefit. Kingdom businesses are enterprises whose purpose are to produce goods and to perform services that accomplish God's will on earth

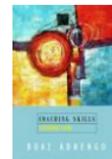
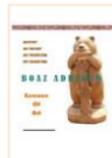
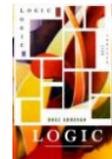
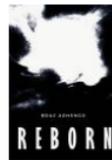
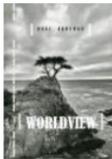
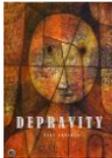
as revealed and proclaimed in the Bible. They intentionally apply Christ's teaching to their business life and practice. They ensure accountability systems that address areas of ethics and Christ-likeness. They carefully evaluate their goods and services to ensure they do not conflict with the message of the gospel.

Business as mission is a strategy that can give access to places where there is no public expression of the local church. Business planting and church planting can go hand in hand. Although a distinction between the roles of spiritual leadership and employer might be helpful to avoid conflicts of interest; thus business as mission can model partnership from the initial stages of local church growth, despite a hostile environment. It can open doors for transformational ministry where traditional mission models and other expressions of the church are forbidden.

Being an effective mission leader does not imply that a person will make a successful businessperson. Just as a businessperson needs to understand good mission practice, a person with a missionary background needs to understand and respect good business principles. Understanding, openness to learn and above all practical experience are the best indicators of future success. There is a clear need for people to be teamed with others with complementary skills. Working alongside established entrepreneurs (*or missionary veterans, as applicable*) is essential. In the business world outsourcing and strategic partnerships are the norm. There should be openness to providing expertise to one another. There is no need for kingdom business to automatically bypass traditional missionary structures and organisations. In order to be effective, synergy is needed. Affirmation of each other and the right application of complimentary gifts and abilities is of primary importance.

# Also by Boaz Adhengo

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