I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor.

– Henry David Thoreau
YOU, INC.

10 Simple Principles to Dramatically Increase Your Fair Market Value

By
Burke Hedges
DEDICATION

This Book is dedicated to YOU . . . for having the wisdom to understand that the door to self-improvement only opens from within.
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SECTION 1

Introduction:
Think – YOU, INC.!

“Inherently, each one of us has the substance within to achieve whatever our goals and dreams define. What is missing from each of us is the training, education, knowledge, and insight to use what we already have.”

— Mark Twain
M any years ago an auctioneer was selling off the estate of a wealthy industrialist. As the auction came to a close, the tired auctioneer held up a dusty, discolored old violin and asked mockingly, “What am I bid for this? ... $100 ... no takers? ... Do I hear $75? ... $50? ... $25? $5?

“How about a dollar?” he implored, as the audience’s laughter echoed around the empty walls.

A faint, cracked voice interrupted the laughter. “Excuse me. May I have a moment of your time?”

A bent old man shuffled up to the auctioneer and reached for the violin with a thin pale hand. With his back to the audience, the old man plucked each string and expertly adjusted the tuning pegs. Slowly turning to the audience, he motioned for silence ... and then placing the violin gently under his chin, he began to play.

Lovely, clear notes filled the room, and the audience sat frozen with awe as the old man serenaded them with a heav-
enly solo. When the solo ended, the old man bowed deeply at the waist ... handed the violin to the auctioneer ... and walked slowly out the door as everyone burst into spontaneous applause.

The smiling auctioneer held up the old violin and shouted above the noisy crowd, “*Now what am I bid for this MOST EXTRAORDINARY instrument? A thousand to the man in the top hat ... I hear two thousand from the woman in the front ... Back to the gentleman ... three thousand, you say? ... Do I hear four? ... Four it is! Do I hear five thousand? Five it is! ... Five going once ... Five going twice ... SOLD! This finely crafted violin, an exceptional value, I must say, at $5,000!”*

**What “Added Value” Really Means**

This story paints a vivid picture of the concept of value — and how to maximize it.

At the beginning of the story the value of the violin was only one dollar. But by the end of the story, that value had jumped an amazing 5,000 percent! All it took to dramatically increase the value of the nearly worthless violin was for one knowledgeable person to make just a few minor adjustments to the strings ... and then to release the violin’s fullest potential by playing it with skill and passion.

The theme of this story — and the theme of the YOU, INC. program — are the same. That is, the value of a product, like the violin ... and the value of a person, like you and me ... can increase 100 times over — even a thousand times over — with just a little fine tuning.

**A New Paradigm in Personal Development**

YOU, INC. is based on the premise that you are the founder, president, and 100 percent stockholder in your own company — YOU, INCORPORATED.
In other words, YOU, INC. is a whole new way of thinking about yourself and how you relate to the world around you. This book is designed to heighten your awareness and expand your personal paradigm so that you can “discover the CEO within.”

In short, in order for us to get the most out of our God—given abilities and talents, we’ve got to reprogram ourselves to “Think — YOU, INC.!”

Work ON — Not IN — Your Life

Michael Gerber, a world—renowned business consultant, makes the observation that businesses don’t fail because of uncontrollable forces, like competition or lack of money or lazy employees.

According to Gerber, the business reflects the person running it ... which is why business owners need to go to work ON their business, not IN their business.

In Gerber’s words, “Your business is nothing more than a distinct reflection of who you are. If your thinking is sloppy, your business will be sloppy. If you are disorganized, then your business will be disorganized. If you are greedy, the people around you will be greedy. So if your business is to change — as it must to be successful — YOU must change.”

In my estimation, Gerber is right on the money. To become truly successful in any endeavor — whether it’s business ... or parenting ... or coaching the local Little League baseball team — we have to go to work ON our lives, not IN our lives!

And that, my friends, is what YOU, INC. is all about. What I’ve set out to do in this book is to focus on the 10 fundamental principles that will empower you to take charge of your business — and your life!

Let me ask you a question: If you could really and truly improve your value dramatically by understanding and applying the 10 simple principles discussed in this book, would
you make them part of your life?

I certainly hope the answer to this question is YES, because that’s the purpose of this book in a nutshell. The 10 principles outlined in this program will empower you to become more valuable in virtually every phase of your life. And as your value increases, you will become more secure in your job ... more productive in your business ... more vital to your family and friends ... in short, happier and more fulfilled in both your professional and personal life.

Why Now More Than Ever

We’re living and working in the most exciting age in our world’s history — the Information Age — an age of unprecedented change and uncertainty brought about by science fiction—like breakthroughs in technology ... an age of tremendous, almost unimaginable opportunity ... but also an age of massive layoffs, global competition and portable careers.

This is why today, more than ever before in our history, it’s imperative that we start thinking of ourselves as an independent, self—sufficient business and begin to make our decisions accordingly!

Graduating from the College of Hard Knocks

I’m often asked how I came up with the title for YOU, INC. My response is that YOU, INC. is a new way of thinking and acting. It represents almost 10 years of reading self—help books and biographies ... researching and collecting information ... interviewing successful businessmen and women ... attending countless seminars ... listening to literally hundreds of audios produced by the world’s greatest teachers and motivators .. and, last but certainly not least, learning from my own business and personal experiences — both successes and, yes ... failures.
And believe me, I’ve had my share of failures. I did manage to get a college degree in criminal justice, but it took me five years and two colleges before I finally graduated. Well, I want to tell you, I didn’t exactly set the world on fire right away! I didn’t want to go into law enforcement, which meant my expensive, hard-earned college degree was basically useless.

At my mother’s urging, I signed up to take the test to become an insurance adjustor for Allstate. Much to her amazement, I flunked the exam! Incredible, isn’t it? Here I was, a college graduate, and I couldn’t even pass a test to qualify for a job paying less than $20,000 a year. Talk about a bust!

I finally landed a job as a boat builder in Sarasota, Florida, earning five dollars and sixty—five cents an hour. A year later I quit to take a job selling cellular phones for commission only.

After selling phones for a year, I decided to open my own business. The good news is, I made a million dollars my first full year in business! The bad news is, it cost me $1.2 million to make it! So here I was, 25 years old, with a wife and a young son ... and I was $200,000 in debt!

I won’t try to convince you these early failures didn’t hurt. I was devastated! But as the old saying goes, “You can’t have a rainbow without the rain.” These early setbacks rained on my parade alright, but I learned great lessons from them — and in the long run, those early failures changed my life for the better ... forever ... because they forced me to change and grow as a person.

**Why the “A” Students Work for the “C” Students**

I tell you my story because I want you to know that Burke Hedges is a very average person. I wasn’t a child-genius like Bill Gates, who dropped out of Harvard because he was too
busy making his first million to attend classes. I was always a C student who had to work hard to make Bs.

But I believed in myself ... I believed that if I got better, my life would get better ... and I believed this country was bursting with opportunity.

In developing YOU, INC., I sought to find the answer to a phenomenon we’ve all observed: Why is it that the smartest person in your high school algebra class now works the night shift at the post office ... while the kid who flunked algebra now runs a successful insurance agency and owns a home on the beach?

Stop and think about this a second: Why in the world is it that some people from very humble beginnings, like Abraham Lincoln, for example, accomplish so much ... while other people who were born with all the advantages just limp through life?

I was talking with my attorney not long ago about this very phenomenon — that the students who made straight A’s in school weren’t always the most successful people in life. He smiled and said, “Burke, we had a saying when I was in law school: ‘The A students become law professors. The B students become judges. And the C students make money working for the D students.’”

Fascinating observation, isn’t it?

Well, if brains aren’t the key to success, what is? The answer to that question, my friend, is what I’ll be sharing with you during the rest of this book.

**Intellectual Intelligence vs. Emotional Intelligence**

Science has proven that our intellectual intelligence — our
IQ, as it’s called — is pretty much fixed at birth. No matter how much you study, no matter how motivated you are, you can raise your IQ only a few points.

The reality is the A students in law school have real high IQ’s. So why is it that so much of the time “the C students make money working for the D students?”

Recent studies show that IQ accounts for only 20 percent of our success in life. The other 80 percent of what we achieve can be attributed to our EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, or EQ.

Sales and management positions, for example, rely mostly on EQ. Having a happy marriage depends on EQ. Being a good parent ... being a good citizen ... being a good employee ... being a successful entrepreneur ... all depend on EQ.

Now, here’s the most exciting news for all of us. EQ, unlike IQ, can be improved at any time during our lives. Which means we can control 80 percent of our achievements. Just as the value of the violin in the opening story was improved dramatically by a simple tuning, so can your fair market value increase dramatically by simply tuning your EQ with the 10 simple principles discussed in this book.

**Seek to Understand**

My primary goal in the YOU, INC. program is to raise the level of your awareness ... to help you *better understand* what it takes to increase your fair market value. The Bible says it this way: “*Get wisdom. And in all thy getting, get understanding.*” “Getting understanding” is really what I want each and every reader to accomplish.

YOU, INC. is designed to help you learn, understand and fine tune the key principles that can sharpen your EQ (and get
you that much-deserved promotion) by making your personal skills better, which in turn will make YOU better!

And it only stands to reason that if YOU get better, your job or business will get better.

Doesn’t it stand to reason that if you get better, your marriage will get better? ... if you get better, your parenting will get better? ... if you get better, your health will get better? ... if you get better, your relationships will get better?

Doesn’t it stand to reason that if you get better, every part of your life will get better? Because when it’s all said and done, the only thing you have total control over in your life are the choices YOU make, isn’t that true?

**Making a Choice to Change**

I’d like to tell you a true story about two people who started in exactly the *same place* ... but who ended up in two very *different places* because of the choices each person made.

The story begins one brisk autumn morning when I drove down to Sarasota, Florida, to meet with a book distributor about making our books available in bookstores across the country. Afterward I decided to swing by my old place of work, Dynasty Boat Corporation.

To my surprise, almost 10 years after I left, two of the guys I used to work with were still there! I was delighted to see them again, and we swapped stories about the old days.

As I was about to leave, one of the guys, Bob, popped out of the hull of a 28 foot boat and asked me what I was doing these days. I told him I’d started a couple of businesses and written a couple of books. “Slay right there,” I said. “I think I’ve got some books in the car. Just a second, and I’ll bring you one.”

As I started for the car Bob shouted back, “Forget the book. If you wanna bring me something, bring me a 12-pack of beer!”
Everyone broke up laughing, and Bob’s co-workers agreed that a cold beer beats a great book every time. I finished my goodbyes to the rest of the crew, and I headed for my car.

As I drove home, I kept thinking about how Bob and I had ended up in two very different places, even though we had started in the same place, sweating side by side in the hull of a boat with a grinder in our hands.

Ten years later Bob was still grunting and sweating for eight bucks an hour. In a good year, with lots of overtime, he may make $18,000. Now, I realize that for many people, $18,000 a year is decent money. But I made a choice when I was working side by side with Bob to improve my YOU, INC. ... I chose to dramatically increase my fair market value so that I could earn a lot more money doing something I loved, instead of settling for $18,000 a year doing something I hated! As a result of my choosing to increase my fair market value by growing as a person, I’ve often earned $18,000 in a single day! All because I made a choice.

**A Book Can Change Your Life**

It’s obvious why Bob and I had ended up in two very different places. And my visit to Dynasty Boat Corporation reminded me of a simple, yet profound truth:

*The door to self improvement only opens from within.*

You see, I know firsthand how a book can change someone’s life. When I was only 23 years old, my sister-in-law, Susan, gave me a copy of Og Mandino’s, *The Greatest Salesman in the World*. Instead of tossing that book in a corner and grabbing a beer, I read it. I made a conscious choice to open the door to self improvement! I made a conscious choice to make myself better by FINDING REASONS TO increase my value, instead of FINDING, REASONS NOT TO.

And that, my friend, has made a world of difference in my life. *The Greatest Salesman in the World* was the first step
to expanding my horizons from a boat hull to the ocean of opportunity available in America today.

Now, some of you may still be wondering if the principles in YOU, INC. can really work for average people.

Not the super talented.
Not the super rich.
Not the super beautiful.
But just the average Joe and Jane.

When it’s all said and done, what every single person reading this book wants to know is CAN THESE PRINCIPLES WORK FOR ME?

**Added Value Equals Added Income**

The best way to answer that question is for you to hear a story about an average person with an average job. His name is Walter. And his job is driving a cab in New York City. Now, is that average enough for you? Well, listen to what happened to Walter the Cab Driver when he “discovered the CEO within” by thinking and acting like YOU, INC. — instead of thinking and acting like just another cab driver in a city full of cab drivers.

I heard about the story of Walter the Cab Driver, by the way, from Harvey McKay, author of *Swim with the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive*! When I first heard McKay’s account of Walter, I was absolutely blown away, because his story proves that the concept of YOU, INC. is alive and well, right in the driver’s seat of a cab cruising around the streets of Manhattan.

Let me preface this story by reminding you that if you travel at all, especially in big cities like New York, you probably don’t have much good to say about the typical cab ride.
A Typical Cab Ride

The typical cab ride for me goes something like this: The driver is a burly guy with a two-day-old beard. The cab looks like it hasn’t been washed since it rolled off the assembly line five years earlier.

The inside smells like an ashtray ... and, more often than not, the driver has a lit cigarette dangling from his lips as he throws your bags into a dirty trunk.

And then the fun really begins. The driver stops traffic with a wave of his hand and pulls across three lanes, screaming at the drivers who have the nerve to honk at him. He swerves in and out of traffic ... tailgates every chance he gets ... never uses his turn signal ... and mutters profanities under his breath as he avoids one life-threatening accident after another.

Does that cab ride sound familiar? Sadly, this is about the norm when it comes to cab rides. When I jump into the backseat of a cab, let’s just say I don’t have high expectations for enjoying the trip. In fact, my primary goal is to get where I’m going in one piece.

Now I ask you, where is it written that a cab ride is an experience to be endured, rather than enjoyed? Wouldn’t you reward a cab driver who increased his fair market value by going out of his way to make your experience a delightful adventure? I certainly would! Here’s McKay’s version of his delightful experience with Walter the Cab Driver:

YOU, INC. in Action

McKay was checking out of a Manhattan hotel heading for

“Why is it, then, that so many people... who could BE so much more... and who could HAVE so much more... are choosing to settle for less?”
— Burke Hedges
La Guardia Airport when he jumped into the back of Walter’s cab. The cab, by the way, looked like just about every other cab in New York — except for the fact the cab was dent free and freshly washed and waxed. So McKay was sitting in a cab parked in front of a mid-Manhattan hotel waiting for yet another cab ride to the airport when Walter hands him a sheet of paper with the following message printed on it:

“Hi, my name is Walter, and I’m your driver. Rest assured that I will get you to your destination comfortably, safely and on time. If there is anything I can do to make your trip more enjoyable, please let me know, and I’ll happily oblige.”

Of course, McKay was surprised, to say the least. He thought to himself that he’s ridden in thousands of cabs ... thousands of times ... with thousands of different drivers, and this was the first time a driver ever handed him a written mission statement!

Then Walter politely turned to McKay, held up two daily newspapers and asked, “Would you prefer today’s New York Times or the Post?”

A suspicious McKay asked, “How much?” Walter replied, “Complimentary, sir.” Now, McKay was starting to become pretty impressed with Walter the Cab Driver, and he took a moment to survey the cab’s interior more closely.

McKay noticed that the cab was spotless. There was no smell of stale tobacco smoke in Walter’s cab — just an understated scent of carpet shampoo and light air freshener. McKay noticed that Walter was clean shaven. He was wearing a starched white shirt, a necktie and a classic blue blazer. McKay was becoming more and more impressed by the minute.

“Excuse me, sir,” Walter said politely. “I have several
radio stations for your listening enjoyment. Would you prefer popular music, rock, or classical? Or, if you prefer, I have a wide assortment of CD’s.”

By this time McKay was in a mild state of shock. Here he was, sitting in a cab in New York City, receiving the same first-class, cordial service as he received in the five-star hotel he just checked out of. Walter’s cab was like having room service on wheels.

“Excuse me for interrupting, sir,” Walter said gently. “But I was wondering if you’d be interested in a healthy snack?” Then Walter held up a decorated fruit basket filled to the brim with ripe red apples ... oranges ... bananas ... and assorted low-fat cheeses, crackers and cookies.

McKay goes on and on about all the little amenities that Walter offered him during his 30-minute ride to the airport. McKay ends the story by saying he so enjoyed the experience that he gave Walter a sizable tip. In fact, in talking to Walter, McKay learned that he wasn’t the only person who thought Walter was deserving of a big tip. According to McKay, Walter earns an extra $12 to $14 THOUSAND PER YEAR IN TIPS!

Putting the 10 Principles into Practice

When you think about it, what’s amazing isn’t that Walter went to all these lengths to make sure his fares enjoyed their rides. What’s amazing is that Walter’s extra service was so rare that people are amazed by it — even frequent travelers like Harvey McKay! And to think all Walter did was to realize he was founder, president and 100 percent stockholder in Walter, Inc. ... and to act accordingly.

Walter increased the value of a low-paying, low-status job by 33 to 50 percent, just by instinctively understanding ... fine tuning ... and then applying the simple principles I’ll be sharing with you in the coming pages.
For example, he took responsibility for his success ... he dreamed and planned about a better, more productive, more profitable way to deliver his services ... he believed he could introduce services that would increase his value ... he acted on his dreams by putting his ideas into practice, instead of just talking about them ... he elevated his attitude, and in the process, elevated the attitude of everyone who entered his cab ... he developed productive habits that became as natural to him as breathing ... he prepared to achieve more in his life through observation ... research ... and empathy .... And finally, he made the choice to change from a run-of-the-mill cab driver to a cabdriver extraordinaire!

**The Power of Choice**

I love this story because it’s a perfect example of how a person can choose excellence over mediocrity — and profit in the process!

New York City is full of mediocre cab drivers ... earning a mediocre income ... leading mediocre lives. Then along comes Walter to remind us that average people in average jobs don’t have to settle for mediocrity.

We can choose to grow.
We can choose to understand.
We can choose to get better.
We can choose to change.
And in so doing, we are choosing to transform our lives from ordinary ... to extra-ordinary.

You and I both know that every cab driver could make the kinds of choices that Walter made. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that every doorman ... every police officer ... every stockbroker ... every retiree ... every man and every woman in every city of the world ... could make the kinds of choices that Walter made.

Why is it, then, that so many people who could BE so
much more ... and who could have so much more ... are choosing to settle for less? ... Why is it that so many people are just willing to go through the motions? ... to look at the cup of life as if it were half empty, instead of half full? ... and to drive through life with their foot on the brake?

The answer to those questions, I’ve got to believe, isn’t that people are stupid. Or disadvantaged. Or without talent. The answer, I think, is that far too many people lack wisdom and understanding about how to increase their value and improve their lives.

I’ve got to believe that if more people understood — I mean, really and truly understood — how to increase their value ... if more people really and truly understood the principles that lead to excellence and what can happen to their lives when they apply these time-tested principles of success ... that the world would undergo a magical transformation.

**YOU, INC. Is Based on Sound Business Principles**

At first glance, it may seem like the 10 principles you’re going to hear about are unrelated to the corporate world. On the contrary, every successful company embodies all of these principles.

For example, doesn’t every successful business start with a dream? Isn’t the word “Attitude” the same thing as a company’s image or brand name? Don’t companies prepare themselves for success by investing in research and development ... and by training their employees? Don’t companies respond to change with new products and marketing strategies?

I can’t emphasize enough that this program is based on fundamental, universal truths that apply equally to every enterprise, whether it’s an individual ... or a Fortune 500 company. In short, the principles in YOU, INC. will empower you to go to work on your life, not in your life!
10 Simple Principles to Dramatically Increase Your Fair Market Value

An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers will not... and it will conquer!

—Thomas Paine
from Common Sense
You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.
—Abraham Lincoln

I’m sitting here looking at two very different articles in the same edition of my local newspaper. See if you can tell which article warms my heart ... and which one makes my blood boil!

The first article is by a columnist for the *Tampa Tribune* who decided not to make anymore New Year’s resolutions because they all end up broken anyway.

Her reasoning goes like this: You make a bunch of promises to yourself, like you resolve to quit smoking. Then you break those promises, which makes you feel guilty. Since feeling guilty makes you feel lousy, what’s the point of making resolutions?

Her solution? Here are her exact words: “There’s a simple solution to avoid all this — to feel good about yourself while keeping guilt at bay. Don’t make resolutions.”

Now, this is the same middle-aged columnist who is always whining about the fact she can’t quit smoking. This is the same columnist who looks to be at least 40 pounds
overweight.

**Founding Father of the Fitness Movement**

The other article is about a man named Ken Cooper. Here’s what the newspaper had to say about Ken Cooper’s amazing life.

When Cooper was 29 years old, he accepted an invitation to go water skiing. A former hot-shot athlete in high school, Cooper thought he could pick up where he left off 10 years before.

Only one problem. For 10 years he’d been in college and medical school. He hadn’t made time in his busy schedule to work out or eat right, and his ideal weight of 165 had ballooned to more than 200 pounds.

Despite being woefully out of shape. Cooper attacked the slalom course just as he used to do in high school. But his body, flabby and weak from inactivity, gave up on him. He barely made it back to the beach ... and then collapsed!

Nausea swept over him. His heart was hammering at 250 beats per minute! In Cooper’s words, “I was terrified. I thought I was going to die.”

That episode was a turning point in Cooper’s life. He began running ... watching his diet. Six months later he had dropped 30 pounds and his blood pressure returned to normal. Thirty years after that incident, Cooper weighs 165 pounds and is in better shape than most men half his age!

You see, Ken Cooper became Dr. Ken Cooper, the man who coined the word “aerobics” and who helped launch the fitness revolution in the early 1960s. He has authored numerous books on fitness and established the Cooper Center for

“Our charge on earth is to exercise our gifts and talents to the maximum — and to care for all the assets God has given us, including our bodies.”

— Dr. Ken Cooper
Aerobics Research in Dallas. Cooper’s philosophy can be summed up in this short paragraph from his latest book, *It’s Better to Believe*.

“Our charge on this earth is to exercise our gifts and talents to the maximum — and to care for all the assets God has given us, including our bodies.”

**Taking Responsibility vs. Taking the Easy Way Out**

Now I ask you, which of these two individuals would you rather be? Active and fit in your fifties, like Dr. Ken Cooper ... or inactive and overweight, like the cigarette-addicted columnist?

I’m telling you about these two people because they have opposite approaches to the concept of responsibility. One person took responsibility for his health ... while the other person took the easy way out by making excuses for NOT taking responsibility for her health.

I know firsthand what it means to take responsibility for my health. You see, for about 10 years I smoked cigarettes. And I’ve battled a weight problem all my life. In fact, I weighed more than 230 pounds at one point, even though I’m only about five feet ten inches tall.

I swear, when I was in my mid-twenties I looked like the rotund actor who played Cannon on TV. The truth is, I looked like a cannonball! Today, I’m proud to say, I’m smoke free and I’ve kept my weight under control.

Just imagine where I would be if I had taken the columnist’s position. I’d still be making lame excuses instead of making needed changes in my life. I’d still be smoking cigarettes ... and I’d still look like the Pillsbury Doughboy. But I had sense enough to do what Dr. Ken Cooper did — I TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY LIFE!

I didn’t make excuses. I didn’t blame McDonald’s for
making high-fat burgers and fries; I didn’t blame Phillip Morris for seducing me into smoking cigarettes with their slick ads. No way! I did what any responsible person would do — I made a commitment to improve my health by quitting smoking and losing weight. And believe me, I’ve never felt better in my life!

The Real Meaning of Responsibility

Let’s take a moment to talk about responsibility — what it is and why it’s so important in our lives. The dictionary defines responsibility as “readily assuming obligations or duties.”

That pretty much says it all. But an even better definition is President Harry Truman’s oft-quoted statement: THE BUCK STOPS HERE!

Truman was referring, of course, to the pastime of our country’s elected politicians, who are always blaming someone else ... always “passing the buck.” Well, “Give ‘em Hell Harry,” as he was called, wasn’t afraid to step up to the plate. He knew that each and every person was responsible for who they are and what they become ... and that included himself.

Look, I understand the position the columnist took — but that doesn’t mean I have to agree with it. Like I said, she’s taking the easy way out. She turned her back on responsibility because it’s a lot easier to avoid responsibility than to accept responsibility. She turned her back on responsibility because it’s a lot easier to pass the buck than to stand up and proclaim: THE BUCK STOPS HERE!

“It’s Not My Fault, Daddy!”

I have four wonderful children under the age of 10, three boys and a girl. What’s most amazing about my kids is they all have the same answer when one of them gets in trouble:
So doesn’t it make sense to treat YOU, INC. the same? If you hang out with people who have lousy attitudes, guess what — you’re going to have a lousy attitude! If you hang out with drunks and losers who haven’t grown personally or professionally since high school, what does that say about you?

Proverbs 28 in *The Living Bible* says it this way: “A mirror reflects a man’s face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses.”

I’ve heard my mother say the same thing thousands of times in slightly different words: “Tell me who you hang out with, and I’ll tell you who you are” is the way my mom put it. No matter how you say it, it all boils down to the same thing. You are who you associate with, so if you want to become a better person, associate with better people.

**Rid Your Life of Toxic People**

If you are sincere about wanting to dramatically improve the value of YOU, INC. in all phases of your life, you must choose your friends carefully. If some of your so-called “friends” have negative attitudes and bad habits that hold you back, you need to get them out of your life.

I call people with bad attitudes “toxic people” and just as you would take special precautions to rid your home of toxic chemicals before they could harm you and your family, you must do the same with toxic people in your life!

That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try to reach out to negative friends and relatives. Certainly you should do your level best to encourage your loved ones to grow. But it seems like...
some people have both feet cemented in a bad attitude, and it’s not your responsibility to join them in their permanent pity party. If that means spending less time with your toxic “old” friends and spending more time with uplifting “new” friends, so be it.

**Choose to Be Somebody**

Look, life isn’t a dress rehearsal. You only go around once. This is YOUR life ... YOU, INC. is YOUR company, no one else’s! If some of your friends want to run their companies from a bar stool ... or if they want to put their minds in cold storage, that’s their choice. But when they ask you to serve on their board of directors, I suggest you politely decline the invitation.

W. Clement Stone, a devoted follower of Dr. Norman Vincent Peale’s philosophy of positive thinking and the founder of a hundred-million-dollar-a-year insurance company, summed up the importance of attitude this way:

“There is little difference in people — but that little difference makes a big difference. The little difference is attitude. The big difference is whether it is positive or negative.”

I’d like to end this discussion of Principle Number Five: *Attitude Is Everything* with an anonymous poem entitled *Somebody*. In a few short lines, this poem says about all that needs to be said on the topic of attitude.

* Somebody did a golden deed;
* Somebody proved a friend in need;
* Somebody sang a beautiful song;
* Somebody smiled the whole day long;
* Somebody thought, “It’s sweet to live;”
* Somebody said, “I’m glad to give;”
* Somebody fought a valiant fight;
* Somebody lived to shield the right;
* Was that “somebody”... you?
PRINCIPLE 6:
Develop Productive Habits

Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing.
—Vince Lombardi

One of my favorite writers is John Grisham, the bestselling author of *The Firm*, *The Client* and *Pelican Brief*. Because of the fabulous success of his books, Grisham is a millionaire many times over today. But the road leading to his fame and fortune was anything but a superhighway. Fact is, it was more like a winding dirt road filled with dead-ends and potholes!

Finding Reasons to Write a Book

Before becoming a full-time writer, Grisham was a lawyer. Like most successful lawyers, he put in long hours at the office, often 60 hours a week, sometimes 80! Despite his grueling schedule, Grisham wanted more than anything to write a novel.

However, Grisham had countless ready-made excuses as to why he could NOT write a book — excuses like the fact he had no “creative” writing experience ... that he had obligations to his wife and two kids ... that he didn’t have the time
because he was working 10 hour days, six days a week ... that he was under incredible stress at work.

But Grisham knew that when it was all said and done, he had a choice. He could either find reasons **TO** write a novel... or he could find reasons **NOT TO** write a novel ... and then justify to himself why he couldn’t do it. Fortunately for his readers and his family, Grisham chose to find reasons **TO** write his first novel.

He wrote his first book, *A Time to Kill*, by making one simple adjustment in his life. He changed his morning habits. He started getting up at 5:00 a.m. and working on his novel. In effect, he didn’t have enough time in his day to write. So he **made the time** by getting up a couple of hours earlier each day. Less than one year later, Grisham had a completed manuscript to send to publishers.

**Word of Mouth Saved the Book**

Only one problem. The first publisher said, “Thanks, but no thanks.” So did the second... and the third ... and the fourth ... and so on. But Grisham was determined to see his book in print, so he kept submitting his book until, finally, publisher number 26 said “yes!”

The publisher had so little faith in the book that only 5,000 copies were printed. At the time it seemed like 4,000 too many! The book was a bomb.

So Grisham made another choice. He decided to market the book himself. He bought 1,000 copies and then made it a habit to spend his weekends visiting every bookstore ... library ... and garden club meeting within driving distance of his home. It took months before his habit of giving talks and signing books on weekends began to payoff.

Slowly, over time, readers started recommending the book to friends. Word of mouth kept building and building until, finally, after nearly a year’s worth of weekend personal ap-
pearances, John Grisham’s first novel, *A Time to Kill*, exploded onto the best-seller list, where it stayed for 100 weeks!

To date there are more than 10 million copies of Grisham’s first novel in print, and publishing houses and Hollywood studios pay him millions for the rights to his newest book, months before the first word has even been written!

**Change Your Habits and You Can Change Your Life**

This story emphasizes the importance of developing productive habits. Grisham was able to accomplish what he did because he changed his habits. He did what he had to do to turn his dream into a reality. He understood that he had to make some adjustments to his normal routines if he were serious about writing a novel. So he did just that by changing his sleeping habits.

Can you see how Grisham’s new habit of getting up at 5:00 a.m. — let’s say two hours earlier than normal — allowed him to accomplish a life-long dream? Just look at how developing the habit of adding two productive hours a day can make a world of difference. Over the span of a year, you could add 15 work weeks (or almost 4 months) of productive time to each and every year of your life.

Even if you woke up only 30 minutes earlier each day, you could add a month of 40-hour work weeks to your year! Isn’t it astounding that developing a habit as simple as getting up a little earlier each day could have such a profound affect on your life? John Grisham is living proof of just that!

**Your Habits Decide Your Future**

Now, at first glance, habits appear to be small, harmless routines that help us personalize each day and give our lives a sense of structure and continuity. Because our habits are so
predictable, they comfort us — especially in times of stress.

But not all of our habits are small ... or harmless. In fact, when it’s all said and done, who we are — and what we become — is the sum of our good habits and our bad habits ... the sum of our productive habits and our unproductive habits ... the sum of our big habits and our little habits. As a wise man put it, “Men do not decide their future. They decide their HABITS ... and their habits decide their future.”

Grisham decided to make a habit of rising early and writing every morning before going into the law office. In turn, that habit decided his future. Today Grisham is no longer practicing law. He’s a full-time writer doing what he loves while earning 100 times what he would be earning as a lawyer. And it all started with one small, daily, productive habit.

**Dictionary Definition of Habit**

Before we go on, let’s take a moment to define the word habit so we all have a clear understanding of what habits are and how they significantly impact our lives.

According to Webster’s New World Dictionary, a habit is “an acquired pattern of action that is so automatic it’s difficult to break.” Let me repeat this definition because it’s rich with meaning. A habit is “an acquired pattern of action that is so automatic it’s difficult to break.”

Unfortunately, for most people, the word habit has a negative connotation, mainly because we’ve been conditioned to concentrate on the “difficult to break” part of the definition. That’s what we think of when we use phrases like “smoking habit” ... “drinking habit” ... “drug habit” ... and “habitual offender.”
PRINCIPLE 7:
Manage Your Emotions

Courage is mastery of fear, not absence of fear.
—Mark Twain

It seems like not a day goes by that we don’t read or hear about a husband or a wife leaving their spouse for someone they “met” — and I use that word loosely — on the Internet. Pretty astounding, isn’t it, that two people, perhaps thousands of miles apart, meet accidentally in cyberspace ... they communicate by sending electronic messages through their computers ... and then they decide to run off together even though they’ve never even met in person.

Doesn’t it just boggle your mind to think that two grown adults would make a major, life-altering decision based almost solely on emotion?

We Make Our Decisions Based on Emotion

Amazing as it sounds, when you examine the way people make almost every decision in their lives, scenarios like this one are actually the rule, and not the exception. Students of human nature — from psychiatrists to novelists to religious philosophers — all agree that human beings make their deci-
sions based on their emotions, and then justify those decisions with reason and logic ... rather than the other way around.

The great English satirist and poet, Alexander Pope, observed this phenomenon approximately 300 years ago when he wrote this couplet:

The ruling passion, be what it will
The ruling passion conquers reason still.

Pope understood that it was human nature for people to make decisions based on emotions rather than reason. And like it or not, there’s not much we can do to change human nature. We can’t change the fact that Adam and Eve made an emotional decision to take a bite out of the forbidden fruit.

The Power of Emotions

Does that mean we’re doomed forever to be ruled by our emotions? Of course not. But it does mean that, in order for us to manage our emotions effectively, we need to better understand the power of emotions so that we can run our emotions, rather than have our emotions run us.

Let’s take a few moments to talk about the power of emotions and how they profoundly affect our lives — sometimes for the better... but all too often, for the worse.

First, let’s look at the downside of emotions, which is certainly easy enough to document. All you have to do is crack open a great novel ... or a play by Shakespeare ... or a history book ... or the Bible at any given page — and you’ll come face to face with the dark side of human emotions.

History is loaded with case studies of individuals — even whole nations, for that matter — whose “ruling passions conquered their reason,” the most notable example being Hitler
and the German people in World War Two.

Hitler in the 1930s and ’40s — and Bosnia in the 1990s — are living proof of what can happen when people fail to manage their emotions. When emotions like greed ... envy ... prejudice ... and hate dictate terms and assume dominance over our intellect, disaster is inevitable!

**Conquered the World, But Not His Emotions**

One of the greatest figures in ancient history, Alexander the Great, is a perfect example of an exceptionally talented human being who was undone by his emotions. By the time Alexander the Great was 29 years old, he’d conquered the known world. By all accounts he was brilliant ... handsome ... courageous ... and ambitious.

Yes, Alexander the Great mastered the whole world ... he was king of kings on earth. But he had a fatal flaw — he couldn’t master his emotions. Deeply depressed because there were no new worlds to conquer, Alexander the Great — the man who ruled the world before his thirtieth birthday — died a drunk at the age of 32!

From the days before recorded time when Cain killed his brother Abel out of jealousy ... to the fourth century B.C. when Alexander the Great drank himself to death out of despair ... to the 20th century when the Menendez brothers murdered their parents out of greed, decisions based on emotions have undone the best, and the worst, of God’s children.

**The Consequences of Unmanaged Emotions**

Just take a look at your own life. Think about all the countless times you made major decisions based more on emotion than reason. Can you remember back to your high school days when you made some decisions without thinking them through? Fortunately, most of the emotional decisions
we made as teen-agers turned out all right in the end ... and we laugh about them today.

But what about the high school kids who make the tragic emotional decision to jump in a car and drag race after drinking a few beers? All too often their failure to manage their emotions ends in a tragic car accident.

The point is, the consequences of unmanaged emotions ... the consequences of acting on your emotions instead of thinking things through, can be life-altering ... or even life-ending. And unfortunately, those consequences can never, ever be taken back.

When we read that nearly one third of the births in this country today occur outside of marriage, it’s a stern reminder that decisions based on emotions can have consequences that live on long after we have died! That’s why today, in an age where people have more freedom ... more temptations ... more distractions ... and more permissiveness than ever before in history, it’s crucial that people fully understand and respect the power of their emotions and learn to manage them.

**Use Your Head, Not Your Heart**

A wise man once remarked, “Half our mistakes in life arise from feeling where we ought to think ... and thinking where we ought to feel.” Every day we hear about, or observe, the truth of that statement.

For example, have you ever known anybody at work who quit his job in a fit of anger ... only to regret his decision the next day?

Have you ever observed a grossly overweight person order a huge, calorie-drenched meal and then say to the waiter, “And I’ll have a diet Coke — I’m watching my weight”?

Have you ever known friends who bought a new car on impulse, even though they were maxed out on their credit cards and were living from paycheck to paycheck?
Don’t Become Another Joe and Jerry

Maxwell Maltz, renowned surgeon and best-selling author, once remarked: “The most delightful surprise in life is to suddenly recognize your own worth.”

Friends, my sincere wish for you is that the principles in this book give you the knowledge ... the wisdom ... and the understanding to recognize your own worth! Because Joe and Jerry failed recognize their own worth, they spent almost 60 years of their lives trying to recover what was rightfully theirs — IF ONLY THEY HAD RECOGNIZED IT!

Life Is Like a 10-Speed Bike

A humorist once remarked that “Life is like a 10-speed bike. Most of us have gears we never use.” To verify the truth of that statement, all you have to do is take a glance around you.

For example, we all know childhood friends who were blessed with great athletic ability ... but who have chosen as adults to let their God-given talents go unused while they willingly turn themselves into overweight couch potatoes.

We all know childhood friends who were so full of adventure and passion in their youth ... but who have chosen to become increasingly sullen and bitter as they grow older.

We all know “whiz kids” from high school and college who were always heading up class projects and fund-raisers ... but who as adults traded in their entrepreneurial spirits for a “secure” job they hate.

Do you think those people are using all 10 of their gears? Or do you think they’re stuck in low gear because it’s easier to turn the pedals? Sure, it may be easier to turn the pedals
in low gear, but it’s also easier to spin your wheels and get stuck in a rut!

“**If I Had My Life to Live Over...**”

Erma Bombeck, the famous humorist and columnist, once wrote a very serious column shortly before she died from a rare kidney disorder. The column was about what she would do differently if she had her life to live over. She gave a long list of small, everyday things she would do differently — before ending her column with a powerful, heartfelt sentiment that nearly brought me to tears. Here’s what she said she would do differently if she could live her life over:

“**There would have been more I love you’s... more I’m sorry’s ... more I’m listening’s .... But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute of it ... look at it and really see it ... try it on ... live it ... exhaust it ...and never give a minute back until there was nothing left of it.”**

Sadly, Erma Bombeck won’t get another shot at this life. But in a very real sense, Erma Bombeck is giving you and me “another shot at life” by reminding us that we have been given the gift of choice ... and we can, in fact, CHOOSE to live life as she so eloquently described it — starting right this moment!

**Purpose of YOU, INC.**

When it’s all said and done, my purpose in the YOU, INC. program is to offer you the information that will allow you to have all the things in life that you deserve. By understanding the principles we’ve discussed ... and then by incorporating them into your life, I’m convinced you will improve the qual-
ity of your life beyond your wildest dreams.

**Look Inside Yourself**

I’d like to conclude this book by telling you about an episode from my family’s all-time favorite movie, Disney’s animated classic — The Lion King. The following scene perfectly illustrates not only what YOU, INC. is all about, but more importantly, why you must THINK — YOU, INC. — starting right now!

Near the end of the movie, the young lion king, Simba, is living in exile, trying his best to avoid his responsibilities as an adult by escaping into a life of meaningless leisure.

Simba is finally forced to grow up and face reality when he is confronted by a vision of his late father, King Mufasa. In Simba’s vision, King Mufasa challenges his only son to take his rightful place as King of the Pridelands with these words:

“Simba, you have forgotten who you are. Look inside yourself. You are more than what you have become.”

YOU ARE MORE THAN WHAT YOU HAVE BECOME!

What a powerful statement! And I, for one, think that this message speaks to far more adults in the audience than children. When I look around and see the vast human talent that is being untapped or under-used, it just breaks my heart!

I don’t know about you, but I can’t think of any fate worse than getting old and sitting in a rocking chair regretting the fact that I hadn’t lived up to my fullest potential.

How about you? Can you look in the mirror and honestly say you’re living up to your fullest potential?
Or are you holding back on your potential... and holding out on the quality of your life by not being all you can be?

Sadly, too many of us have “forgotten who we are”... and too many of us are “more than what we have become.”

**Don’t Squander It!**

What I’m talking about here isn’t some clever line from an animated movie. This is real. This is serious! You’ve got to understand that life is not a dress rehearsal!

This is it, my friend — it’s showtime!
*You’re on ... and you’re live.*

You’ve got one chance ... so don’t squander your life by giving a half-hearted performance! Please, please don’t squander your life by putting a fence around yourself.

Just as King Mufasa helped his son Simba to look inside himself so that he would pursue his rightful place as king of the Pridelands ... I sincerely hope that during our time together, I’ve been able to help you look inside yourself by opening your mind ... and by expanding the way you think of yourself and your place in the world.

**Discover Your Full Potential**

I challenge you to look inside yourself and discover, once and for all, what you can become.

For I truly believe that once you discover the full value of YOU, INC., you will become not only what you were meant to become ... you will also become more than you ever dreamed!
A world-renowned author, speaker and trainer, Burke Hedges travels the globe teaching sold-out audiences the art of entrepreneurship and how to transform their lives using his You, Inc. Life Development System. Although Burke has enjoyed tremendous success in recent years, he is no stranger to adversity. At age 22, Burke was earning $5.50 an hour building boats for a living. He was overweight and underemployed, living paycheck to paycheck in a tiny one-bedroom apartment with his wife and baby son, and going nowhere fast. After reading The Greatest Salesman in the World, Burke decided that if he wanted his life to change, then he needed to change. And change he did! By dedicating himself to personal growth and positive thinking, Burke changed the direction of his life 180 degrees. Within a year of resigning his job as a boat builder, Burke opened his first business, setting the stage for a lifelong commitment to seizing business opportunities in fast-growing industries. Since 1985, Burke has founded numerous companies, written seven best-selling books, and inspired millions of people around the globe with his penetrating insights and inspirational words.

अधिकतर लोग इसलिए अमीर नहीं बन पाते क्योंकि जिंदगी भर वे दूसरों के लक्ष्यों पर काम करते हैं।

—जे. पॉल गेट्स
YOU, INC. TEST

1) What would be your primary reason for being the C.E.O. of You, Inc.?
   • Extra Income
   • Financial Freedom
   • Have Own Business
   • More Spare Time
   • Personal Development
   • Helping Others
   • Meeting New People
   • Retirement
   • Leave a Legacy
   • Travel
   • None of the above

2) How would you rate your Responsibility Factor?
   • Irresponsible. I let everyone else take care of what needs to be done. If it’s important enough, someone will take care of it.
   • Somewhat responsible. I’m only responsible when I absolutely have to be.
   • I need to work on taking more responsibility for my spiritual, physical, relational, financial, and/or family related affairs.
   • Responsible. I consider myself responsible, but there’s room for improvement.
   • Very responsible. I’m a stickler about taking responsibility for all my affairs.

3) How would you rate your Tolerance Factor for Change?
   • Very Low. I don’t like change, and avoid change.
   • Below Average. I have a hard time with change. It throws my whole life out of balance.
   • Average. I prefer to stick to a routine, but I’ll change it if I have to.
   • Above Average. I don’t mind change, as long as it’s positive. It depends on the circumstances.
   • Very High. I love it! I welcome and embrace change. I believe it’s necessary if you want to Live Life to the Fullest.

4) How would you rate your Ambition Factor?
   • None. I get a kick out of watching paint dry.
   • Low. My ambition only comes out when it’s time to pick a TV channel or go on vacation.
   • Average. I have just enough ambition to do what I have to do, no more.
   • Above Average. When I want something I put effort into getting it, but sometimes I quit before achieving my goal.
   • Excellent. When I want something, I won’t stop until I get it. Quitting is not an option.

5) How would you rate your Financial Risk Tolerance Factor?
   • Never. I’m not a risk taker of any kind.
   • Seldom. Every once in a while I’ll take a risk, if I know it’s working for other people.
   • Sometimes. I’ll take a risk but the circumstances need to be weighed heavily in my favor.
• Often. I don’t mind taking calculated risks, depending on the circumstances. I’ll take a risk to earn a high reward.
• Off the Charts! I like to take calculated risks; my philosophy is - if nothing ventured then nothing gained.

6) **What is your Optimism Factor?**
• Very Low. Things never ever work out for me, so why look at the bright side of life.
• Below Average. Every time things start going my way, something or someone rains on my parade. I’m cautious about being hopeful.
• Average. I’m hopeful and skittish at the same time. I waiver on the fence of getting my hopes up or being disappointed.
• Above Average. I prefer to see life as what it can be.
• Unstoppable. I see challenges as opportunities in work clothes. I look for the good in people and challenges.

7) **Do you believe your potential equals your current income?**
• Absolutely
• Not Sure
• No

8) **What is your Procrastination Factor?**
• Always. I’m always procrastinating. It’s my middle name.
• Usually. I only procrastinate when I don’t want to do something.
• Sometimes. I know I need to get important tasks or chores done in a timely matter and on a consistent basis, but I have a habit of putting the off until the last minute.
• Hardly ever. I do my best to not procrastinate. When I do, I like to think it’s for a good reason.
• Never. I make it a point to not procrastinate. I pride myself on getting things done ahead of schedule.

9) **Do you have HABITS that are LIMITING your success, either in life or with your Career?**
• Absolutely
• Not Sure
• No

10) **What would you rather do?**
• Lead a Team
• Follow a Leader
• Neither

11) **How do you feel about setting goals?**
• Goals are worthless. I don’t believe in setting goals. So few people ever achieve them, so why bother?
• Occasionally. I set goals but I don’t write them down or talk about them. If I achieve the goal, then great I’ll make sure someone knows. If I don’t, then I won’t tell a soul.
• Regularly. I set goals. They are mostly small goals and I don’t write them down. Some of them I achieve, and some of them I don’t.
• Often. I write my goals down and I achieve most of them, but I don’t set my goals too high, so I don’t feel like a failure.
Goals are absolutely necessary for success. Goals are the legs of my Dreams. I have a clear vision of what I want my life to be, and a plan on how to achieve my dreams.

12) How important is structure to you?
- Not at all important. I dislike being accountable to anyone or anything. I detest structure!
- Slightly important. I could take it or leave it, but I know I should have a lot more structure in my life.
- Fairly important. I try to stick to a routine, but I tend to get off track from the direction of my goals or what I know I should be doing.
- Important. Structure is important to me because it holds me accountable and I get more accomplished. However, it’s hard for me to stay consistent.
- Essential. Structure is a must. If I don’t have structure I feel like a fish out of water. With structure, I can be accountable and others can count on me.

13) How would you rate your Time Management Skills?
- Poor. I have no idea how to manage my time.
- Below Average. It seems like I have more to do at the end of the day, than when I started the day.
- Average. I manage my time pretty well, but I need to be more efficient by being less distracted.
- Above Average. I like to stay organized, and get a lot out of my day.
- Outstanding. I’m a stickler on how I use my time. I don’t waste time because I can’t get it back. I measure my time in minutes and hours, not days and weeks.

14) How would you rate your People Skills?
- Poor. I don’t like people; therefore I don’t care if I offend people.
- Below Average. I’m somewhat thoughtful on dealing with people, but it’s generally when there is something in it for me.
- Average. I like to treat people the way I like to be treated. It’s sometimes frustrating when people don’t see my point of view, and therefore limits my influence factor.
- Above Average. I like to study and work on my people skills. Communication is important to me because I want to better understand how to interact with others.
- Outstanding. I’ve been a stickler about studying what makes people tick. Understanding human behavior is essential for reaching my potential. I consider my people skills one of my most important assets!

15) What would you like best about being your own Boss?
- Calling the shots
- Influencing people to reach their potential
- Controlling my work environment
- Ruling over people
- Earning what I’m worth