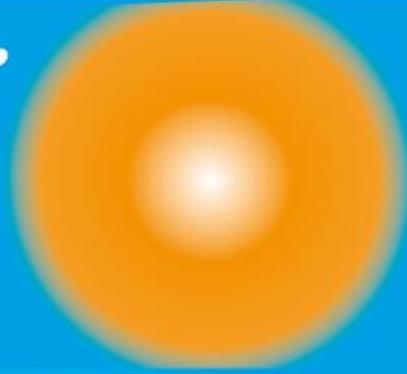


HAND ME THAT
TAKE THIS!



Dode Sescri

HAND ME THAT TAKE THIS

By ***Dode Sescri***

WORDS TO ELATE

Fourth Agenda

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All readers are welcome to challenge the contents of this book, and should process them with their uttermost intellectual capabilities before they can assess them for reference purposes because they are largely a work of the author's own imaginations.

Some stories given as examples in this book do not represent Factual or historical events but have been used fictitiously to bring out the literal aspects of discussions and also demonstrate the author's intended thoughts and ideas exemplarily. Do not take them too seriously.

This book is stacked up with numerous mini chapters the author refers to as transactions. Each transaction stands for each idea or topic of discussion.

You will also find some non-English words, the author has used them only for the sake of enhancing description. They are not a result of typo.

Contents

Transaction-1-Corporate ambitions

Transaction-2-Shrewd grocer.

Transaction-3-Merchant of many nations.

Transaction-4-More Business More Bills.

Transaction-5-Creating demand.

Transaction-6-Wretchedness of the banks.

Transaction-7-Best Cheapest.

Transaction-8-Success depreciated.

Transaction-9-Fear of the taxman & the new forced labour.

Transaction-10-More money less shopping.

Transaction-11-Small space- excellent for start-ups,

Transaction-12-Blind Bee

Transaction-13-why won't you sell?

Transaction-14-Adjusting to the weather changes.

Transaction-15-Multinational is a Multi-patriot

Transaction-16-Lethal mix.

Transaction-17-selling to the rich folk

Transaction-18-the business coach

Transaction-19-maintaining momentum.

Transaction-20-brooding ideas.

Governments against Businesses

Lethal Loans

My Life is worth a million

The Upsides of Running Your Own Business

The Downsides of Running Your Own Business

Surprising Reasons why many Startups Collapse

The Success of small businesses heavily depends on brilliant management

Simple ways to deal with people playing shell games in your business

Getting rich quick business

Final Clause

Footnotes.

Transaction-1-Corporate ambitions

Never share your corporate ambitions with your friends, family workmates, neighbours etc. because they will believe you only after they have seen your idea work, otherwise you will be mocked and forced to quit, Opposition begins right at the doorstep, they mock you greatly saying that you are out of your mind, "why don't you just quit? You are a rather funny person," they say.

One day I summoned all my friends, relatives and neighbours to a party, there I revealed to them the plans of my project , "I am planning to build a great FLYING BOAT, that will sails the seas of the air from continent to continent, from shore to shore," I said to them, then a few jeered me, "your own words prove that you are in fact silly, " they said, "boats are not built on land, that's point number one, note that carefully, secondly boats don't fly, they sail on the rivers, lakes and seas, they need WATER to move! Do you understand that?" they shouted at me. Later on they turned my case into an interesting story which they passed amongst themselves and used it to warn their children to stay away from me for I may pass on my madness onto them, it wasn't until a short time later when they saw me pull it out of the hangar that they were amazed, I flew it across the oceans from Thebes to Hispaniola and back without stopping then around the globe twice without docking on any harbour, it's after that did they believe what I have been telling them all along, they came out in huge numbers during the air show, and said to the media reporters that they had helped me accomplish the task of building the machine, only after the project's success did they want to be associated with me.

It's no wonder why people build great companies from their garage, because they face criticism from the very beginning, they wait till you are finished and the project is successful before they can give you any approval.

At first a I wanted to do it in the open communal way, then I came to realise this would not be possible, as long as my flying boat still lives, I shall have nothing much to worry about.

It will turn out in the end that those who once persecuted you the most in the beginning are the ones who will show you the most affection, whether they are doing it out of the general feeling of guilt or not, I don't know, or a genuine feeling of love.

Transaction-2-Shrewd grocer.

The grocer then spoke, "Miss Maree here is my biggest customer, and whenever she comes around here, I let her choose from the wide range of fruits and vegetables in stall, this is the bestselling practice, even chain stores all around this town have adopted our tactics. For me I don't sell bad apples, I have never sold any bad apples and there are no bad apples here on display as you can see now, they have gained confidence in the grocery stores because of being allowed to choose, they believe they are picking the best and leaving out the bad ones, I tell you ma-customer, all my fruits are best, if they were bad, I would not have put them on display in the first place. Please choose any of your liking.

Transaction-3-Merchant of many nations.

However, the word global has lost its value as a way of commanding attention and respect from others, I do global commerce, global trade and research etc. saying to others that your business conducts global merchandise is not enough to convince them that your business is of a kind worth putting their trust into. You have got to put in much, so much more.

He has become a merchant of many nations.

Two guys who once knew each other met as executive officers of rival companies... "hey Derik, how did you get into the ranks of TLLC Corp?" to others in the boardrooms it looked like they know one another, then the other

fellow reminded him of what they were there for, "..... would you pretend for a minute that you do not know me?" said Derik, we have more serious matters at hand."

The world markets are different, there are places where if you work hard and be patient a bit you easily achieve your success, but there are places where no matter how hard you work, you can never achieve anything, you get what is barely enough to feed your family.

A time will come when national trade barriers will have very little effect, humans are highly mobile and stubborn creatures no matter how restricted they are, they'll always find a way to do business in hostile conditions.

Transaction-4-More Business More Bills.

Better are those who started their businesses after losing their jobs due to some economic crisis than those who wilfully abandon their well-paying jobs to start a business of their own, only to find out later that they were better off when they were employed. When they look back, they remember the good olden days, when they had a secure salary, when times bite hard, they remember the many allowances they previously had enjoyed yet they threw away. When the bills begin to pile on the table like grocery, they had forgotten a crucial principal in finance and that's "people don't start businesses to pay bills with, instead to expand an existing enterprise, when putting an idea into practice for the first time, it's more of a hobby than a serious undertaking," for someone who was laid off without earlier notice from work, that's okay for them because they never really had any choice, or could not do otherwise, but someone blindly throwing away their wallet hoping to pick another one along the road is extremely foolish, so unspeakable. The business is in its infancy stage and barely beginning to walk, taking its first step, how come you expect it to be providing for you at this stage? Remember you have to wait for the cow to grow old enough before you can start milk it.

These are employees who quit because they are angry with their employers, they don't have a voice at their bosses' premise, they are loathed, intimidated, manipulated, exploited, every time they come up with a brilliant idea to improve the business they are slammed to shut up by their bosses, they can't do a thing to benefit the company, this makes them feel absolutely worthless, so they decide to quit.

But this should not be good enough reason to undertake such a decision, hadn't they made a deal in the beginning, the employer asked them if he could buy their time in exchange for a few thousand pounds, they all agreed to it, in as much as this job eats into your daily hours, you are not doing it for free remember? You get something small in return. That as we know it was the contract old written down. Now you have other agendas at hand, you intend to be a great contributor in scaling this business to some higher level, or you propose a change in the way of doing things around here. Wasn't this part of the deal? If not why bother? This is someone else's business, if they run it in a direction you find rather awkward, there is no need keeping yourself busy trying to help. Pocket the few notes he gives you weekly and walk back home, make merry and enjoy your day, for the boss time will teach him/her a lesson.

Transaction-5-Creating demand.

Someone creates something new, out of nowhere it came so everyone seems to need it all the time, it was once in oblivion, unthinkable unimaginable and something beyond comprehension of any human being now it appears a necessity for everyone, so much that no one can do without it. Someone just brought it out from the middle of nowhere and dropped it right at the centre where people are. Soon everybody is scrambling for a copy of it. It's quite surprising that something which was once unheard of is creating chaos and murmurings at the public places. When it's taken away people go about their business as if nothing ever happened in the first place. Even if it's something you actually don't need, you find yourself craving for it for some mysterious reasons, makes consumers think they need it very much, much more than anything else around them.

For instance, in the midst sixteenth century when glass was greatly improved, magnifying glass reinvented as eyeglasses were used by the elderly people who had vision problems or couldn't see anything, at the time they were associated with the elderly, in later years middle aged professionals began to be seen wearing them, it began to be popular among all aged professionals, it became a sign of high academic capacity, it shows that these are scholars that read a lot and in the boom of twentieth century eye glasses took a new step, they were no longer used for reading purposes only but for fashion as well, they instantly became fashioned ,different shapes and sizes came up, with shadings

of different colours, no longer the originals(*transparent*), they revolutionised everything and were very influential when pop culture was around the corner, they became fantasy, fashion and modelling items.

Transaction-6-Wretchedness of the banks.

After the sudden collapse of one of our most trusted local bank and several financial organisations nearby, people began to lose faith in banks and all other financial institutions, some people lost all their savings when their banks collapsed, a lifetime worth of savings, you could hear people murmuring in the streets, saying to one another, "it's better to buy a hardware store than to put your money in a bank, your money could simply vanish in a matter of seconds, hardware equipment on the other hand do rust over time but you can never lose them easily like money in a bank. " people were left with so much pain, grief, hopelessness, disbelief and mistrust of the banks. There was a time when bandits gathered in gangs to rob banks of their cash, that time is all gone, now it's the banks that are doing the robbing, snatching the only few pennies owned by the poor which could have saved their lives.

Folks have learned to fear banks, they have heard stories from families and friends of how some popular banks robbed them of the little fortune they had left. I thought they had a sweet deal from the beginning, sealed by mutual trusts and lots of assurances, but somehow something went wrong in the middle and their once strong cooperation turned sour.

One poor farmer said that some banks approached him like wolves in sheep's clothing, they made him many promises and enticed him with many gifts, persuaded him to sign the dark papers which forced him to make a deal that sealed his eventual demise. "had I known that they were coming to take away my handful of flock, I won't have led them enter my ranch in the first place." he said sobbingly, "I thought I saw my saviours coming to my aid, wasn't aware of the fact that they were actually reptilians dressed in priesthood robes and spoke the language of the angelics."

When I shall have my own bank, I hope to gain enough coins from the public as much as possible, but I do not want to be the cause of their despair, nor bring them stresses that might send them early to the grave.

There are deals which go well of course where both sides get numerous benefits from one another, things happen well only if you know what you are doing, if you don't know very well those strange partners of yours inside out then don't dare set a foot in their bargain.

People have smartened up in the recent decades, they want to put things into their own hands, things banks did for them they want to do it for themselves, how can such a huge reliable bank collapse? It's like someone who lives in a stone shelter then all of a sudden, the rock walls fell back in the four faces leaving you in danger and exposed to extreme weather, "had I known I would have put that money into a hardware store" says an old man.

Two men carrying luggage cross a river, one carrying a toolbox full of hardware components and another carrying a bag of paper money, on reaching the other side they saw an old cabin which they decided to take a rest in before they proceeded the next day, the following morning each woke up to a surprise, the tools man found all his tools had been engulfed with rust overnight, while the money man found out that all his precious notes have been dissolved by water, forming a large lump of spoilt paper, they have been completely destroyed, the tools man simply took a piece of sandpaper, scrubbed off the rust and went on with his journey, he left behind the moneyman agonising over his lost wealth.

They know very well that you should never put all your eggs in one basket. Wondering why they are still putting their life savings in a single bank account, so that you will not weep bitterly in the end, they should find some alternatives I believe.

Contemporary wisdom may claim that those who keep all their money in a bank are absolutely foolish. The walls of the banks are weak and porous, termites may one day bore into the building, build a colony around the safes and destroy your cash, and conversely water may slowly seep into the buildings through the basements and destroy your paper money, what will be left of you if all your life savings are destroyed? A solid proof that paper money is worthless. for now, we will hide our money under our pillows We will wait until the walls of the banks are built of better material, bricks that are stronger than steel, then shall we be confident enough to keep our money there for safety.

I think the reason banks are so strict with the behaviours of your bank deposits and withdrawals, is because they don't want any superstitious cash flowing through their system, they will be the ones to answer to when the authorities come knocking at their doors, they will be the ones demanded to produce documents needed of the suspects, so they'd rather keep the potential threats at bay than risk damage to their name.

The Great Wreak

It is soon found out that a calamity is descending upon the economy, the banks have been misbehaving because they have brought such a disaster of such an enormity to the us and the world economy, the government should have them whipped, the peoples voice say, "the banks executives from the smallest to the largest who participated in these shady deals should be laid down in a line according to their size , then each given ten strokes of cane, first before each is added bonus whips depending on the size of damage they did to the economy,"

These were some of the comments I heard people say on the streets, when they were forced to sleep out in the open like mail boxes.

Lots of banks often find themselves in shaky conditions I believe is probably due to their treachery, because they steal from the poor always, they collapse all the time, but the honest and truthful ones in their dealings stand tall for generations and centuries, but the wicked and greedy ones, those that rob the blind and show no mercy to the poor, their lifetime is often very short.

Many people fear banks and label some of them as utterly evil, they sweet talk you claiming they want to help you out of your problem, but all they are planning at the back of their minds is to take away the little you have left of your inheritance.

Transaction-7-Best Cheapest.

Everyone wants to buy at a cheaper price to save a few coins, they'll get their hands onto things they are obliged to only.

There's literally none who has excesses to squander away, as some people may think. Why do people want very excellent goods yet they are unwilling to add an extra dime to get it, if we continue to bargain any further down, we might reduce the price so low that they will end up paying nothing for it, if possible, they could ask you to give them for free, they care not about all the hard work

the producer has put into making their product so far, as long as they get what they want at the price they want. They complain that some retailers charge too high a price, and are taking advantage of the uninformed public, they too appear to be trying to take advantage of the situation, and they are offering to pay too low a price.

A shopper visits a shoe store in the streets of the city when he was travelling abroad, the good thing about this part of the world, everything is out for bargain, and there are no fixed prices of most things sold in the streets. With only the exception of a few supermarkets and outlet stores, so whatever you get depends on your luck and your bargaining power. When the shopper asked the vendor the price and was told, he was amazed, "isn't that supposed to be cheaper?" he exclaims, "What's your quote then?" Asks the vendor, the shopper in turn quotes a price much lower than half of what the vendor had proposed. He becomes angry at hearing this, and takes it as an insult, and therefore sends the shopper away angrily, "you want to buy a cow at the price of a chicken? Go on, I hope you will find vendors who are willing to sell at the price you are willing to pay for, see ya later!" the shopper walks away giving also bitter remarks. "You think your shoes are so special, you are selling worn out sack-cloths at the price of golden boots, whom do you think is foolish enough to buy your so-called boots? Maybe a drugged person I may guess." well the interaction isn't supposed to end this way, most bargains end well with either the seller giving off their goods at an agreed affordable price or the shopper bidding the seller farewell hoping to get their desired goods further down the road.

"If you are not smart enough, then you can easily be duped by these vendors on the streets," Is the common phrase people warn new shoppers that come to this place, foreigners especially are targeted with prices almost four times its actual cost, if you do not speak the local language then it becomes difficult getting your way through.

Benson almost paid with a pound of flesh on that good. Had he not known how to bargain he would have been ripped-off.

Transaction-8-Success depreciated.

To some people, your success may mean nothing to them, they'll even despise your achievements, what matters is what it means to you. Have I achieved any

level of progress in the past five months, or could I be stagnating, taking two steps ahead and one backward?

A guy was very joyful after being promoted at his place of work from being a branch supervisor to becoming a regional director and took control of office of all imports branch, of a construction company. This enabled him to move away from his pitiful ghetto he called home to a lavish middle-class neighbourhood, he was so over joyous because he has worked very hard for the company for over fifteen years, now he'd achieved the promotion he long yearned for. To his astonishment his new neighbours were not friendly let alone being happy for him, their actions and behaviours clearly suggested he was not welcome there. "Isn't that the guy who lived under a Railroad near that stinking neighbourhood? What does he want here?" they mumbled at one another; many people will not appreciate your hard struggle only those who have gone through the same experience will understand. Some people may understand success as acquiring a certain amount of money, buying a new car, or moving into a new home, others understand as improvements in social relations, overcoming a bad habit, completing a hefty project etc. each person has his/her own understanding & view of what success is. What matters most is "what does it mean to you?"

Even though he had moved to a more comforting lifestyle and driving a SUV, the neighbours see it as nothing. Many of them had inherited their wealth, they don't know what it feels like to live from hand to mouth, and then all of a sudden you are delivered from your misery by some generous executive.

Transaction-9-Fear of the taxman & the new forced labour.

There are two people who strike fear into my hearts the moment the sight of them shows up, the lawman and the taxman, coincidentally it's the people who give them this power to intimidate. The tax man is said to be so mean, he takes away everything and gives back nothing.

If you want me to give away lots of money to my employees, then you should give me that extra cash which you want me to top up on their salary. Why are we paying too high a tax? When it comes to collecting taxes, civil authorities will show no mercy.

Global tax rates have skyrocketed in the past decades, citizens of every nation and increasingly paying a higher tax level than before and are now beginning to complain about it. An angry worker from the quarry returns home complaining, "why am I paying too high taxes, am I doing a volunteer work for the state? this is worse than forced labour, is manual labour slowly turning into forced labour? better to do work and not get paid than for someone to overwork you, pay you flimsy cash then takes it back while you watch." citizens of many nations often complain that they fear the state often robs them of their hard-earned cash,"

You toil so hard for years on your own and when you now have achieved a fortune the taxman comes in to take it all away, he drains you of your life-giving blood. People have always hated tax collectors in all ages, there was nothing ugly like being called a tax collector. A mean agent that often takes advantage of the poor. The sight of the taxman brings feelings of gloom and resentment to the homes of the poor.

Jeremy saw a middle-aged man walking down the alley towards his street, as he gaze onto his face, he found that it was familiar and wanted to meet him, he had with him nearly half a dozen bags which he struggled to carry. Jeremy offered to help him with the luggage as he felt sorry for the struggling man. He carried the other half of the old man's luggage for another three hundred yards till he reached safely home. The elderly fellow feeling relieved thanked jimmy greatly, he then dug his hand deep into the left inner pocket of his coat and brought out a wallet, removed some few notes which he counted before handing them over to Jeremy, "this is just to get yourself some cola to boost your energy, may your youthful strength continue to give help to the elderly." He said to him.

A guy was watching the entire event from over the bridge through a binoculars. He descended down speedily as he shouted to Jeremy, "stop, stop," Jeremy stood still, searched with his eyes around to see who was shouting at him, when he saw someone running towards him in a hat, he waited for him to get near, "don't you walk away on me like that, you need to pay taxes." So this was a tax man in disguise, he snatched the pieces of notes from Jeremy's hands only to find they were negligent after counting. He slammed them back onto his chest and walked away, "I thought you were carrying zillions worth of notes," he said and walked away.

Transaction-10-More money less shopping.

Here is how I understand inflation and the problems it has created in the past few decades, a fellow goes to their employer and ask them to raise their salary, the amount they are currently earning now is not enough to sustain them, so the employer tries very hard to negotiate the situation out of the problem but all attempts fail. The workers threatened to tear down the warehouse if their salaries are not increased, they claim the amount they are getting is not enough to sustain them through their daily programmes, the employer therefore adds three dirhams to every dirham that is used to buy bread, when the dispute is settled the employees go back home satisfied that they have made a clever bargain in the course of the day which they have actually won.

On the other side of their neighbourhood, the shopkeeper sees that her customers have become very rich recently, so she decides to raise the price of bread by three dirhams, her customers are now spending four dirhams to buy the same size of bread, which they used to buy just for one dirham, price of everything else skyrockets in the neighbourhoods, they sat down in a meeting and said this to themselves, "we are paying more money for the same amount of goods, have we become any richer?" they asked,

When the factory employers raise the wages of their employees the bakers also raise the prices of bread, you get more notes to take to the food stores and get the same amount of food you got when you were paid lowly, So life hasn't improved for anyone at all, the struggle is still on.

Inflation is on the rise because everybody is hiking the prices of their goods, they all want to become trillionaires, the school teacher raises the tuition fee, the drug companies raise the prices of their medicine and in turn indirectly contribute to high cost of healthcare, the baker raises the price of his bread, the garment maker raises the prices of his clothes... everyone is raising their prices because they all want to become trillionaires, the prices are so high while the quantity of goods still remains the same. Won't people realise the money they are chasing after is worthless compared to the goods they have at their disposal?

Transaction-11-Small space- excellent for start-ups,

Give someone a small space, if he is industrious well enough, they will grow their goods in size and expand their territory to find proper storage for them, if you give him too much space even before he builds a tent, the size and immensity of the emptiness will be too big for him, it will easily discourage him.

Transaction-12-Blind Bee

People who rush to put their business ideas into practice without looking at the long term demands only to get stuck later in their exploits while trying to get out are like bees that enthusiastically fly into a motel room looking for flowers then bang their heads continually onto a glass window looking for a way out, it is no use trying to help them. When one is caught in the middle, unable to go forward but also unable to go back, you certainly have no idea which step you should take next. Sit down for a minute first before you move on to the next super project.

Transaction-13-why won't you sell?

Receiving a steady stream of window shoppers is not all that bad luck, they pass information to others about what they have seen, they tell their companions, "hey wait I saw a very pretty dress on store 49 down sixth street," "how beautiful was it?" asked the other members, "it looks like those fellows do sell nice clothes these days, maybe I shall go to check it out for myself," the other says, what began as a short observation turned into a shopping spree, slowly word about the shop spreads and the keeper soon finds themselves with a flood of customers.

As far as I can remember, customers should not feel they are the only ones coming to make an order at your shop, they enjoy the fulfilling thoughts of being just faces in the crowd of window shoppers. They just want to contribute. They want to buy only stuff that everybody else is buying from the most popular store. Absence of many customers in a given store scares away the few willing customers.

Dealing with slow moving stock is quiet painful discouraging and heart-breaking, I once bought a space in a small plaza, in it I placed the best leather boots from the best known brands, I really hoped that these were going to sell off quickly in the first few weeks, I did succeed in selling a dozen in the first

month for the mall was particularly new at the time, but in the subsequent months, there are days and weeks that passed without making a single sale, while there were bills to pay, you know, months of no sales grew into years, such frustration was becoming unbearable, there are times when I saw what seemed to be potential customers came gazing through the windows but when we go over to welcome them in so that they can take a better look, they quickly run away, it's better to have no customers at all than to have window shoppers who waste your time and attention day in day out, I often ask this my jackets and leather boots, why won't you sell yourself? I have made the most attractive displays in the entire mall, yet none of them would notice, those who notice as they pass by are not willing to buy, when I put up something for sale, I expect it to make sales, it should sell like hot cakes, not just sit there for ages as if some piece of artwork, when I build an apartment, I expect people to move in as soon as it is finished, why are all my apartments nearly half empty? They are consumers behaving badly, they are taught well of consumer behaviour yet they won't respond.

Merchants of the Wait.

“What does it mean to be a merchant? Is it an easy life or is it as hard as farming?”

What is the use of keeping around clothing that do not sell, why don't you remove all the so-called slow-moving stock then, and remain with only those that sell, are these people really serious with their work? If they were, why not take action now?

The answer to that is no, these clothing are just there to help others sell, if our customers were to find lots of empty shelves on our clothing outlet it would probably scare them off. Bad stock helps good stock sell.

At first when I built the chain store, I thought I could just stack up stock then hire an attractive face to do for me the sales, then customers would flock into my storefront each day, this later turned out to be a nightmare, my store looked deserted like a ghost city, no one ever came near or across it, most customers kept far off. For every product sold there are thousands of similar products left behind crying to potential customers to pick them. They are tired of staying on the shelves.

We created an excellent product that would send buyers scrambling for the stock on display, that's what connects us, nothing else or more than that, so we didn't have to entertain every customer that walked into our store, to beg them to buy our goods.

Entrepreneurship is surely meddled with lots of frustrations, you stay stone faced all day and sometimes go home in the evening with nothing.

Others advised me saying, "please moderate your price tags so that you can convert your willing but unable to buy visitors into regular customers." I surely tried out their counsel but this too didn't seem to work.

Fresh Stalls.

After spending a few months working at a local restaurant that served fish foods, Jeremy and I decided to reduce the serving area space. We discovered that the too many empty seats in the serving area scared away our first customers. They each diverted their payment to adjacent stalls, but three months later after reducing the tables from twenty-one to four, we had people swarming in from every direction and our servings increased threefold, we added two more tables to those that already existed. when the four tables under the main roof were full, we set in place temporary sheds as more people come in to take shelter from the afternoon heat, we ordered our fish suppliers to bring in more tilapias, and perch, our temporary seats & sheds were kept in place ready to be used only when necessary, we just made sure there were no idle furniture around and we succeeded in that to an extent.

We successfully saved our restaurant from falling into a pit, a potentially grave situation was threatening to destroy the business.

Soon we are going to do commodity moderation, in the course of time we shall smoke out every unproductive product especially slow-moving stock, leaving only potentially selling goods plus a few others in the store to just keep our stores filled to capacity.

Transaction-14-Adjusting to the weather changes.

When the tsunamis of change come be prepared to ride the waves, when you see the huge towering waters closing in you should pick up your surf board, tug in your boat and be ready to move with the rolls, otherwise if they were to find

you sleeping, you and your companions who are caught off-guard will be swept away like chaff, or crippled to an extent the damage gets beyond repair.

Each decade, year or month, numerous changes emerge in the global business trade that forces existing ones to either adapt or die, in the turmoil many old enterprises collapse while others emerge from them, the advent of technology has put many merchants who have been around for centuries out of business giving ways for others that have never had a chance to conduct trade, the rules of the game are simple, if you want to be a giant yourself then kill another giant who is sleeping on their work and take their place.

Not just the technology being a challenge, there could be a change in source of raw material, new ways to market, changes in manufacturing and distribution, creation of a totally new product etc. Like the way Manufacturing is becoming too risky and less profitable by each day, more and more entrepreneurs are moving to service industries. The manufacturing industry is slowly finding itself in tatters and a huge section of it dying as merchants move on to other things by each coming day.

The waves of tsunami, you never know when they will come, just be ready at all times.

Transaction-15-Multinational is a Multi-patriot.

The duke of Cromwellson had the taxes levied on the merchants of the city increased by four-fold. The merchants shouted at the duke saying, “away with patriotism, away with the love of motherland, away with nationalism, all our property we inherited from our forefathers, we never robbed anyone of anything yet they try to make us look guilty, if they strip us of our rightful belongings, who is going to feed our bellies and those of our children, and our children's children?” with the fear of having their property seized, they hurriedly sold all their property, packed their money and other treasures into ships and sailed away into the seas, they pledged to settle in any land or nation state that will welcome them and allow them to do merchandise, if their terms of trade are better than those back at home, then they will never return. How could you love some people whom after paying them their wages they threaten to send you to the gallows, they still want to kill you even after you have paid all your tariffs in due time. After they had gone and were in safe lands they said to their previous governments (*heads of states & kings*) welcome to the new world which we have created, isn't it beautiful.

The monks of that city also demanded a share of their exploits, they must either give a third of their monthly earnings to the monks or else they lose their place in the silver city above.

Transaction-16-Lethal mix.

There are three things that do not mix...

- We do not mix business with friendship. Some of the Friends or family working with you at the premise can be lousy, sleep on the job, cause damages and steal from you, they do this knowing they will get no disciplinary action because they are your friends. They pick apples at your store refusing to pay simply because they are fond of you. For a business partner who was once your friend and is lagging behind in their work, if their project fails, they might think you are stealing from them and may make plans to kill you.
- We do not mix business with religious dogma, those that mix business with religion are like someone who mixes clay with iron, a person who is a religious devotee and successful merchant at the same time often forgets sometimes and starts injecting business practices in his sermons.
- We do not mix business with politics, when a successful overseas traders is seen on numerous occasions associating with very popular politicians he might lose many of his/her customers, who might think his business is directly funded by the state or they have some fishy dealings with the government, also if he puts a flag of his country at the entrance of his every vendor store, customers will be appalled by this sign, they definitely turn to other stores where there are no intimidating flags, your flag as a global merchant as you may remember is your company's brand and logo, nothing more than that is needed, if customers have faith in it, so do they have faith in your business and other products you provide.
It is not a wise thing to wave your country's flag at your business premises for its really going to have a serious effect on your franchise. Patriotism is good for security and protection but not for business, if you are planning to do global business, what matters at the moment is your company's flag, your brand name and your true identity. The other

things come second, global markets are so competitive that a small thing such as loyalty pledge printed on your merchandise can easily taint your image, give your competitors an upper hand, it can easily put you out of business.

Transaction-17-selling to the rich folk

Goods of ostentation, that's what they were called, I almost forgot. Is it a sign of arrogance or foolishness when the rich buy goods at too high a price? Sometimes those goods have no practical use for them but they still buy them, the poor will then say, "the rich have got so much money they haven't found a place to keep it all in, so by buying the useless stuff, they are simply dumping the excess cash they have got. That would be better than throwing a bunch of notes to street urchins." the shopkeepers on the other hand, who have now wealthy customers claim that charging them too high for cheap goods is a justice served, if we allow them to buy at a regular price, then they might buy all the quantities in our stock and leave others who have fewer notes with literary nothing.

In fact, this gives me a business idea, am going to start a company where I sell extraordinary and rare sea shells, if they are very prestigious indeed some dumb rich folk is obviously going to buy them.

Figure out if your product is going to be of a necessity or a luxury good, goods of necessity attract more competitors thus lowering profit margins, luxury goods on the other hand attracts fewer competitors but also fewer customers and slower sales.

Transaction-18-the business coach

My Dad has an MBA, we asked him for some help, but he was first a little reluctant, he has an MBA and teaches business at the university, but he's got no business of his own, when we ask him, "why don't you stop helping those campus kids and stay here with us helping us build our businesses?" but then he said, "you know things don't work that way, the coach stays on the bench after giving clear instructions how the game is to be played while the players enter the field to conduct the match, we teach others how to conduct/run

their businesses in the most profitable way possible then they go out there to put it into practice, we can't do both. Bear with me on that please."

Transaction-19-maintaining momentum.

Growing with the Customers.

Starting and running a well-planned business enterprise is like a nuclear reaction, once it's triggered there is no stopping. It grows and grows for decades until when there is nothing more to grow.

For a business that has been growing for a long time it is not that easy to eliminate (*uproot*) it has stretched its roots to further places and firmly held onto rocks. And also, when an individual starts a franchise, you can't run away from it when things start to get tough, you have to handle what you started.

If you are going to start something entirely new and begin to run it immediately, then chances are it will be released premature, you shall then let someone else will have to improve it later on. With the first idea created in your mind about planned procedures its high time one should work on their projects thorough enough, remodel it more and more till when it cannot be changed any further that's when it's ready for launching.

A proper business is half hobby and half serious work, as time comes by it becomes part of you so that even though it doesn't bring much profit as forecasted you can still proceed anyway.

Most business I have ventured into major on solving other people's problems. The customer will always see a need to get themselves one of your products, the help it gives them is worth more than what they pay for it.

I don't have to drum into them my product identity, they will come in times of need, a good business has room to grow, we keep building it and upgrading it with time, sometimes with just a few readjustments are needed to keep it running.

When you are done with step one of your project and it has proved successful, however sometimes you find yourself being rushed and tossed around by

some self-assigned assistants. Do not let yourself be rushed by others who think there is quick riches ahead.

Transaction-20-brooding ideas.

The Story of the One Chic.

A hen laid ten eggs, one was accidentally crushed by the farmer's foot, there were nine eggs left in the basket one hanged loosely and easily fell to the floor, it broke, there were eight eggs in the basket, one night a large lizard crawled into the roost and swallowed three eggs.

There were five eggs left in the basket which hatched into five chicks, one chick failed to grow enough feathers and therefore died in the cold, there were four chicks playing around the house compound when a kite flew down from the skies and scooped some of them, it snatched two of the chicks with its powerful talons, there were two chicks playing around the compound when a truck dove past by and crushed one's head. There was one small chick that clung onto its mother's bosom all the time, it grew into a huge healthy hen, then laid ten eggs. A hen laid ten eggs... and the story goes on forever.

Sometimes when you have many business ideas only a few of those many brilliant ideas of yours ever turn out successful if they are ever ventured into. If you undertake ten ventures, then only two of those will ever come out as a success, if you have fifty then probably five of those will make it the finish line, and if you have a hundred maybe ten will prove resilient.

Governments against Businesses

The relationship between governments and corporations is like that of a husband and a wife, when the man mistreats her, locks her in the house and beat her on a daily basis without any good reason, she has no choice but to end the relationship, to leave him, and find another man who will take good care of her, the humiliation of living with another man would be much better than the suffering she endures on a daily basis, she thinks to herself and says, "I am the breadwinner of this home, I bring in the most income, I take the most difficult roles, I do the filthy work of the house, I watch over the kids all night, I

work tirelessly, always exhausted, never have enough sleep, and all the worries and burdens of the family are put upon me, I worry about the family's security, about their health, what are the children going to eat what they are going to wear, how are they doing at school, everything is placed upon my shoulders. Despite all these contributions I make he is never grateful, and the only thing he gives you in return is endless criticism and lots of threats, he sits on his sofa all day watching football while you run around the house, at the end of the day he wags his fingers at you saying you must do better, your food tastes bad, all while your baby is crying, why did you just burn my best shirt? Don't you know how to handle an iron box or maybe you want to say we need a new one? The list is endless, he condemns you for every little mistake you make.

If corporations are the workhorses and plough oxen that bring food and riches into the country, yet their governments decide to mistreat them, punish them with huge fines, humiliate them in the public eyes, and take away more than a half of what they have worked hard for, things they have sacrificed so much for, then they shall have no choice but to make that dreaded decision. They invite themselves to a secret meeting and gossip to one another like the wives of a chieftain, "our husband shows no gratitude to us," they say, "he looks at us like a piece of shit, why don't we dump him and go find someone who will give us better treatment. And let's see if he will ever do anything for himself, we shall openly express our feelings to him. If he refuses to listen, we shall therefore have no choice but to abandon him, for he never gave us any support nor show us a shred of concern.

Of you understand the feelings of a lady that has been used then ditched by her lover husband then you know this is exactly the way corporations feel about their governments.

They are a symbol of supreme authority, yes that we know and understand, but then why won't you give a helping hand?

Just as it is expected from a husband to properly treat his wife, your government is supposed to love and protect you not to abuse you

Lethal Loans

Once a bank gave a farmer a loan to invest on his farm, the farmer used the money to buy new equipment, agricultural tools, fertilizers and tried out a new kind of crop, he then sat aback on his rocking chair with his arm crossed, hoping the new style of input would amass him a great fortune, that year, the seasonal long rains did not arrive, and the crops failed, It was followed by months of severe draughts more terrible than anything that country has ever seen in a hundred years. Hen the time for loan repayment arrived the farmer had nothing to give, the bank that had loaned him a year ago came to his farm and grabbed him by the throat saying, "produce the money we gave you just as you had promised "well I don't have it" said the farmer, "what do you mean you don't have it, didn't you pick a cheque from our office last year and gave us a promise to pay it back with interest on time?, "well cant you see that I put it all in the soil yet it failed to bear fruit? 'said the farmer, "it is not my fault" insisted the farmer, you should blame the weather . Climate and the soils, "well then ,force your damn soils to produce our money," said the banker, if you don't we are coming back to take the same lands you inherited from your forefathers.

Its apparent how banks invest in very risky and absurd programs and expect to reap great fortunes from them , owning a bank is like is like sailing a ship that is full of wild adventurous and mindless crew.

You see a a bank putting all its savings into a farmer, when the crops fail or all farm animals die from animal plague, they loose everything as soon collapses, you see some banks putting all their financial reserves into buying heavy equipment for fishermen, who in turn scoop out all fish from the oceans, fish stocks begin to run low, and the investors run into trouble.

Then the bankers say to one another, all these businesses happen to be risky lets put our money into real estate, it is the safest kind of investment in the world , so they develop countless commercial and residential properties in cities they also develop vast luxury resorts on beautiful beaches and attractive seafronts, years later , earthquakes shook the city and tore their magnificent

skyscrapers into pieces, even the high-rise apartments complexes fell to the ground like sand castles, tsunamis came from the seas and washed away all development near the coasts, all land within a few miles to the beach is flattened and lay barren as though no person had ever set foot on that area.

Finally the banker takes a dollar bill, rolls it up and wraps it with a rubber band, he then digs up a hole in the soil, put the bill inside, covers it with earth, he then goes forth, brings a watering can, and waters it, after that he goes home in the evening, he sleeps soundly dreaming of his sown bill growing into a huge tree, with countless thousands of bills hanging from its branches and leaves, he comes back the following morning hoping to reap his harvest, only to find out his sown bill has been destroyed by dump & termites , he is greatly outraged, causes the soils and walks away to find another place to sow his worthless bills.

My Life is worth a million

How many homicides have been inspired by life assurance, a man walks to his brother and asks him, " how much is your life worth", he replies, saying its worth a million, he then pulls out his handgun and proceeds to blow his brains out. A day later he walks to the insurance company' office asking for compensation for the loss of his brothers life, when asked what transpired, he says that his brother was tragically killed b another hunter during a hunting expedition, the guy fled off after realizing what he had done, he thought that he had shot a wild hog not knowing that it was a human. "where is this guy that took your brother's life?" they asked him, but he stubbornly replies with the same answer saying that the guy took off immediately and couldn't even draw the simplest outlines of his outward appearance. The insurance staff then take the guy to the woods to take a look at the crime scene when the alleged accident took place. It is when they reach those hunting grounds that the true story really unravels, the man realizing that he has been outwitted and now in deep trouble since his story has change from that of promise to access to incredible wealth to a police case, he becomes a fugitive and he never gets the flashy lifestyle he had dreamt of.

In another scenario, some rebellious children decide to end the life of their sickly father after realizing he had a jaw-dropping life insurance value. Their dad was a long-time public official who served his country faithfully for many years; his life insurance was worth millions. They decided to push their wheelchair-ridden parent down the stairs all at once. Everything went according to plan at first; the police believed their sad story of their ill parent meeting his untimely end in the family home. All their close relatives and friends came to join them in the family home to support them in their times of grief; they provided them with whatever they needed, including wiping tears from their eyes. The funeral proceeded well, and as soon as they were over, the kids went straight to the bank to cash out their daddy's Pension funds, as well as visit the insurance company's offices to claim his life's worth of millions. This very act raised eyebrows in the law enforcement department, who reopened the case for further investigations into the so-called accidental death. Detectives found many gaps in the kids' stories; there was a lot of things that weren't adding up. They pressured the kids further for more information on how their daddy fell from the stairs; their accounts weren't adding up, and some elements of their stories were changing from time to time. A friend of the kids told detectives that he was asked to become part of a plot to finish their father but refused to participate. This confession from their friend, together with pressure from the police, finally forced the kids to change course of their action and admit to the mistake of deliberately ending their father's life too soon so that they would clean up daddy's pension accounts since they were the sole beneficiaries.

These are stories that are too common in our daily lives. The question remains that who should be blamed for this moral decay in our modern lives? Some scholars argue the fact remains the wicked nature of humans; people commit murder to take over their property every day, be it expensive cars, beautiful homes, or land. It happens more often in other industries that are not related to insurance; the insurance companies on the other end of the spectrum support this claim, saying they have nothing to do with other people's evil plans. But some activists speak a different voice; they argue that insurance companies have a significant role to play in the rise of these homicides. The rise in the value of life insurance has led to the increase in homicides inspired by riches promised by these assurance policies, and the industry is not doing enough to combat this vice that is slowly creeping into the society.

The Upsides of Running Your Own Business

As an employee, you will always be governed by someone superior to you and will always be commanded around. Self-employment is for people who hate to be bossed around and are talented enough to generate salary by selling their expertise independently. Let us look at some of the benefits of self-employment...

You are your own boss:

Do you hate the idea of some person who is not as talented as you are governing you? Do you hate the feeling of being told what to do and how to do it all the time? Well, if you do, it is time for you to start your journey from a salaried job to becoming self-employed. That way, you will be more pleased with what you do and hence lead a contented life.

More opportunities to earn money:

Going self-employed, you can earn more than what you did when you were a salaried person as the company deductions are not included in your earnings and you get what you receive. You can start with the basic charges and slowly raise your rates based on the positive reviews that you receive for your work. The opportunities will knock on your door if you can give your clients what they want. It is important to build good reviews as it puts an extra weight on the rates that you are quoting.

There is less investment:

You can save a lot of your daily expenses based on the work that you choose. You save on gas as you work from the comfort of your home and thus avoiding the lengthy commutes to your workplace like you used to. Getting up early for meetings and hence going on expensive lunch outs can also be avoided and you can get to have a healthy and delicious home cooked food. Leaving your kid behind with a day care and wondering how your kid's day has been could be taking an emotional toll on you. One of the benefits of being self-employed is that you can divide time for your family and profession without taking anything else for granted. You can also save on the expensive day care expenses that add on to your daily needs.

Variety of projects that you can execute:

When you are working in a corporate firm, your roles and responsibilities are defined and you are asked to work within a framework. The structure does not allow you to explore other options that are creative and innovative as you need to stick to the designed solution as agreed upon by the seniors and clients. Being a freelancer, you can select new challenging projects pushing yourself to innovate and evolve at every step and hence, giving you the job satisfaction.

Drama-free environment:

When you are self-employed, you can create your own peaceful space for working which is devoid of distractions. In an office, especially an open plan one, many people work in the same space and you can't avoid to overhear official conversations and gossip.

No worries about the sick leave:

If you are ill, you don't have to worry about whether you will get a sick leave or not. As your own boss however, you can inform your clients regarding your health and take a day off from work. You no longer have to beg or give long explanations as to why you were on leave. You have the liberty to choose your own health insurance based on your needs and not what your company has decided for you.

It is your work area:

It is your area and your call on how you want to decorate it; you can put up photographs of people or places you like; you can use dual monitors if you want or go for a single one; you can keep a standing desk or a sitting desk. It is your work area and you can decorate it in whichever way you want without having to worry about the company norms and what your colleagues will think or say.

You buy new equipment as and when you want!

It is very bureaucratic to get new equipment for your project in a workplace. You need to support and justify your request with all sorts of documentation. Being an own boss, all you have to do is get up, go to the

market and buy the needed equipment for your projects. No worries about the approval process and no more waiting time.

No dress code:

If you are not the formal dressing kind of person, being self-employed takes away that requirement. As long as you are smart and deliver on client needs, that is all that matters. If you are happy to work in your pajamas at the comfort of your home or work in funky outfits that define you when you work from any place other than your home, you just go for it. The only time you may have to dress up like a corporate employee would be when you are attending client meetings.

You are in control of your time and program:

As long as you meet the deadlines of your customers or clients, how you schedule or structure your time is entirely up to you. You can decide to work at night and rest by day; you can decide not to work on weekends; you can have a relaxed schedule as well as a tight one and so on. Since you are self-driven, you can be flexible on time depending on deadlines and your energy levels. It is your schedule hence, making you more responsible in planning your day!

You are a valued person now:

When you are working in a corporate setup where there are many employees, you may not get the recognition you feel you deserve because all are competing for visibility. At times, your work and efforts get ignored because some other guy took the credit. As a self-employed person, you don't have to seek recognition and appreciation from anyone else but your clients. If they are happy with your work, they will tell you. When you get a pat on the back, you know your clients value you. Knowing that you are valued can greatly boost your morale and motivate you to work harder on future projects.

You choose your customers:

You can choose the customer you want to or not to work for. If you experience a strain in your relationship with a client, you are at liberty to dump them. The responsibility to choose the right clients for yourself is

squarely on you. As an employee, you have to work on any project shoved your way, irrespective of whether you like it or not. In such a case, you may not give it your all. As a self-employed person, you will have soul-searched a client before bidding for a project and putting ink on the contract.

The Downsides of Running Your Own Business

Every rose has thorns to go with it and every coin has two sides. That is the nature of most aspects of life. So, before you give that “I resign” note, consider the cons of self-employment and be sure that that is what you want, let us look at the disadvantages of self-employment.

Paying more taxes:

As a freelancer, you normally end up paying a little more taxes as compared to when you are a corporate employee. Apart from that, you also are responsible for filing your tax returns and are liable for penalties if you submit late. As an employee, that is the job of the organization.

No more paid leave:

In the world of self-employment, the days you are not at work are not paid for. So, if you decide to take a break, you are also taking a break from earning. As an employee, you have the luxury of getting paid when you go on leave. You need to constantly remind yourself that as a freelancer, there is nothing called paid leave.

Multitasking all the time:

As a freelancer, you package all the roles of a business into yourself. The responsibilities of looking for work, doing the work and billing for it are all yours; you are the manager, the supervisor, the operator, the messenger, the accountant and so on. More often than not, you will end up hiring a helping hand as all these tasks begin to overwhelm you.

Unsteady pay:

With employment comes a regular pay that you can bank on one hundred percent. As a freelancer, there is nothing like end month. Projects can be erratic. Some months may bring a lot of work and others may be totally quiet. You may sometimes, within a very short time, earn enough to last you several months but other times, the dry spell may also last for months. You therefore need to be ready to face the unsteady income flow and plan your finances for fat and lean times.

You are Socially isolated:

Being on your own comes at a price of being socially isolated. If you are working alone then there would be no social gatherings like that of corporate jobs. There will be no social contacts or friends that you could make through your workplace. It might get a little lonely after a while and you might begin to miss the charm of working with a huge team and the celebrations that come with it when celebrating milestones in your project. Working alone might achieve your milestone but celebrating with yourself is not that inviting and exciting!

Distractions at home:

Before getting comfortable working from your home, you might want to think about the various distractions that come with it. If you have children, then their running around and the urge to play with you will distract you. Your spouse may need emotional attention now and then, your helpers may distract you as they go about doing the house chores and so on. Your door bell will rob you concentration as neighbors, relatives, vendors and utilities meter readers come calling. This way, you may end up solving your personal issues more than your work issues.

Surprising Reasons why many Startups Collapse

Technological causes

If within an industry, there is failure to exploit information technology and new production technology, the firm can face serious problems and ultimately fail. By using new technology, cost of production can be reduced and if an organization continues to use old technology and its

competitors start using the new technology, this can be detrimental to that organization. Due to high cost of production, it will have to sell its products at higher prices than its competitors and this will consequently reduce its sales and the organization can get into serious problems.

Working capital problems

Businesses which rely on one large customer or a few major customers can face severe problems and this can be detrimental to the business. Losing such a customer can cause big problems and have a negative impact on cash flows of the businesses. Besides, if such a customer becomes bankrupt, the situation can even become worse, as the firms would not be able to recover these debts.

Economic distress

A turndown in the economy can lead to corporate failures across a number of businesses. The level of activity will be reduced thus affecting negatively the performance of firms in several industries. This cannot be avoided by most businesses.

Mismanagement

Inadequate internal management control or lack of managerial skills and experience is the cause of the majority of company failures. Some managers may lack strategic capability required to recognize strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a given business environment.

Over-expansion and diversification

The situation of over-expansion may arise to the point that little focus is given to the core business which can be harmful as the business may become fragmented and unfocused. In addition, the companies may not understand the new business field.

Fraud by management

Management fraud is another factor responsible for corporate collapse. Corrupt managers may be influenced by personal greed. They manipulate financial statements and accounting reports. Managers are only

interested in their pay cheques and would make large increases in executive pay despite the fact that the company is facing poor financial situations. Dishonest managers will attempt to tamper and falsify business records in order to fool shareholders about the true financial situation of the company. These fraudulent acts or misconduct could indicate a serious lack of control leading to serious consequences such as loss of revenue, damage to credibility of the company, increase in operating expenses and decreases in operational efficiency.

Poorly structured board

Board of directors may be handpicked by CEO to be docile and they are encouraged by executive pay and generous benefits. These directors often lack the necessary competence and may not control business matters properly. These directors are often intimidated by dominant CEOs and do not have any say in decision making.

The dominant CEO

A weak board will often, after a period of seemingly successful management, effectively abdicate power to a CEO whose drive, charisma and ruthlessness may have contributed to the earlier success. Lulled into a false sense of security by rising share prices and earnings, the board becomes reluctant to challenge the CEO's judgment and falls into the habit of rubber-stamping his decisions. It stops scrutinizing detailed performance indicators, allows executive compensation to spin out of control and becomes content to an extent of even accepting management figures and explanation without serious question. This may lead to eventual failure.

The Success of small businesses heavily depends on brilliant management

Why do some companies succeed, whereas others fail? Strategic leadership is about how to most effectively manage a company's strategy-making process to create competitive advantage. Strategy-making is the

process by which managers select and implement a set of strategies that aim to achieve a competitive advantage. Strategy formulation is the task of selecting strategies, whereas strategy implementation is the task of putting strategies into action, which includes designing, delivering and supporting products; improving the efficiency and effectiveness of operations; and designing a company's organizational structure, control systems, and culture.

This article seeks to explain how leaders can manage the strategy-making process by formulating and implementing strategies that enable a company to achieve a competitive advantage and superior performance. Moreover, you will learn how the strategy making process can go wrong, and what managers can do to make this process more effective. Strategic leadership is concerned with managing the strategy-making process to increase the performance of a company, thereby increasing the value of the enterprise to its owners, that is, its shareholders.

To increase shareholder value, managers must pursue strategies that increase the profitability of the company and ensure that profits grow. To do this, a company must be able to outperform its rivals; it must have a competitive advantage. Maximizing shareholder value is the ultimate goal of profit-making companies, for two reasons. First, shareholders provide a company with the risk capital that enables managers to buy the resources needed to produce and sell goods and services. Risk capital is capital that cannot be recovered if a company fails and goes bankrupt. Shareholders will not provide risk capital unless they believe that managers are committed to pursuing strategies that provide a good return on their capital investment. Second, shareholders are the legal owners of a corporation, and their shares therefore represent a claim on the profits generated by a company.

Thus, managers have an obligation to invest those profits in ways that maximize shareholder value. Managers must behave in a legal, ethical and socially responsible manner while working to maximize shareholder value. By shareholder value, I mean the returns that shareholders earn from purchasing shares in a company. These returns come from two sources: (a) Capital appreciation in the value of a company's shares. (b) Dividend payments. One way of measuring the profitability of a company is by the return that it makes on the capital invested in the enterprise. The return on invested capital (ROIC) that a company earns is defined as its net profit

over the capital invested in the firm (profit/capital invested). By net profit, I mean net income after tax. By capital, I mean the sum of money invested in the company: that is, stockholders' equity plus debt owed to creditors. So defined, profitability is the result of how efficiently and effectively managers use the capital at their disposal to produce goods and services that satisfy customer needs.

A company that uses its capital efficiently and effectively makes a positive return on invested capital. The profit growth of a company can be measured by the increase in net profit over time. A company can grow its profits if it sells products in markets that are growing rapidly, gains market share from rivals, increases the amount it sells to existing customers, expands overseas, or diversifies profitably into new lines of business. Together, profitability and profit growth are the principal drivers of shareholder value. To both boost profitability and grow profits over time, managers must formulate and implement strategies that give their company a competitive advantage over rivals. Managers do not make strategic decisions in a competitive vacuum.

Their company is competing against other companies for customers. Competition is a rough-and-tumble process in which only the most efficient and effective companies win out. It is a race without an end. To maximize shareholder value, managers must formulate and implement strategies that enable their company to outperform rivals-that give it a competitive advantage. A company is said to have a competitive advantage over its rivals when its profitability is greater than the average profitability and profit growth of other companies competing for the same set of customers. The higher its profitability relative to rivals, the greater its competitive advantage. A company has a sustained competitive advantage when its strategies enable it to maintain above-average profitability for a number of years.

The key to understanding competitive advantage is appreciating how the different strategies managers pursue over time can create activities that fit together to make a company unique or different from its rivals and able to consistently outperform them. A business model is a manager's conception of how the set of strategies their company pursues should work together as a congruent whole, enabling the company to gain a competitive advantage and achieve superior profitability and profit growth. In essence, a business model is a kind of mental model of how the

various strategies and capital investments a company should fit together to generate above-average profitability and profit growth. A business model encompasses the totality of how a company will:

- Select its customers.
- Define and differentiate its product offerings.
- Create value for its customers.
- Acquire and keep customers.
- Produce goods or services.
- Lower costs.
- Deliver goods and services to the market.
- Organize activities within the company.
- Achieve and sustain a high level of profitability.
- Grow the business over time.

It is important to recognize that in addition to its business model and associated strategies, a company's performance is also determined by the characteristics of the industry in which it competes. Different industries are characterized by different competitive conditions. In some industries, demand is growing rapidly, and in others it is contracting. Some industries might be beset by excess capacity and persistent price wars, others by strong demand and rising prices. In some, technological change might be revolutionizing competition; others may be characterized by stable technology.

In some industries, high profitability among incumbent companies might induce new companies to enter the industry, and these new entrants might subsequently depress prices and profits in the industry. In other industries, new entry might be difficult, and periods of high profitability might persist for a considerable time. Thus, the different competitive conditions prevailing in different industries may lead to differences in

profitability and profit growth. For example, average profitability might be higher in some industries and lower in other industries because competitive conditions vary from industry to industry.

Managers are the linchpin in the strategy-making process. It is individual managers who must take responsibility for formulating strategies to attain a competitive advantage and for putting those strategies into effect. They must lead the strategy-making process. In most companies, there are two primary types of managers: general managers, who bear responsibility for the overall performance of the company or for one of its major self-contained subunits or divisions, and functional managers, who are responsible for supervising a particular function, that is, a task, activity, or operation, such as accounting, marketing, research and development (R&D), information technology or logistics. Put differently, general managers have profit and-loss responsibility for a product, a business or the company as a whole. A company is a collection of functions or departments that work together to bring a particular good or service to the market.

If a company provides several different kinds of goods or services, it often duplicates these functions and creates a series of self-contained divisions (each of which contains its own set of functions) to manage each different good or service. The general managers of these divisions then become responsible for their particular product line. The overriding concern of general managers is the success of the whole company and also the divisions under their direction; they are responsible for deciding how to create a competitive advantage and achieve high profitability with the resources and capital they have at their disposal.

We can now turn our attention to the process by which managers formulate and implement strategies. Many writers have emphasized that strategy is the outcome of a formal planning process and that top management play the most important role in this process. Although this view has some basis in reality, it is not the whole story. The formal strategic planning process has five main steps:

- Select the corporate mission and major corporate goals.
- Analyze the organization's external competitive environment to identify opportunities and threats.

- Analyze the organization's internal operating environment to identify the organization's strengths and weaknesses.
- Select strategies that build on the organization's strengths and correct its weaknesses in order to take advantage of external opportunities and counter external threats. These strategies should be consistent with the mission and major goals of the organization. They should be congruent and constitute a viable business model.
- Implement the strategies.

The planning model suggests that a company's strategies are the result of a plan, that the strategic planning process is rational and highly structured and that top management orchestrates the process. Several scholars have criticized the formal planning model for three main reasons: the unpredictability of the real world, the role that lower-level managers can play in the strategic management process and the fact that many successful strategies are often the result of serendipity, not rational strategizing.

Effective strategy formulation and implementation is the key to generating a competitive advantage. In strategy formulation, an organization should focus on its strengths that propel it past its competitors, while managing its weaknesses to avoid adverse impact from competitors taking advantage of its limitations.

Simple ways to deal with people playing shell games in your business

Zero tolerance attitudes to fraud and creating anti-fraud culture is the narrative to embrace. However, prevention is better than cure, therefore the following should be observed and implemented in order to combat fraud.

Implement internal controls

Internal controls are the plans or programs implemented to safeguard your company's assets, ensure the integrity of its accounting records and deter and detect fraud and theft. Segregation of duties is an important component of internal control that can reduce the risk of fraud from occurring. For example, a retail store has one cash register employee, one salesperson and one manager. The cash and check register receipts should be tallied by one employee while another prepares the deposit slip and the third brings the deposit to the bank. This can help reveal any discrepancies in the collections. Internal control programs should be monitored and revised on a consistent basis to ensure they are effective and current with technological and other advances. If you do not have an internal control process or fraud prevention program in place, then you should hire a professional with experience in this area. An expert will analyze the company's policies and procedures, recommend appropriate programs and assist with implementation.

Hire Experts

Certified Fraud examiners and certified public accountants who are certified in financial forensics can help you in establishing antifraud policies and procedures. These professionals can provide a wide range of services from complete internal control audits and forensic analysis to general and basic consultations.

Live the corporate culture

A positive work environment can prevent employee fraud and theft. There should be a clear organizational structure, written policies and procedures and fair employment practices. An open-door policy can also provide a great fraud prevention system as it gives employees open lines of communication with management. Business owners and senior management should lead by example and hold every employee accountable for their actions, regardless of position.

Know who you are dealing with

Try to find a seller's physical address (not a P.O. BOX) and phone number. With internet phone services and other web-based technologies, it's tough to tell where someone is calling from. Do an online search for the company name and website, and look for reviews. If people report

negative experiences, you will have to decide if the offer is worth the risk. After all. A deal is good only if you get a product that actually work as promised.

Know that wiring money is like sending cash

On artists often insist that people wire money, especially overseas, because its nearly impossible to reverse the transaction or trace the money. Don't wire money to strangers, to sellers who insist on wire transfers for payment, or to overcome who claims to be a relative or friend in an emergency and wants to keep the request a secret.

Read your monthly statements

Scammers steal account information and then run up charges or commit crimes in your name. Dishonest merchants bill you for monthly members fees an other goods or services without your authorization. If you see charges you don't recognize or didn't authorize, contact your bank, card issuer or other creditor immediately.

After disaster, give only to established charities

In the aftermath of a disaster, give to an established charity, rather than one that has sprung up overnight. Pop-up charities probably don't have the infrastructure to get help to the effected areas or people and they could be collecting the money to finance illegal activity.

Talk to your doctor before you buy health products or treatments

Ask about research that supports a product's claims and possible risks or side effects. In addition, buy prescription drugs only from licensed pharmacies and herbal clinics. Otherwise, you could end up with products that are fake, expired or mislabeled; in short, products that could be dangerous to your health.

Remember there is no sure thing in investing

If someone contacts you with low-risk, high-return investment opportunities, stay away. When you hear pitches that insist you act now, that guarantee big profits, that promise little or no financial risk or that

demand that you send cash immediately, report them to relevant agencies.

Don't send money to someone you don't know

Do not send money to an online seller you have never heard of or an online love interest who asks for money. It is best to do business with sites you know and trust. If you buy items through an online auction, consider using a payment option that provides protection, like a credit card. If you think you have found a good deal, but you aren't familiar with the company, check it out. Type the company or product name into your favorite search engine with terms like review, complaint or scam. See what comes up on the first page of results as well as on the later pages. Never pay fees first for the promise of a big Pay-off later whether it's for a loan, a job, a grant or a so-called prize.

Don't agree to deposit a cheque and wire money back

By law, banks have to make funds from deposited cheques available within days, but uncovering a fake cheque can take weeks. You are responsible for the cheques you deposit. If a cheque turns out to be fake, you are responsible for paying back the bank. No matter how convincing the story, someone who overpays with a cheque is almost certainly a scam artist.

Don't reply to messages asking for personal or financial information.

It doesn't matter whether the message comes as an email, a phone call, a text message or an advert. Don't click on links or call phone numbers included in the message, either. It's called phishing. The crooks behind these messages are trying to trick you into revealing sensitive information. If you got such a message and you are concerned about your account status, call the number on your credit or debit card or your statement and check on it.

Don't play a foreign lottery.

It is illegal to play a foreign lottery. And yet messages that tout your chances of winning a foreign lottery, or messages that claim you have already won, can be tempting. Inevitably, you have to pay taxes, fees or

custom duties to collect your prize. If you must send money to collect, you haven't won anything. And if you send any money, you will lose it. You won't get any money back, either, regardless of promises or guarantees.

Conclusion.

the prevention and deterring of fraud is no longer discretionary. The formulation of a set of pervasive rules where both public and private sector industries are compelled to adopt statute, regulation and governance in relation to setting benchmarks for corporate governance is key to combating fraud. These rules will apply to all persons involved in business, whether the person is an executive, an external auditor, audit committee member or just an employee. The message is clear; effective deterrence of fraud and corruption is no longer discretionary. Non-compliance with these rules and regulations carries penalties and presents reputational risks. Effectively managing fraud risks and deterring these is therefore a must. When the deal is too good think twice.

Getting rich quick business

There are very ridiculous and unrealistic expectations that are typical of many entrepreneurs. People Have weird wishes about making Money and getting rich quick

Many people dream of seeing a day when they shall have full financial freedom, everyone dreams of making money and becoming a tycoon some day, but very few get to achieve that vision, but why is that so?

Many people have very absurd thoughts about earning a fortune and getting rich in general. Here are some misconceptions the so-called easy goers have about life.

Everyone can become a millionaire, in fact all peoples of the world are going to be billionaires some day, all you need to do is to find out that secret formula, that secret success recipe and you will have trillions of dollar bills raining on you from above

You can become rich in just a few weeks to a few months without doing any difficult work, when in reality, you have to wait for years before you can truly master any skill, most millionaires had to wait for many years even decades before their profits hit the roof, many of the business tycoons of the world had inherited a huge chunk of their wealth from their parents before adding on their own wit and taking their businesses to a whole new level. Those who start their businesses from scratch and make it to the top of the world are very very few, Not unless you are a born genius who invents the next game changer stuff, your ambitions should therefore stay moderate and realistic.

You can easily become rich by winning the lottery. There are a lot of folks who think that they should never work at all, they plan to quit their daily job, use the few bucks they get from their daily wages, spend it on some lottery tickets and then sit back hoping that one day they are going to win it big. Why work when you can win? When in reality less than one percent of those that buy lottery tickets end up winning, and the vast majority of those participants end up empty handed. Moreover, ninety percent of those who win lottery end up spending or losing all their winnings within their first or second year. Only determined and experienced entrepreneurs know how to manage their quickly earned riches. A lot of people don't know how to manage money that comes to them that quickly.

Also, winning lottery exposes you to unwanted publicity, everyone, your family and debtors have seen you in the news holding that million dollar check, they all come to cash in and you can't deny them their right, your entire little hometown has seen you receiving loads of cash, people close to you, family, friends, acquaintances and even total strangers begin to craft the most devious ways to extort money from you. Not forgetting the high risks of kidnapers, gangsters and all sorts of criminals your new lifestyle exposes you to.

There is also another category of nerdy folk who think they can get rich quickly by playing shell game, They waste so much money by going to the Casinos and throwing them lots and lots of cash, hoping to gain much more from them in return. When their efforts fail, they turn to selling all their belongings.

I know of a guy, an old friend who has a gambling problem so much that he sold everything in his house, when I went to visit him one day, I was shocked to find out that there were no furniture in the house, I had to sit on the floor to take my drink, I later learnt that he had lost his furniture as a result of a painful gambling deal. Its so unfortunate. The guy talked about dealing with gambling addiction, he said that his gambling wasn't bad as much as his dads was, his daddy, "as in his own words had serious gambling problems, to the point where it affected the members of his own family," as he was growing up, he watched how his father's addiction almost destroyed his own family, he claimed that at some point things went to the extremes, there was a day he remembers his father asking his mother and older sister to go and sleep with one of his creditors from the casinos as payment so that he didn't have to sell the family home, and end up on the streets, you know things turned really ugly and life at home was becoming really, really unbearable, "you can see that an apple never falls far from the tree," he exclaimed, "you may call me bad, but my dad was way worse,"

Those who con others by robbing them of their hard earned cash should be given ten years of hard time, if they knew what pain and suffering they were inflicting on others, they wont be engaging in those mischievous acts in the first place.

There is a movement that is letting people think that its easier to make money online than offline, at times with very little effort put in, to be honest with everyone, its three times harder to make a killing online than you would have by simply finding a job in the neighborhood, online businesses are difficult to create and time consuming just as much as those offline do, even though the internet may expose you to a wider market potential, setting things up is just as difficult, patience is also key, you just have to wait like any other brick and mortar store does.

Whenever you come across any youngster, you tell them that they should pull up their socks and stop daydreaming, praying for manna to fall down from heaven. things don't happen that way in our modern world.

END OF TRANSACTIONS.

##

Final Clause

We have come to the end of our conversation, looking forward to connecting to you soon. We shall have more to discuss.

Please leave your thoughts & queries about this text in the reviews section, if you have something that needs further elaboration or have got some burning question, you can always text me and I shall be more than happy to respond appropriately.

Write to me,
DodeSescr@gmail.com

***NB**

Make sure you have the latest version of this text; you should check for newer versions at your favourite stores in order to get instant access to free content updates.

Thank you for your time.

Footnotes.

My most used/favourite stylistic features

- Sharp contrast
- Heavy metaphor
- Extravagant exaggeration.

The reference to masculine characters in the above stories is not a biased motive to discriminate against any gender, it's just for the purposes of description, the authors repeated use of words such as he/him/man/king are just for the purposes of enchanting the narrative, if you feel offended by them then feel free to replace them with whatever words you choose as you read along, these pronouns are NOT put in place to intimidate, you can also contact the author directly and specify which part should changes be made to and to what particular effect, the author respects all readers and will not misrepresent members of any class, age, status or gender. All readers are precious.

I am trying to avoid the inconvenience of having to jump from one side of the group to another as it easily puts the readers off, jumping from side to side, back and forth, here and there is really irritating, take for instance it's better to say, "the king came out of his castle, called the knights and asked him to take him out on a ride through the royal forests and left his son in charge of the castle," than to say, "the king/queen came out of his/her castle, called the knight/knightess and asked him/her to take him/her out on a ride through the royal forest and left his/her son/daughter in charge of the castle"

Textual homogeneity- some aspects of the words, phrases and stories share lots of similarities with one another, the keen reader who repeatedly crosscheck between different titles will definitely notice this trend, if characters are portrayed in such a sluggish manner that makes the text boring to the reader, then reader please remember to inform the author as soon as possible.

Cover image: *Two Captains from different trading routes making an exchange on a ship's dockyard, theme by the Author*

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