

# **EMPOWERING**

**THE LEADER WITHIN YOU**



**The 7 Essentials to Being a  
Standout Entrepreneur**

**DONNA P. DAHL**



There were many pieces that went into the development of Western Canada. The entrepreneurial settlers played a significant part.

**TAKE A JOURNEY  
back through time  
with me**

as business practices emerge before the calendar turns the page into the 20th Century and impact upon 21st Century business culture.

**MEET ALBERT,  
a homesteader,**

who comes to Canada in 1899. He's on a mission. Travel with him as he builds his legacy one step at a time practicing the 7 essentials needed to become a standout entrepreneur.

Donna P. Dahl, B.Ed., M.Ed., is an award-winning Empowerment Coach who has been honoured with the Queen Elizabeth II

Diamond Jubilee Medal, the 100th Anniversary International Women's Day Award for Outstanding Service to Business and the 2016 Woman of Inspiration Award for Lifetime Achievement. She has been celebrated as a thought leader and as a coach's coach. She has authored nine books and has appeared as a co-author in The Change Book Series. *Lessons I Learned from the Tortoise*, continues to receive rave reviews. As a speaker, Donna's presentations prove to be thought-provoking and inspirational. In short, she activates your desire to achieve. Visit her website at [DonnaDahl.ca](http://DonnaDahl.ca).

25.00 USD/CAD



# EMPOWERING

THE LEADER WITHIN YOU



**The 7 Essentials to Being a  
Standout Entrepreneur**

# DONNA P. DAHL

PUBLISHED BY MA KO YE MARKETING

Copyright 2020

Empowering the Leader Within You:

The 7 Essentials to Being a Standout Entrepreneur

ISBN 978-0-9780512-6-6

Author: Donna P. Dahl

All rights reserved. No part of this manuscript may be duplicated, recorded or copied in any form on any platform without written permission except for short passages not to exceed 50 words when quoting from this book. All quotes must be credited to the author, Donna P. Dahl, and the title of this book.

Published by Ma Ko Ye Marketing

Calgary Alberta Canada

#### Disclaimer

The contents of this book are for entertainment purposes only. Any references to historical events have been painted with a very wide brush and may not exactly resemble the facts of the times. They are merely offered as food for thought with respect to matters that may have influenced the development of business and commerce in western Canada over the years since the confederation of Canada as a country in 1867 and even before. Through the many stories shared by the author's contemporaries, the fabric of the fictional characters is drawn from a weaving of the lives of numerous individuals who came to Canada as immigrants. The characters, their personal experiences and their dialogue is drawn from the author's imagination. Any resemblance between the fictional characters in this manuscript and persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

This book is a work of fiction and non-fiction. Any mention or reference to persons, people, events, locations, locales, companies, organizations or events is only intended to offer a sense of authenticity for the reader.

It is important to emphasize that this manuscript should not be considered historically correct. While every effort has been made to make the essence of the material authentic, there are many gaps in the recorded history of the development of the western prairie. Imagination has been applied. Readers are encouraged to conduct their own research to explore the topic further. Please also note that Internet references appear throughout the document. The URLs supplied may or may not be available to the reader once this book is published.

“And suddenly you know.  
It is time to start something new  
and trust the magic of new beginnings.”

Meister Eckhart

# Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1 Why	9
2 Who	17
3 Consistency	31
4 Commitment	53
5 Camaraderie	67
6 Reciprocity	73
7 Vision	85
8 Next	99
9 From Entrepreneur to Leader	111
Epilogue	123
Bibliography	128
Index	132
Acknowledgments	136
About the Author	139

# Introduction

**M**eet Albert, a young homesteader from Russia arriving on the Canadian prairie in 1899. His journey from his homeland began with his suitcase in hand and a trunk packed full of all the artifacts and potential heirlooms his parents thought he might need in this new land. He hadn't planned for the massive bundle of treasures he was advised to purchase in Montreal before heading west. Rumpled from sleeping in his clothes for days and yet full of anticipation, 23-year-old Albert stepped off the train. You should have seen the look on his face staring into an emptiness such that he had never seen. Before him was a blank canvas of flat, practically treeless, prairie landscape waiting to be carved. There was little evidence of human habitation aside from the train tracks, the hotel and the Mounted Police barracks.

His cross-country journey by rail took days. If travel by train from Halifax to Montreal seemed to take forever, the trip from Montreal to Saskatoon took two forevers. He removed the picture of his mother and father from his satchel and said a prayer of thanks for having made it safely this far.

The train left the station house leaving him standing alone on the platform. He surveyed his chattels. The weight of the plow alone was too much for one man to hoist on his back. The vendors in Montreal had been eager to outfit all the homesteaders. They had never operated a homestead themselves, but they had heeded the advice of the British representatives who had advised them to

stock up on goods that settlers would need. Tilling the unbroken soil and setting up camp on barren land were not things one could do with bare hands. They sold plows, tools to sharpen plowshares and harnesses for a horse to pull the plow. They sold interior wood stoves and flint to start the fire. They sold hammers, axes, spades, cooking paraphernalia and tents. They hoped they had outfitted the settlers well enough to survive a prairie winter and thrive. The vendors could ship more goods from the east but they told him it could take months for his order to get all the way to Saskatchewan.

Albert breathed a sigh of relief as help arrived. The administrator of the region, a representative appointed by the British Government, helped him load the awkward parcels that represented his worldly wealth onto a horse-drawn wagon and away they went. He would sleep in a bed tonight. Tomorrow they would head out to find the survey markers for his homestead.

\*\*\*

What was a homestead? A homestead was the "Door to Tomorrow". It was the investment leveraging opportunity of a lifetime. Becoming a homesteader was a unique experience that had never been offered to the people of the world before.

According to the Dominion Lands Act, prospective homesteaders were invited to settle in Western Canada. Conditions applied. They were to cultivate a minimum of 40 acres of the 160-acre parcel of free land they were allotted, and they were required to put up a permanent home within three years. Further to this, homesteaders did not need to be subjects of the British Empire. Examples of posters advertising for homesteaders may be found on the Internet in the National Archives of Canada.

Wikipedia cites the Homestead Principle as "the principle by which one gains ownership of an unowned natural resource by performing

an act of original appropriation." The mineral rights attached to the land. Appropriation was measured by the degree to which the land was put into use for production purposes on an active basis.

Western Canadian homesteaders were allotted a parcel of land on which to develop an agricultural enterprise. The land clearing and farming endeavours of those early settlers would help ensure that people would be able to grow food for themselves, for their neighbours, for their animals and possibly for the country. The sale of the products of their labours would eventually generate income that could be invested in buying the raw materials to attract local entrepreneurs, construct buildings, purchase seed, and engage in cooperative trade that would help support the members of the community in which groups of homesteaders found themselves. That was the vision. That was the expectation. The map had been drawn. The settlers had been invited.

These homesteading pioneers were the first agri-entrepreneurs to work the prairie land in this new country. Their desire to own land, their faith in their ability and in their optimistic dream plunged them into the Land of Entrepreneurship as farmers even though they may never have owned land before. Simply being present breathing in the air on the Canadian prairie was a dream. Could it be real? The earth beneath their feet was like a blank canvas ready to be trod with countless footsteps of effort. Receiving the deed and title to the land described on the document was the penultimate reward.

\*\*\*

**NOW THE CHALLENGE** before Albert was to conquer the unknown and claim the prize. Albert was the third son in a family of five children. He had two older brothers and two younger sisters. If his brothers were to be able to eke out a livelihood from the family farm back in Russia, it would be a miracle. His sisters would marry one day and leave the farm. Albert felt he had no

hope for a future that would allow him to take a wife and raise a family in anything but a state of near poverty. Canada called. He was answering the call. He knew he would never see his family or his native country ever again, Good-bye was good-bye...forever.

The little voice in his head kept reminding him, “That was then; this is now”. Allowing himself to be homesick was not going to make his farm more productive. He heaved a sigh and then another. Soon there were tears streaming down his face. He had never felt so alone.

Albert didn’t have any idea what to expect when he got to the prairies. He knew the land he was allocated for his homestead would be his one day if he honoured his part of the bargain. The promise of the deed became his beacon of hope for a bright tomorrow. Arriving here had been a huge step that took months to achieve but what lay ahead would take years.

Success in those late 19th century days might have been defined as having shelter from the weather, food on the table, a warm bed in which to sleep, clothes to accommodate your needs, animals such as horses to assist with the labour and the resources to sustain a farming operation. What would it take to acquire all these things in a strange and desolate, nearly unpopulated place? All those things were things he had more-or-less taken for granted while living with his parents. Now they became goals of acquisition in this new land. One day he, too, would have what his parents had and more...but not yet. There was a great deal of distance between the unbroken sod upon which he stood and living in the comforts of his future home.

Success for Albert, the homesteader, became a mission that had two channels. One channel was for satisfying the day-to-day needs of survival. The other channel was for keeping his eye on the prize. It meant that everything he chose to do today would contribute to becoming a landowner in one of his tomorrows.

Albert knew that he would need to parcel his assets over a

considerable period of time if he were to make a go of it. Budgeting not only his time and money but also his mental energy and his physical stamina would be critical to his survival. He carried his mobile bank account securely in a money belt at his waist. He knew he would need to purchase a horse as well as develop a plan to keep himself and his horse alive. He explored his options for food which could be stored and kept over the winter months. He knew only too well how cold it could get in winter in Russia. The days between seeing a neighbour or making a visit to the nearest general store could be long. Travel alone in harsh conditions might be life-threatening. He needed to make wise decisions if he were to endure the biggest test of his life. It was the spring of 1899. It was just Prairie Day 3, April 3, 1899. There was ample time before the next snowfall.

\* \* \*

**Becoming an entrepreneur in the 21st Century is a lot like staring into that blank prairie canvas of the 19th Century. You have assets and tools that can be applied to your new endeavor. You have skills. You have faith in yourself and you have a vision of what your company is meant to accomplish. Is it enough?**

What’s your definition for success? Until you arrived at the doors of the “Land of the Entrepreneur”, you may have measured success on the basis of achievement or project completion, or on the basis of showing up to exchange your time for a pay cheque at the end of the month. Unfortunately, in the world of doing business, just because you arrive at some arbitrary finish line doesn’t mean you will score a hit and make money. For instance, what if your advertising campaign runs its course through the entire month and you find yourself having spent more money on the advertising than you made in profit? What if you spend time and money

on building a website and printing business cards and still you have no customers? What if nobody is buying what you are selling? What if you rent retail space for your office or for your service company and your expenses exceed your income month after month after month? How many months could you stay in business? What if you have no one with whom to share the workload? What if it is time to fish or cut bait, as they say? Is it time to “go big or go home”? Would it be better to expand, hire more staff, change direction or close the doors? Some decisions are easier than others.

Success in business does not tend to come overnight. Many successes have been preceded by numerous failures. Failures, if and when they occur, are but steppingstones on the way to success...a concept you may or may not accept. Some might say success without failure teaches you nothing. Others may tell you that growing success from failure requires an attitude of unrelenting persistence.

Success is not a guaranteed destiny but it can be a realistic goal. Success may be dependent on your skills in sales. It may depend on the demand in the marketplace for what you are selling. It may depend on the value and quality of your product or service. The art and skill of operating a successful business is a huge undertaking with a lot of unknowns but if you have a vision to pull you forward and the fortitude to persist, your energy might attract attention and support. It may, in fact, become contagious enough to make a difference. It all starts with your intention.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT, THE INEXPERIENCED** homesteader, found out early on in Russia that tilling the soil and planting the seed was not enough to harvest a crop successfully. His father had educated him well in the art of protecting his future by being vigilant over

what he had planted. Being vigilant could mean the difference between profit and loss. What good would it be having a farm, investing all that time and energy in working the land, and ending up with no money to buy seed for next year’s crop!

No amount of faith in his own abilities was a match, though, for the uncertainties of the weather and all the other things that could go wrong. Sometimes wild animals like the deer could come and eat his grain. Birds like the geese were especially hungry at harvest time and could eat away at the profits until their bellies were full. He knew only too well that sometimes the insects could come to dine on his crop in such large numbers during the growing season that there would be little left to contribute to building a bank account. An early frost could reduce the quality of the harvest.

Albert had learned well how to be a cautious and watchful provider as a farmer within the framework of the family into which he was born. His participation in the family farm back in Russia was part of a cooperative effort that was accomplished with the help of four men: his father, his two brothers and himself. They were a team. Occasionally, his sisters would be called upon to lend a hand as well. When there was work to be done and things could not wait, there was no gender attached to the labour. Everybody pitched in.

Here in Canada, Albert was a team of one. He tried his best to rely on the wisdom he brought with him from his own life experience. He recalled the stories told by the men in his hometown back in Russia when they spoke of their wins and their losses as farmers. The memories shared after the evening meal by his father and grandfather would surely remain available in his mental library of farming wisdom. Here in Canada he had no access to times past and folklore like that. He was writing the pages as he lived and breathed.

\* \* \*

**Do you have a dream? For yourself? For your business? Standing out as an individual or becoming a “Standout Entrepreneur” could happen virtually overnight. It could take years. The amount of time it takes to go from intention to standout depends on a lot of different factors. Your timeline to get to the top could be by deliberate design. Your success may come as a result of generating huge volumes of viral support online virtually overnight, or by building your business one deliberate feature after another as time, manpower and resources allow.**

This book is about the seven essential things you need to become a standout entrepreneur. You set your timeline. Your timeline is connected to your goal...the distance between now and success. Whether your actions translate into leadership or not will be determined by the people you serve. The chapters that follow describe the ingredients that make a difference.

## 1 Why

Do not follow where the path may lead.  
Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

**A**lbert had many whys. Albert was drawn to the adventure of exploring a new country. He was pulled by the hope that he could be his own person no longer living in the shadows of his family, past or present. Most of all, he was lured by the promise of being a farmer owning land...land that was far away across an ocean in a place he had never seen.

Albert spent more than a year thinking about why he should leave his homeland. If he left, the likelihood of ever seeing his parents or his siblings again was remote. Leaving meant he would have to sever the umbilical cord that attached him to his family. He knew his childhood history would surely become a distant memory with his brain being the only vessel that stored it. He spent many hours taking pictures of his surroundings in his mind's eye. He lay awake at night weighing the pros and whitewashing the cons of staying versus following his dream. Yet, the distant land he had his heart set on kept calling his name.

For Albert, one WHY was not enough. Finally, it was the refrain made up of all the WHYS together that made his decision firm.

Albert would head for Canada in time to arrive there in the early spring.

\* \* \*

### **Your WHY matters.**

Every project you undertake, every campaign you design, every goal for your business needs a strong WHY. The stronger your WHY, the better the chance your endeavor will succeed.

Without a WHY, the chances are good that your outcomes will be mediocre at best. While mediocrity may still spell success, mediocrity may not be your preferred target.

Choose a Why. If your WHY isn't big enough and isn't alarming enough, it will never motivate you to get up off the couch never mind stand out. Your WHY must be important enough to you to give you a reason to get out of bed in the morning. Your WHY needs to matter and it needs to matter BIG...even if it only matters big to you.

Some have told me that their WHY is to help feed the world. Some have told me that they want to help people have access to clean water. Your WHY does not have to have an international footprint. It does not need to have a philanthropic focus, but it could. Your passion about anti-bullying might be pulling you toward a speaking career advocating for non-violent communication skills. Your desire to give abused women a place to land safely could find you, for example, fundraising to develop housing for these women while in transition. When your why touches hearts with a more universal appeal, you may gain advantage.

What if your why is more personal? Is that okay? Why not? Could you have a why that would fulfill a lifelong dream? Perhaps you have been impacted by health issues in your

community that are feeding your unique idea about developing a cure for MS. Perhaps you want to make a film using a never-before applied technique to advance movie production methods. What if you could be the first to inhabit the moon? Your ambition may be to perform a feat never done before such as walking on a tightrope directly over Niagara Falls...which, by the way, has now been done. I watched on television as Nik Wallenda, from seven generations of the famous "Flying Wallendas", became the first to do so on the evening of June 15, 2012. Think of the magnitude and strength of belief he must have had in his abilities to conquer the red tape alone. Think of the beating of a metronome set to a constant pace. Can you hear the space between the beats? That's what came to mind. Each careful, methodical step Wallenda took in strict, consistent tempo over a distance of about 1800 feet carried him one step closer to fulfilling his lifelong dream. He will retain the title of "first" forever.

In the latter half of 2018, the television announcement was made that Donna Strickland, a Canadian, was one of three who were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics. Strickland's work using specific variations in laser research was recognized for making a huge contribution to the field of industrial and medical laser applications including eye surgery. She shared the prize with two others: Arthur Ashkin and Gerard Mourou. I wonder how many thousands have been given the gift of improved sight as a result of this groundbreaking science. At age 96, Ashkin is the oldest person to have ever received the Nobel Prize. Mourou was 74 at the time and Strickland was 59. While Strickland was a PhD student at the University of Rochester in New York, Mourou and Strickland had worked together. Mourou had been Donna's Ph.D. supervisor.

Donna Strickland was an associate professor at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, at the time of being awarded the prize. She is only the third woman in the history of the Nobel Prize to become a Nobel laureate in Physics. The first

was Marie Currie in 1903; the next was Maria Goeppert Mayer in 1963, 55 years previous. What is also particularly significant is that Ms. Strickland is the first Canadian woman to be recognized in this way.

In an article published in MACH online on October 4, 2018, Denis Chow shares excerpts of his interview with Donna Strickland under the headline: Strickland’s long journey from laser jock to third woman ever to win physics Nobel. Denis asked the question, “What led you to laser research?”

This summarizes Donna’s reply: “Back in the day, we...would just be given...the calendars of the various universities...McMaster...had an engineering physics program. And a quarter of that was lasers and electro-optics. I...thought ‘That just sounds so cool.’”

Chris Hadfield, The Canadian astronaut who spent months living on the International Space Station (ISS), has since retired. While Hadfield’s primary claim to fame might not necessarily be that of being an entrepreneur, his dreams coupled with his multiple successes have significance and deserve attention. Wikipedia reports that Hadfield became the first Canadian astronaut to walk in space. A Wikipedia entry adds that he also served as commander aboard the station—all this with a boyhood dream to fuel his accomplishments and a background in engineering and flying. Chris Hadfield was an Ontario farmer’s son whose dream was ignited at the age of nine. Watching Apollo 11 and the lunar landing on television was the stimulus that gave birth to the dream. Hadfield’s subsequent work has a lifetime of recognition including an honorary Doctorate in Engineering in 1996 from the Royal Military College and an honorary Doctorate of Laws from Trent University three years later. I recall the video transmission from the space station where he was playing his guitar and singing to his earthly audience. Since his mission to the ISS, Chris Hadfield has gifted the third planet from

the sun with his 2013 autobiography: *An Astronaut’s Guide to Life on Earth: What Going to Space Taught Me About Ingenuity, Determination, and Being Prepared for Anything*. The book became a New York Times Bestseller. In October 2015, Hadfield released an album of music he had previously recorded in the ISS, *Space Sessions: Songs From a Tin Can*.

There are still things that may be learned from Hadfield. The long-term effects of space travel on his heart health and his cardiovascular system as he ages remain to be uncovered. “As a metaphor for pursuing our dreams we’re often told to reach for the stars.” These words appear on Chris’s website (<https://chrishadfield.ca/>). Chris Hadfield did it literally.

These various accomplishments cause me to raise questions: could you have a WHY that is other directed as well as a WHY that would fulfill a personal lifelong dream? I think you already know the answer.

My WHY? I have two WHYs. The WHYs are connected. The second one stems from the first.

My first WHY is tied to my writing and combined with my coaching. I choose to write and to coach as side-by-side activities from an empowerment perspective because I want to make a difference—a difference for the better—through a process of nurturing. It is my intention to nurture leaders to lead. When you discover your purpose, claim your voice and find your path, change results. A sense of identity as a leader emerges. If I can spread a blanket of confidence onto your venture, if I can sprinkle courage onto your project so that you move forward, if I can expand your thinking to create a larger circle of influence, you make my day!

And so I wrote my Tortoise book. I wrote it to be the mainstay of my coaching platform. *Lessons I Learned from the Tortoise* continues to receive rave reviews on Amazon with most star ratings given being at five out of five. What this book has

done for others has exceeded my expectations beyond my imagination. The fact that the reviews consistently report that you can't read this book just once is something I consider to be the ultimate compliment. The reviews share personal experiences of how reading the book influenced significant change in the life of the reader. What these reviews do for me is validate me and the writing I do. They remind me that I am making a difference.

My second WHY? I want to influence other Canadian writers to write. I want their voices to be recognized. I want the contemporary literature of Canada and the imaginative manuscripts of Canadians to occupy a bigger space in the bookstores and in the libraries of the country. I look forward to a day when the number of books in Canadian bookstores written by Canadian authors has doubled from the number available today. I happen to believe that more Canadian writers deserve to have a familiar and prominent voice within their own country. What if Canadians had access to more Canadian works in print?

I think every entrepreneur needs two WHYS. The letter Y by its very shape seems to call for two of them. From the top down, I could say that each arm of the Y is funneling down into one space, or, looking at the Y from the other direction, I could say that from a single concept can come two (or maybe more) directions for change or accomplishment. It depends on your perspective.

What's your WHY? Does it have a philanthropic component? Is it your aim to build a family legacy? Are you seeking to invent a machine that could farm all the plastic out of the oceans? Is it your vision to develop a cure for one of the world's debilitating diseases? Your WHY could be the overall focus of your business or it could be a charitable arm of your business. Your WHY could be to feed your family. Your WHY could be related to having the freedom to work on behalf of your own

business. Perhaps your WHY started as an assignment for a class. Did someone tell you what you were about to do was impossible? Your WHY could be simply to prove someone wrong. Your WHY could be to fulfill a personal challenge you have set for yourself. While social enterprise is on the rise, social objectives toward targets like the society or the environment can be the charitable driving force behind any business. What drives your WHY?

\* \* \*

**ALBERT KNEW WHY** he came to Canada. He was answering the call. He read the sign: Homesteaders Wanted! Albert wanted to be a landowner. He wanted it desperately.

Owning land in Canada was all he could think of when his head hit that soft feather pillow at night and it was all he talked about for days. He visualized himself standing in his field of grain, golden and swaying in the wind. He would close his eyes, breathe a huge breath and imagine himself smelling the harvest air. Going to Canada to be a farmer would be an adventure. The promise of the land? That would be the gift of a lifetime.

In Albert's mind owning land was the highest elevation that any man could ever hope to achieve. If you owned your own land, you were the lord and master of your own domain. You could build equity. You could build wealth. You could leverage the value of the land in order to make other acquisitions.

It was a huge decision to leave Russia...to leave the only home he had ever known. It was emotional. But the thought of owning his own farm was addictive. While he had his fears, he was ready to step forward and stand out.

Albert knew there would be little hope that he would ever see his family again. It took months to complete the paperwork and prepare a sturdy home-made trunk with the goods that would travel with him. His mother took the helm at packing the trunk. What do you give a son who will make his own way in the world? What would he need when he got to his homestead? She began to make a list: a suit with a vest for church, a half dozen pair of knitted socks, yarn and a darning needle to go with the darning block so he could mend the holes in his socks, a pillow (maybe two), a sheet and a woolen blanket, two Turkish towels, some medicinal ointment, fabric for cleaning his teeth, a fur hat with ear muffs, three pairs of mittens, a cap to keep the sun off in the warmer weather, and that was just for starters. She would continue to check with Albert as she proceeded to gather his belongings for the journey.

There was no doubt that Albert's WHY was huge. It was big enough to give up the comforts of sharing space in a loving family and set off to a land across an ocean he had never seen. He could die making the trip. It was a risk he was willing to take. To be awarded the keys to his economic future just by being a responsible steward of his plot of land was worth the risk. His entire remaining adult life would be determined by his outcome.

## 2 Who

Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocrities. The latter cannot understand it when a man does not thoughtlessly submit to hereditary prejudices but honestly and courageously uses his intelligence.

Albert Einstein

Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible.

Frank Zappa

**B**ACK IN Russia, Albert was Albert. Everybody knew Albert. They knew who his parents were. They knew his grandparents. They knew his sisters and brothers. They knew who to ask to get the help they needed. They knew whose counsel to seek to get advice. He had never once had to explain that he was a farmer's son. Everybody knew.

Albert had not yet developed a distinct identity of his own but he was working on it. Chores were part of his farming life. Albert liked helping his mother carry in wood to feed the fire in the hearth where she often made her delicious cabbage soup. Sometimes he chopped the wood and sometimes he helped hang the laundry or gather the eggs. He was a fast learner quickly figuring out how to repair the worn leathers for the horses. His uncles weren't shy

about praising him for filling that much-needed niche. His father was proud. If owning land was not in his son's future, Albert would have a skill that would surely last him a lifetime.

It was no secret that Albert liked music. Albert liked to dance. Girls liked Albert.

\* \* \*

**While visiting China in the fall of 2015, I caught an interview on a TV channel being broadcast in English. The focus of the interview was the Hutong in Beijing. Concern was being expressed that aging homes in the Hutong were in need of maintenance and repair. The Hutong in Beijing have become identified as a significant landmark and as such are not only culturally important but also have become an international tourist attraction. Visitors to Beijing are often sure to include the Hutong on their itinerary.**

The Hutong might be thought of as a neighbourhood signified by houses called Siheyuan, a historical type of residence in Beijing, that unless updated, comes with few modern amenities. These residences were built attached one to another often backing onto a shared garden area. The narrow lane between one row of houses and another facing each other was wide enough for a small car to be parked outside the house. The homes in the Hutong resemble the nowadays subdivided, connected row housing. Historically, they were associated with wealth and prosperity providing residence for large and extended families.

Apparently, many of the Hutong or neighbourhoods have been destroyed over time since their origin in the thirteenth century. As I recall the interview I saw on television, it reported that measures were being explored to refurbish

the interiors of the houses in the Hutong. Most importantly, it was indicated that the result of restoring the houses and updating them to a more modern standard would allow the communities of people living in the Hutong to remain intact. They would not have to leave and become scattered. It was further reported that one elderly gentleman who was the go-to calligrapher of the Hutong community in which he resided, wondered who he would be in a new community of strangers with whom he shared no history.

WHO you are matters. WHO you are as an entrepreneur matters. WHO you are influences the path you choose.

WHO are you? You were given a name at birth and you may have picked up some skills and a few credentials along the way that help give you identity. You could tell me your name and add that you are a photographer or, perhaps, an engineer. But these labels may only be a portion of your identity.

There was a time during the 18th and 19th Century when a young man of status came to call on a young lady in her home. Finding her not available to receive the gentleman caller, he would leave a card to inform her of his visit. This card would have been printed on a press. It resembled the business card of today except that it was then called a calling card or a visiting card and it had but one item of information: the name of the gentleman. These days a business card contains a significant amount of information from the person's name, position and the company represented to various pieces of contact information.

In the business world, for one thing, if you are an entrepreneur... or intending to position yourself as one, you have something to sell. Whether your business is delivering a product or providing a service to the public, you have something to sell. Even if you are not an entrepreneur, you have something to sell. If you are seeking a new job, you are going to have to sell your new potential employer on the value you will bring to

the company. Everyone has something to sell.

In chapter 13 of my book, *Demystifying Marketing*, I wrote,

I would love to see more people carry business cards. Actually, what I would like is for more people to adopt an independent identity label...even when they are not in business for themselves. ...Future Professional Photographer...Future Professional Photographer with Retail Sales Experience... Professional Volunteer...Vacation Specialist... Apprenticing Armchair Critic...Domestic Logistics Engineer...

Think of the profile you place on your business card as having a credential and having a plan. What if your business card opened doors for you? What if your business card could be your application for a paying gig?

I ask again, “WHO are you?” What’s the title you put on your business card? You could label yourself to be an entrepreneur, but how would that inform your audience about who you are and what you do? To me, that’s like saying, “I own an enterprise. Guess what it is.” You would reveal almost nothing about your business. If you call yourself President, it is not the same as calling yourself Sales Manager. What is the status, the role, or the area of responsibility that you wish to announce under your name?

A charity event I once attended made a point of introducing the major players on the staff of the fledgling organization. One of the members of the staff was introduced as being the Chief Gopher. I pictured him as being the assistant to everyone but who answered mostly to the person at the top of the chain of command. Being there and learning about this Gopher position was a gift. It taught me that organizational hierarchies and the labels that are attached to them do not

have to follow traditional lines. The position of vice president may be functional in terms of your relationship with your company, but it may not tell your story to the people who you serve. Having the title of VP may be just the authority you need to be a credible voice on behalf of your company. Your subtitle may be more informative or revealing.

Think of yourself as applying for a job...or advertising for the one you prefer. Every posted position has a title of some description or another such as accounts payable manager or inter-departmental communications liaison officer. What if you said you were an armchair sports critic specializing in football, a meeting timekeeper (alias clock watcher), a first-class memo messenger, a dust mite controller, a grapevine catalyst or an expert deli taster with experience by the slice. I didn’t say the title you chose had to be completely serious. It would depend on the environment in which you find yourself doing business.

Whether you are an employee or an entrepreneur, who you are and how you describe your role announces specific information about where you fit into the total employee schematic chart of a company. After a car accident in which I was injured, I found myself having to take on a new role and a rather broad-shouldered sense of humour. It helped to serve up levity when I hurt. The result? I developed a business card that said Donna P. Dahl, CEO in charge of Household Management including Banking, Meal Planning, Errand Logistics and Dust Bunny Control. The tag line on my card read, “Anything that won’t go moldy will keep”. People found it humorous. It was meant to be. And I discovered that my business card had a feature that I had not anticipated: it was memorable for the recipients.

Do you have a business card already? Even if you are allergic to the idea and believe that business cards are a waste of paper, carrying even one card can allow others to take a

picture of it on their phone. You can even get an app to help you store your collection of business cards on your cell phone without carrying a single piece of paper.

While your identity in relation to your company may come with a job description outlining your responsibilities to the company, your identity in relation to the people you serve may assist you better if it is expanded. For instance, a Vice President in charge of Public Relations says more than the title of VP alone. Having the title of VP might come with a little more recognized status or decision-making authority but being a Communications Catalyst might come with a little more curiosity. Curiosity might spark people into asking questions. How effective is your card at being a conversation starter?

Who are you? What's your handle? Describing who you are when you are meeting people for the first time may be a context specific exercise. You may want to develop a few alternatives and try them on for size with your friends and co-workers. How you describe yourself and the work you do in your own words will either attract an audience to you or become a distraction with little or no value. If eyes glaze over and you see yawning, it's time to change up your intro. Even if you are employed and your company gave you a title, you may prefer to identify yourself in a more personal way. If you could give yourself a new job title, what would it be? As an entrepreneur, you may wish to work with a coach to uncover a title that garners attention.

Your title as accounts manager tells people your relationship with the company but it does not tell people what you do on behalf of your company. What do you do? Do you micro-manage sales accounts? Do you attend networking events as a professional schmoozer in search of clients? Do you spend the bulk of your day reading balance sheets? Do you consider yourself to be a leader among your staff by empowering those

who work for you and trusting them to get the job done?

Sometimes it's your company tagline that becomes the great distinguishing feature. What if a furnace company advertised itself as being more than just a hot air company? A tagline that defines your company can be a helpful addition to add clarity. A tagline is a short, memorable description that becomes attached to a company or a product. It helps separate a company or a product from its competition.

At the time of writing, I discovered some creative job titles. They included Collector of Orphan Dust Bunnies, Sales Ninja, Word Herder, Professional Job Seeker and Master Handshaker. Readers are encouraged to do their own searches online for current job titles. To get the maximum benefit out of a job title, ask yourself if it declares value to your audience. If the title is too cutesy or trendy, it may not work well in your favour. Who is your audience? Are your customers considered edgy modern or more traditional? Your title is part of your personal brand.

Who are you in relation to the people you serve? If you are a solopreneur and you give yourself the title of President, just exactly what do you do and how do you explain that to those you meet for the first time? Some titles that identify positions are obviously more meaningful than others. Some titles require interpretation. Some titles are new and innovative, and others don't seem to promote clarity. A title of journeyman plumber, for instance, does not necessarily need any explanation. A title of sales associate, however, seems to beg the question, "Where do you work?" A sales associate selling cars most likely has a skill set that differs from the person who is working in an outlet selling electronics or household appliances for home use.

In 2014 Forbes published a list of some of the more inventive job title names. My favourite among this list was "Director of

First Impressions,” the title of the receptionist at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Another one that caught my attention was “Crayon Evangelist,” the label for the person who “oversees all of the company’s graphic-design needs” at InteQ Corp.

I like encouraging my clients to think outside the box, so to speak, when it comes to putting a frame in words around the work they do. Your frame could be a great conversation starter. I have been known to call myself a light-hearted instigator from time to time. The label seems to break the ice. It couples nicely with how my husband describes my work with my clients. He says I make them think, and I give them homework. If I am your coach, don’t you want a little food for thought and a brief but relevant assignment to go with it?

It’s one thing to wear your label on the outside. It’s quite another to wear your label on the inside. If you don’t think of yourself in like manner to the way you are promoting yourself, there is a disconnect and your audience will sense it. In short, if you wear the label, be the label. And if you want people to see you as the label you are wearing, dress and speak the part.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT WAS NOT** sure how he should introduce himself. Should he say is a homesteader or should he say is a farmer? Should he think of himself as a Canadian or should he call himself a Russian? When he spent time in England learning some English before boarding ship for Canada, he would say he was from Russia. He was okay with that because he was not British, and he was just passing through. Anyway, there was no hiding that he was not born in England. His heavy Russian accent followed him wherever he went.

Learning new languages was not that difficult for him. Albert

could speak other languages besides Russian: German, Polish, some English and a little French. He wasn’t entirely fluent but he could get by. Growing up, he had been exposed to people speaking languages other than Russian all the time.

Today Albert was on a mission to acquire a horse using whatever language he needed. A horse would make a huge difference. He arose at dawn, gathered his pack and headed to his nearest neighbor. He needed answers to his questions. Someone who had already built a small dwelling from bricks made of prairie sod must have answers. With only a few spoken words, he quickly discovered that his nearest neighbor came from the Ukraine and his name was Vlad. While Albert did not know any Ukrainian, he was able to wear a smile and extend his hand in the universal language of a welcoming handshake while introducing himself. Vlad fumbled around for a clean cup on the shelf above the pail he used as the kitchen sink and poured Albert a cup of water. He also offered to fill Albert’s leather water flask.

Albert grabbed a stick as they stood at the doorway to the tiny abode and sketched a map into the bare ground at his feet to show his neighbor where his farm was located. Then he drew a stick figure of a horse. He was on a mission to purchase his horse. That was not going to happen here today. The neighbor shook his head and pointed toward the nearest “village”. It was hardly a village; it was the nearest station house where the train stopped. It was eight miles away by road and shorter as the crow flies.

At the very least it would be a two-hour walk. It was Prairie Day 5. He was glad he had started out shortly after dawn that morning. He was also glad his father had encouraged him to purchase the sturdiest boots that his money could afford. Armed with his purpose, Albert set out to meet the train.

\* \* \*

**Who are you? Are you able to tell people clearly and distinctly in as few words as possible who you are and what you do?**

“My name is Donna P. Dahl. I’m an Empowerment Coach. I sell confidence. No batteries required.”

Count them. That’s 10 words. First, I say my name clearly and distinctly. Then I say my title. My line about the batteries is irrelevant but it seems to add an element that puts people at ease. In fact, many find themselves laughing. The laughter? I am finding that it’s a most delightful ingredient for reducing tension if ever there was one. With so many people wearing the label of Coach, my approach helps me stand out.

Do you make a habit of telling people your name with deliberate clarity and without running all the syllables together? I find it hard to understand how someone introducing themselves to me for the very first time could say their name in such a mumbling way that it sounds like the marbles in their mouth are impeding their enunciation. Really? Say your name...and maybe what you do...in such a way that you capture (my) attention. How could you present yourself in words in a way that you help me remember your name?

One of the TV programs that I enjoy watching is America’s Got Talent. The judges on the show see thousands of acts every single year before choosing those who will go forward into the final stages of the race for the prize of one million dollars and a Las Vegas show as the headliner. So...what’s the real competition there? Isn’t it standing out? When it comes to the show’s auditions, Simon Cowell occasionally tells an act that it will be one of the ones he is going to remember. Delivering a memorable performance compared to the thousands of acts that are not is like hitting the jackpot when it comes to auditioning in front of someone like Simon. Would you agree?

In the 2018 season, that’s what he said about the Angel City Chorale. Here is the performance to which I am referring: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3wwqgoQwfE>

What makes you memorable? Members of my audience often step up and inform me as to what makes me memorable. I value that they take the time. It’s important to learn from those who you serve. Here is a testimonial I received from one of the people in my audience at the CIBN Leadership Institute where I presented a brief synopsis of the contents of this book:

*Donna’s talk at the CIBN Summit for Leaders on the “Leader Within You” was inspirational with a lighthearted approach for entrepreneurs of any industry. Her humour and love to help others bring a way of relaxing into the topic that is easily absorbed. Thank you, Donna!*

Carell Mehl, Author and Reiki Master

I was once invited to be the guest speaker at a meeting of a chapter of local professional organizers. One of the organizers in the audience later reported that she took what I had to say most seriously. In my presentation, I had told a story about an HR (Human Resources) person who was charged with the responsibility of hiring new staff. A picture is worth a thousand words, right? The final step in his interview was to walk the job candidate to their car. He wanted to know what their car looked like inside and out. He felt the picture gave him some added information that could not be altered or manipulated with any choice of words.

The story made such an impact on her that she decided to commit to the ultimate take away after I spoke that evening and walk the walk, not just talk the talk. The first thing she reported she did was clean out her car and employ her

organizing skills to make the trunk of her car functional. Soon after, she drove the ladies from her office in her car for a lunch date. She said they could not help but notice the impression she was making on them. She informed me that my message that night changed the way she presented herself as a professional. This is what she later shared with me:

*Recently while at work, four gals decided to go for lunch. I was asked to drive. The other three gals all had excuses why their cars could not be used that day. I agreed to drive. Immediately upon buckling up, all three gals commented on how clean and organized my car was.*

*I simply said, 'I am an organizer. I walk the talk'.*

*Thank you, Donna, for helping me become a better person.*

*Hugs, Lois Duke, Duke Organizing*

I am reminded of my friend, Annette Stanwick. We met at a Calgary Chamber of Commerce event where she told me she was writing a book. Over the next months, our paths continued to cross. Lo and behold, she authored the book. In her book, *“Forgiveness: The Mystery and the Miracle”*, she tells the story of how she was able to forgive her brother’s killer. It’s an unforgettable book with an unforgettable message that has touched the hearts of thousands on several continents.

Before she launched her book, Annette approached me asking me if I would coach her on her first book signing. We already had developed a mutual respect for one another’s work and I so agreed to work with her. A book signing is not unlike attending a tradeshow as a vendor/exhibitor and I had already written my book on doing tradeshows. In fact, it was my first book and it was the book that helped me launch my business.

To make a long story short, our conversation took a turn toward the title that Annette would adopt regarding her work. She needed a title that would allow her to be the empowered voice for her passionate message of advocacy for forgiving. The title of Author seemed to be sorely insufficient. We must have touched on a dozen or two possibilities until the right one made its appearance: Freedom Facilitator. You should have seen her eyes light up when the words arrived. Annette has been a Freedom Facilitator ever since. She may well be the only Freedom Facilitator in the entire world. That’s perfect. Being first in a category of one is perfect.

\* \* \*

**IT’S KIND OF** funny, Albert thought, how walking with his footsteps rhythmically touching the ground served up what resulted to be a kind of mental problem-solving meditation. On his way to the train, he decided that from this day forward he would refer to himself as being a Canadian, or a homesteader or both. His feet were firmly planted on Canadian soil. Even if he stood in the very centre of the land assigned to him as his homestead, he could not see the outer boundaries of his property. His land was almost flat with few trees. There was an abundant space on which to grow crops. Albert could never have imagined such enormous wealth back in Russia.

In that moment Albert felt so overcome with gratitude that he knelt down on both knees, leaned forward and kissed the ground. How could he be so lucky?

Giving thanks was important to him. One day, he would find a way to direct his gratitude and make a contribution in a way that would make a difference.

## 3 Consistency

Long-term consistency beats short-term intensity.

Bruce Lee

**B**ack in Russia Albert had learned how to farm his crops with a horse and a plow. Why would farming in Canada be any different? He had the plow. Having no luck gathering information from the neighbour about finding a horse to buy, Albert headed to town on foot. It wasn't really a town. It was just a bit of a train whistle stop, so to speak. This was the small tract of land that the government of Canada had allocated to the railroad as a place to build a station house.

On the prairies station houses were constructed every eight or ten miles or so along the railroad track to provide destinations where goods could be shipped to the homesteaders. Eventually, homesteaders would be shipping their grain and farm produce out to other parts of Canada by train, and the station house would be the prairie distribution port of sale, so to speak.

The North West Mounted Police (now known as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or RCMP) were often based near a station house for the purpose of helping to keep the peace. It was 1899 and people were arriving from many parts of the world to settle the land. They deserved law and order. A police presence

could go a long way toward avoiding difficulties.

At a level of bare-bones basics, every homestead community needed access to at least three things: water, law enforcement and a focal point for transportation in and out of the settlement. The stationhouse was that place. It also served as the post office and the centre of commerce for an area of 36 square miles—the size of a tract of land commonly referred to as a township—which included the land needed for the roads as well as the 36 square-mile plots of land assigned to be 36 individual sections of farm land. Because the police were often stationed near a stationhouse, it was also the first point of entry for first aid for the area. The police had access to medics and they had access to horses.

\*\*\*

Before homesteaders could be invited to come to Canada and settle on the Canadian prairie, railroad transportation needed to be put in place to get the people there. Also, the land needed to be surveyed and mapped and the location of survey markers called monuments needed to be recorded to mark the specific plot of land in a large sophisticated grid system. In 1871, four years after Confederation in Canada, an order was issued by the Canadian government to develop a land identification system so that official land grants could be issued for the land west of Ontario.

A system to describe parcels of land was necessary to keep claims on parcels of land from being a free for all. Letters of Patent, as the grants for the tracts of land were called, were accurate land descriptions to be issued by the federal government to the successful homesteaders in the three future prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

What resulted was the largest mapped grid in the history of the world. Think of the land across the prairies as being a large checkerboard. The grid was developed using the meridian lines of longitude as a reference. The system, called the Dominion Land Survey system, enabled records of ownership to be drafted in such a way that the titles would stand up in a court of law. It is important to note that the grid system adopted is quite

different from the manorial system still in existence in parts of eastern Canada along the St. Lawrence River. Briefly, the manorial system established ribbons of farmland that stretch out lengthwise from the river thus enabling the ribbon farmers to have access to water.

The western Canada grid was cordoned off according to range roads and township roads. Range roads run north and south. Township roads run east and west with the numbering of the roads started at the Canada-US border. Townships were divided into sections. Each township had 36 sections. Each section was a mile square. Each section was 640 acres and a quarter section had 160 acres. Each homestead was 160 acres. Road allowances connecting the sections were built into the grid. That way neighbouring homesteaders would be able to visit each other, and travel to and from the train stations.

Township roads were designated as being every two miles apart. Range roads are one mile apart. It is important to note that this original system of identifying rural property is being employed today by the land permit offices and Canada Post to identify a plot of land and give it a postal address. An address like "344027 Rge Rd 215" says this property is on Range Road 21-5 and is intersected by Township Road 34-4. 27 is the house number and the access to it is from the Range Road.

It is also important to point out the planet Earth is not flat. To accommodate the curvature of the earth, Correction Lines were added to the grid in the Dominion Land Survey system. If you have ever driven a country road on the prairies and found that the roads north of a correction line did not exactly match up with a road south of a correction line, it's because the world is round, not flat. This system of land description mapped in western Canada was the original system and it remains in effect to this day.

Additional information on the background of the remarkable and consistent road system and the history of homesteading in Canada may be found here: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/land-grants-western-canada.aspx>

Thanks to the Township system being connected to the meridians of longitude, a consistent system long used for navigation with the Prime Meridian being located in Greenwich, England, settlers were not only able to obtain a legal document identifying their plot of land but they were also able to use the Township system as a map to locate plots of land. It is possible that the enormous consistency of the Township system offered a security blanket of sorts offering order and organization through its predictive values—both socially and legally.

\* \* \*

**Let there be no doubt that consistency matters. Consistency trumps random. A lack of consistency invites chaos. If you are not consistent, there is an invisible veil that can shroud your business from being engaged in wealth-building activity. It has no odor and it weighs nothing but it tells your audience you have not yet thought things through. You could be sending the message that you are taking the short-term leap and ignoring the long-term effect.**

When you are not consistent, it can show up as a lack of attention to what people see when you send messages on the Internet. It might be something as simple as not using the same font every time you promote your business name. If you asked your visitors what is bothering them, they may not be able to put their answer into words. What happens is that something doesn't feel quite right. The result? Your audience turns its back on you. Potential customers leave your website. They don't open your email. Think about how you react when your gut tells you to walk away.

Consistency counts. Consistency makes a difference. Don't you want your favourite restaurant to serve your favourite dish with consistency?

Consistency offers a bond, visible and invisible. Consistency

has the capacity to manifest trust out of thin air. Consistency promotes predictability.

Consistency adds calm. Consistency demonstrates confidence.

In the world of building a business, one of the outcomes of consistency is brand identification. Given enough consistent repetition, company brand and consumer trust meld. The key is to repeat the message often—word for word if you can. Repeat messaging can take place without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is possible to do it yourself and, in addition, it is possible to connect with thousands without spending a nickel.

The more you repeat your message, your logo, your product name or your slogan, the more it sticks in the minds of those in your audience...the more everything melds. If you can't repeat it exactly, get it as close you can. The examples offered by the practices in the 1800s in western Canada demonstrate the thoughtful solutions given to new world opportunities to serve up consistency by example and to spread the news by word of mouth.

What becomes consistent becomes familiar. What becomes familiar becomes transformed into trust. Trust reduces risk aversion and builds confidence to move forward.

Briefly, consistency in the world of doing business is about two things: it's about your brand and it's about your reputation. Everything about consistency in business falls under one of these two umbrellas. Your brand is how you present yourself consistently and your reputation is the outcome you achieve from consistently practicing your brand. Even if you are not in business, your social media posts will brand your (Internet) reputation with precisely the branding brush you chose to paint that picture.

Your BRAND evolves from three diverse and interconnected

platforms: what people see in connection with you and the business you represent, what people HEAR when you speak about your business and what people FEEL when they do business with you.

Your REPUTATION evolves from your history of being in business. It's your reputation that manifests the platform upon which everything else about your business grows—or doesn't. It's your rating at the Better Business Bureau. It's what people say about you through word of mouth.

Your brand starts with your name and/or your business name. Will your business have your name or will you give it its own special name? A NUANS (Newly Upgraded Automated Name Search) report will tell you if the business name you are considering is available. Also, do an Internet search on your personal name. Find out if there is a domain name available for it. If you are considering a company name, do a domain name search for its presence, too. If the names you are investigating seem to be taken, consider exploring spelling variations. Some seek the assistance of an online domain name generator. No matter the name you choose, you want to be able to claim a unique and positively memorable identity. Start by exploring the Internet for what is obtainable and fitting. If you plan to put up a business website, the name of your company in the domain name could be important for customers to find you. With respect to your reputation, your uniqueness could mean the difference between sales and no sales. Overlapping with a less-reputable brand could hurt.

Your brand includes the face of your business. If you are a celebrity, a common and obvious choice would be your face. In the case of it being your company, your brand is often communicated via your logo. It becomes the image that conveys the business you represent. Think about the symbol that identifies items like Adidas sport attire, non-genetically

modified food products or Jaguar vehicles.

Your brand includes embracing consistency between your business goals and your business reputation. To that end, social media reputation management is becoming an entrepreneurial enterprise in and of itself. Gathering testimonials from satisfied customers where they post their experiences with you is pure gold. Testimonials are widely accepted as a valid social proof sampling of the value you bring to the table. Whether your focus is job search or customer engagement, your attention to what's posted by you and about you could also mean the difference between sales and no sales.

Consistency in terms of your identity and how you communicate that visually, orally and emotionally matters. The consistency you practice helps build the trust your customers need so they feel free to risk purchasing from you.

\* \* \*

**STATIONHOUSES WERE OFTEN** equipped with benches for waiting passengers and they provided shelter from the elements if the weather wasn't suitable for waiting outside. The local station house was the place where the homesteaders and the nearby residents could meet to share stories. If it was cold, one might stoke the fire in the pot belly stove in the centre of the house. If the telegraph was working, you could send for supplies. It was the one place where there could be a conversation waiting to happen.

No one was the defining expert here. All the homesteaders were in this together. The more tips, ideas and information they could pass along from their experience, the faster they might be able to demonstrate appropriation of the land and receive the deed to their land. Many an insight came to light on that bench just outside the Station Master's door.

There was no mistaking a stationhouse. It was likely the only building right next to the railroad tracks. (Many of the ones constructed along the railway were later built with a high degree of similarity according to numbered designs that displayed consistency in the brand of the railroad company.)

With sunshine overhead, Albert decided to follow the road to the Stationhouse. Today was not a day to pursue shortcuts or find he could not get to there from here as the crow flies. Albert was on a mission to get to the station house so he could catch the train to Saskatoon. He hoped he wouldn't have to wait too long. He had brought his sleeping pack with him strapped to his back just in case he found himself needing to bed down somewhere under the stars for the night.

April weather on the prairies was like typical northern European, spring weather. Albert thought he might be able to get in a little groundbreaking before winter arrived if he could only get a horse in time.

\* \* \*

As an aside, CNR station houses were built with easily recognizable consistency. The CNR had employed several numbered plans including 100-29, 100-19, 100-72. Some were larger than others. When it came time for the stationhouses on the prairies to be closed, some were bought by private enterprise for commercial purposes. One, for instance, has been turned into a restaurant in Strathmore, Alberta, south of Calgary and another called Riverbed Station is situated in a shopping complex in the community of Riverbend in Calgary. It is now a tavern. You may know of others. You will find ones with historic designations in places like Saskatoon and Maidstone, Saskatchewan.

\* \* \*

**IN ANY CASE**, the stationhouses were not hard to find. They lent a realm of familiarity with the relative consistency of the construction not to mention the orderliness of the township system that tied the prairie landscape together. When predictability is present, stress is reduced.

It was Albert's lucky day. The train pulled into the station shortly after noon. Tired from the miles of walking, he purchased his ticket from the conductor, chose a seat and had a bite of his lunch before nodding off.

\* \* \*

**Consistency is like the rebar of your profile. Consistency gives your profile added strength just like rebar makes concrete structures stronger. Consistency extends your reach to every corner of your business practices including customer service. Consistency is important because it builds trust. No trust—no business.**

When consistency begins to serve as an autonomous icon, it can add value to your business. The lack of it could generate an instant social media slam on company reputation. The world is watching 24/7 and you never know when or where someone may be filming a video on a smart phone across the street and posting it online without your knowledge.

Can consistency be overrated? Can it be ignored? That's like asking if your customers should buy from you even when they don't trust you. I have encountered countless messages in my email inbox that tell me what I must do to build trust. They suggest it's important to say things like "try it for free for 30 days" or "return the product within 60 days and we will pay the shipping."

Do statements like this reduce your feelings of risk? Do

they motivate you to make a leap of faith with your money? Would your “yes” say you trust the seller? Or would your “yes” suggest that you are willing to take a chance?

More questions arise. Are they wanting me to make a decision to purchase without a serving of recorded customer satisfaction consistency? Are they wanting me to drink the punch from the proverbial community bowl to experiment if the seller is committed to the words in print? As an entrepreneur, when you make a statement of guarantee, make sure it is one you are prepared to keep. And keep your word...consistently. Keeping your word...or not...is, literally, where trust begins and ends.

Yes, trust is about keeping your word. It's that simple. Trust is about taking care of your reputation by keeping your word. Your appointment is at 2:00 pm? Be sure to show up on time. Being on time is likely to cost nothing and it confirms you show respect. It's an easy way to establish a foundation for trust.

Overpromising and under delivering are not sound business practices. Do what you say you were going to do. Nothing builds trust like keeping your word.

Consistency is, without doubt, a visionary foundation upon which the blended culture of western Canada was built. The large land mass grid system among other features suggested trust and predictability for the early settlers. Consistency influenced the confidence to build new communities through faith and hard work.

Consistency impacts decisions.

\* \* \*

**IN 1890, THE** Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Railway Company built a bridge that crossed the North Saskatchewan River from the east side to the west side where Saskatoon was situated. The bridge was necessary to carry the train across it. Albert learned that settlers had begun arriving at Saskatoon around 1885 but their numbers amounted to barely a handful over the next five years. Saskatoon, in 1899, consisted of a few houses on the east side of the North Saskatchewan River. Albert's homestead was west of Saskatoon. According to <https://www.saskatoon.ca/community-culture-heritage/saskatoon-history-archives/history>, the railway stationhouse was on the west side and nearby were “the section foreman's house, the Mounted Police barracks, a stone building, a hotel and about six other houses and shacks”.

When Albert got to the stationhouse at Saskatoon, he purchased a ticket to take the train to Rosthern. During his time on the train from Montreal to Saskatchewan, he had learned about a group of Russian settlers who had settled there. He heard that they had been able to set up a sawmill so they could build houses and that they were already shipping grain. He was anxious to connect with them. At the very least, he knew they would be speaking the same language.

He had wanted to send a telegram with questions before making the trip but the telegraph lines were not working. A telegraph line had been built connecting Winnipeg and Edmonton but it was unreliable. While 800 miles of line had been completed by 1876—more than twenty years earlier, the line was all but abandoned. Instead, a more southerly line closer to the Canada-US border was fast-tracked by the Canadian Pacific Railroad leaving the settlers to the north of Regina with inconsistent service if any at all.

Albert could not depend on the telegraph. He knew that. It was a waiting game; sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't.

Today was not his day. The exact positioning of the northern line had been conducted during the winter months. The winter prairie landscape did not reveal the places where setting telegraph poles could create a problem. Consequently, poles fell into sloughs and lines ended up getting wet in soft, spring marshland that had been invisible in the snow.

Albert knew about the Canadian telegraph. He had seen it at work in Montreal. He loved history, he loved inventions and he loved learning. The telegraph was a source of curiosity for him and so he had been full of questions about how it worked.

\* \* \*

**It was May 24, 1844, when Samuel Morse sent the first telegraph message using the Morse Code he had developed. The recipient of Morse's initial message was his associate in developing the telegraph, a machinist and inventor named Alfred Vail. Suffice it to say that the desire to be able to communicate long distance was something that seemed to take no time to catch on.**

That first telegraph message sent from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore, Maryland, on an experimental line connected people in a way that they had never been connected before. To be able to send a brief letter using a code that could be deciphered and have the message arrive some 40 miles away within minutes was almost beyond belief.

\* \* \*

**TO HAVE ACCESS** to telegraph communication on the nearly uninhabited prairies barely 30 years later seemed tantamount to a miracle. Imagine the complexity of not only developing the technical equipment to convey letters of the alphabet with sound but also developing the virtual new version of a language

that could only be written with a series of dots and dashes and that subsequently needed to be translated back into words by skilled operators. Imagine inventing the telegraph only to find that the demand for its infusion into the culture meant telegraph equipment and training needed to be scaled at a global level never before done in the history of the world. Little did Albert know that Morse Code could already be used to communicate with people on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

It is important to note that sending a telegram required huge helpings of consistency. It was easy for mistakes to be made. A certain level of perfection on the part of the telegraph operator was the order of the day lest a message be wrongly deciphered. Not every telegraph operator kept the same tempo throughout the message. Sometimes senders of the code might be fast, or they might be too slow. Then there was the matter of the receiver. Receivers needed to understand that they were receiving communication in an auditory language and not a visual language. If they could not distinguish the differences between the sounds of the 'dits' and the 'dahs', the message could get a bit scrambled. In addition, telegraph messages were charged by the word so messages were often truncated making it even more difficult to successfully transcribe the code. Any orders for goods sent via telegraph should always have verification.

Albert decided he would test the telegraph system from the station house at Rosthern. He would send himself a telegram to be waiting for him when he got back to the station house at Saskatoon. He decided to send two words: Arrived. Stop. Safe. Stop. Stop was special telegraph lingo for a longer pause between dits and dahs to tell the receiver that there was a period in that space. It was a punctuation word and not part of the text in the message. If the system worked, perhaps he would be able to communicate with members of the community in Rosthern without physically having to make the whole trip. After all, how much could two words cost? It turns out that Albert was wise to save his money. It would be better to put his money toward a

horse. It may have cost between 25 and 75 cents a word to send a message via telegraph in 1860. Translating those numbers into early twenty-first century equivalents, the prices could have been 25 to 30 times as much depending on the distance the message needed to travel. Putting those prices into some perspective, the cost of a beer in a beer parlour might have been ten cents and a work horse may have been about \$10 and as much as \$25.

In those early days on the prairie, travel to and from the nearest station house could be a major undertaking. If you were expecting goods to come by train, it would be ever so helpful if the train had a schedule and if the train was on time. The trip to the station house and back to the farm could take an entire day or even more. Hopefully, the shipment would arrive. In a perfect world, things would run perfectly. They don't always. But travelling to and from the station house was a much shorter trip than from his homestead to Rosthern which could be a two- or three-day trek.

Albert had decided early on that the wood to build his house would come from Rosthern. A colony of Russians who spoke both Russian and German had taken up settlement at Rosthern and they were building houses on their land with the wood from the trees on the property. Albert had learned about their sawmill operation. He knew he could be building a house of his own one day. If there were not enough trees on his land to warrant setting up a sawmill of his own, all he would have to do is return to Rosthern to order the lumber and have it shipped by train.

\* \* \*

**Twenty-first century advances in communications technology are moving at an ever-increasing rate of speed. The last hundred years have seen communication shift from wire to multiple forms of wireless. The nature of the Personal Communication Device (PCD) has diminished in size from something that was bigger than**

**a boat anchor to something that can be handheld and concealed in a pocket. Furthermore, it does not need to be connected to a base with wires. Everything from ordering merchandise online to depositing a cheque into a bank account can be done from an android cell phone or Apple iPhone. Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and cell phone service enables people to stay connected in many sectors of the globe—even on airplanes—though there are still large geographic areas where there is no service.**

Consistency in communication services across the entire planet would be an admirable pursuit despite large unpopulated areas. Customers with service continue, however, to find that the speed at which an order can be placed comes with inconsistencies related to shipping time. Internet purchases do not come with a 3D printer to produce the items purchased with a programmed instant download. Deliveries over land require days, not minutes.

Operating an Internet business that sells merchandise requires delivery services that must be consistently reliable. Dependable delivery is what keeps customers happy. Whatever the company commits to do with respect to when the parcel will arrive is what is expected to happen. Thumbs up when it works. Thumbs down when it does not. Consistency counts.

Keeping your word matters.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT'S FATHER HAD** taught him that the strongest value a man could offer when there was nothing else available was his word. A handshake was the event that committed your word. A handshake was the sealing of a contract whether performed in the presence of witnesses or not. No signature necessary.

Albert wanted to be able to use the power of his word to build his farming enterprise. He wanted his neighbours to be able to bank on his word. He knew he was going to have to parlay his word into equipment he would need to get his farming operation off the ground. If he said he would do something, he made a promise to himself that he would follow through and do it...not once but every single time.

Albert had a plan. He was on his way to Rosthern.

\* \* \*

For the record, settlers began arriving in the Rosthern area around 1890. A post office was established in 1893, and by 1898 the community achieved village status. In 1903, Rosthern was incorporated as a town.

\* \* \*

**THE TRAIN RIDE** from Saskatoon to Rosthern was comfortable enough. The passenger car was clean. The seats were small and narrow but the car was nearly empty so Albert undid the laces on his boots, stretched out his legs, placed his bedroll pack under his head for a pillow, covered his face with his hat and closed his eyes. He would have to hit the ground running when he got there. A little shut eye couldn't hurt.

Albert no sooner started to nod off when that little voice showed up. It was that little voice that liked to tell him what to do and this time was no different. The voice said, "How are you going to take care of a horse over the winter when you don't have any shelter for it?"

Albert knew the voice was right. He had literally put the cart

before the horse without the horse. He needed to help his horse make it through the coldest weather and so he was quickly putting together a mental change of plans. Albert needed a shopping list to purchase the things he would need to take back to his homestead: enough lumber to construct shelter for him and his horse, nails, a saw, a hammer, a window, a door, some oil paper for his roof, chimney pipe for his stove, a scythe, matches and a lantern. He would telegraph the station master to request help to arrange assistance to get his order to his homestead. He was glad his father had had him build a new coop for the chickens before he left Russia. Building a small one-room house for his first winter in Canada was do-able.

It was nearing the end of April...Prairie Day 19. There was ample time to build his shelters before snowfall. And maybe get a horse, too.

Albert arrived in Rosthern hungry and thirsty. First things first. Find a hotel or arrange for a bed for the night. Grab a meal. Book a bath. Ask about where he might find the Russians who had settled there. He was ready to negotiate on his feet from his word and not necessarily from his purse in order to leave Rosthern with everything on his list.

Albert was starting out at ground zero. There was no one to introduce him as Ivan's son. There was no one to speak on behalf of his trustworthiness. There was no one who could tell stories of how he used to play with his brothers and how they looked out for each other. There was no one to show up to lend a hand when the word went out that he needed help with a project.

How was he going to establish his credibility? How was he going to be able to make friends if he and his neighbours did not even speak the same language? His grandfather, a man who was highly regarded for his guidance, had always counseled him to seek the advice of the elders and the decision-makers. Albert was going to have to rely on the government officials that were housed

near the stationhouse, his makeshift English to move forward on establishing his homestead and his belief that people who spoke his first language would lend a helping hand.

\* \* \*

**Confronting the issues in starting up a new business in the 21st Century is not unlike facing the issues that homesteaders did getting their farms up and running in the latter half of the 1800s and the early 1900s. When the most important thing is establishing trust without a track record, where do you begin? How do you get started? What does it take to convince others to have faith in your product or your service and risk a purchase with you?**

A big part of what builds trust is consistency. Consistency hangs on mindfulness. When you are new to the entrepreneurial landscape...when you have nothing but your word to attract your first customer, your first customer can provide a testimonial that what you said you could do is what you did. That could well be your first measure of consistency. Your business builds from there.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT FOUND THE** Russians that chose Rosthern as their choice of settlement, helped with cutting the felled trees into boards for his shelters, asked a ton of questions about everything from when he could come back to buy that horse he wanted to where he could get seed to plant a garden. He learned about planting and storing potatoes and he learned about the challenges digging the hole for the civilized outdoor two-seater pit toilet on the rock-hard prairie. He appreciated the mentoring. He was grateful for the time that he was given to pay the bill for the lumber. He valued that he was able to arrange to work off his

debt for the lumber when he would come back later in the year to collect his horse. The early settlers understood consistency. Albert was one of them now. Albert would keep his word.

\* \* \*

**The homesteaders understood what it meant to give your word and keep your word. The lives and the livelihoods of the members of the community depended on giving their word and then trusting each other to follow through. So much of what happened in the present was an investment in the future and the future was pretty much guaranteed to pay off. So much of the business that was transacted on the Canadian prairie at the beginning of the 20th Century was carved out of barter or trade or labour in kind. People were expected to be personally responsible and accountable for promises; promises not kept were like bad apples. Bad apples were not welcome in the community any more than they were welcome in the barrel with the rest of the apples.**

Consistency requires persistence. Persistence demands consistency or it's not persistence. It helps if there is some flexibility to being open to change. I am reminded of the title of one of Herb Cohen's books, *You Can Negotiate Anything*. I think the title says it all. In case it doesn't, what can you leverage with persistence and consistency to get your foot in the door, so to speak?

Consistency is important because practicing consistency builds trust. No trust—no business.

What happens when consistency is not present? The Government of Alberta announced in the last quarter of 2018

that it would be resuming its role in conducting driver's tests. In 1993, the road test for drivers in Alberta was handed over to private agencies. The 2018 announcement included that the action was being taken as a consequence of the numerous complaints about alleged inconsistencies in passing and failing drivers taking their road test. The story was related in a Global TV newscast. This is but one example of how perceived inconsistency can morph into a change in direction.

Certain inconsistencies may be avoided. Access to accountability supports such as overseers, vigilance monitoring, coaches and customer surveys might prevent missteps. Consistency is important.

You have a given name. That is the name by which people call you. Would that be correct? Your parents chose that name for you. You get to teach people the name by which you prefer to be called. People call you by that name. You don't change your given name like you change your wardrobe or your hairstyle. Your name is your name. A small percentage of the population undertake a total name change but that is rare. Some choose a pseudonym. Some change their surname through marriage. This is not about your surname. It's about your first name... the one to which you answer when called. Some choose to go by Bobby, for instance, instead of their birth name which may have been Robert. Some Roberts might choose to be Bob and some Roberts are Robert. Some prefer a nickname that bears no resemblance to their birth name. However, generally speaking, your given name...the one your parents gave you...is your name. It appears on your legal documents and it identifies you with consistency. The name you go by is the name you recognize when your name is called. There is something about your name such that when you hear it, you respond. Your ear is tuned to your name. It's top of mind.

With reference to entrepreneurship and doing business, being top of mind for the customer is a good thing. Some brand names are more readily top of mind than others. Some of the

brands that quickly come to my mind, due to my personal exposure to their frequent and consistent message, are Mazda with "zoom, zoom" and the Nike swoosh. One brand is more auditory (Mazda) and one is more visual (Nike). Becoming top of mind may come with a price. It cost money to capture my attention with commercials on television and paid strategic product placement in sporting events. I admit to being curious as to where Mazda cleverly plants the "zoom, zoom" when they release a new TV ad.

There are some Canadian icons that come quickly to mind. There are some that seem to have been around forever. I think of CNR and CPR, the Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Railway, respectively (now CN and CP). I think of the Fairmont Hotels (formerly often referred to as the CP Hotels) and their iconic "castle-like" architecture in cities across Canada from Quebec to British Columbia. I think of the classic shape of the grain elevators which used to dot the canvas of the prairies storing grain in readiness for the next train that would carry the farmer's grain to market. I think of the T. Eaton Company and the Eaton's catalogue. I think of the Sears Christmas Wish Book. I think of the copper patina on the roof of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Some of these things have already become "extinct" or next to it but they are nonetheless memorable. They formed a consistent and predictable presence in the lives of Canadians. Their consistency across decades of time demonstrated a sense of stability across the country and in the culture. That stability communicated trust. May their memory remain alive in Canadian museums and other memorabilia banks.

Canada's early decision makers saw to it that consistency and organization were present in the west before the first homesteaders arrived. The development of the railroad system, the orderly division of the parcels of homestead land, the presence of a respected, regally uniformed and readily

identifiable law enforcement agency and the installation of a telegraph system were all critical outcomes of the invaluable forethought that shaped the homesteader experience. The artificial development of melting-pot type communities by strangers who shared dreams as well as life and death survival challenges serve as a monumental example of how common experience can generate common good...generate charity, philanthropy and collegiality. It is entirely likely that modern day remnants of these stabilizing elements continue to influence the way westerners do business today. It is possible that consistency can traverse decades and generations. It's possible that consistency can transcend boundaries set by doubt.

Consistency is like the concrete footings buried deep in the ground to support a skyscraper. Consistency is like the thousands of feet of rebar used to build resiliency into a 30-story building in an earthquake zone. Consistency is the glue that helps people make that connection between you and what you represent. Consistency is the bond that makes all the difference.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT MADE A** commitment to himself to stick to his priorities. He decided that the most important task for him to complete was to build a small dwelling that he could heat with his stove. He would also need a supply of chopped wood to burn over the winter to keep his house warm and he would need to have access to water for drinking.

It was time to get started. The sooner he could finish his preparations to withstand the winter, the sooner he could work on getting his horse.

## 4 Commitment

Individual commitment to a group effort  
— that is what makes a team work,  
a company work, a society work, a civilization work.

Vince Lombardi

**F**eelings of guilt were starting to weigh on Albert. He had promised his mother he would write when he got to Canada. Saying good-bye seemed so final. She cried. He fought back the tears.

With distant memories tugging at his heart, Albert dug into his day pack for the notebook and pencil his mother had given him on the day of his parting. He reminded himself of the things he wrote while he was on the train and then added a few highlights of his experience on the prairie to date. So far, his brief attempts at journaling included a sprinkling of notes about Halifax, Montreal and his neighbour, Vlad.

With every word written, Albert was breathing a little easier. He had been so absorbed by everything new that he had all but ignored his promise. Here on the train ride back to Saskatoon, he felt at liberty to write. He would find a way to send a letter.

\* \* \*

**Commitment to loved ones is one thing. Commitment to yourself is where the rubber meets the road. On the scoreboard of life, honouring commitment that results in you following through and keeping your word is a promise that deserves to be kept. When your commitment results in you manifesting your goals, it is cause for celebration. Commitment seeks completion. Commitment binds. Commitment matters.**

Making a commitment of service to your community matters, too. Without commitment and without community, there is no cause to bond with people for the building of relationships and there is no opportunity to build toward a future. Do you normally think of your community as being the neighbourhood in which you reside? What if you thought of your community as the city or the province in which you live? What if your community is your country or your continent or the planet?

What if your global focus is on a single feature of the planet like the largest rivers on the planet? According to Jeremy Wade in his 2018 documentary series called “Mighty Rivers” televised on the National Geographic Channel, the Yangtze River, the longest river in Asia, has undergone considerable change over the past several decades. On my own trip to The Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze, I learned, for instance, that the dam was constructed to increase the supply of electrical energy to the population of China. The dam stretches 2.3 kilometers across the river, has 32 turbines and in 2015, apparently, supplied between one and two percent of China’s total needs for electricity. If it is not the world’s largest hydro-electric dam, it is among the largest.

In the series, Wade expresses concern for the big rivers on planet Earth. He is on a mission to find out if these rivers are healthy. His test for river health is finding large fish inhabiting the water. One of the ways in which Jeremy learns about the fish that are still in the rivers is to visit the fish markets in

the communities along the river to see the varieties of fish that are there. In the Yangtze River episode of his big rivers series, Jeremy Wade showed a man pouring tubs full of live, farmed fish into the Yangtze. It was reported that this man purchased these fish on his own and that he was attempting to restock the river with fish on a regular basis together with a team of supporters.

The Mighty Rivers series reveals powerful examples of people taking on personal commitment on a scale that goes well beyond a local level. It shows how people with commitment lead by example. When you lead by example, you might volunteer your time to perform labours, you might volunteer your thinking and ideas, and/or you might offer financial support. Be it your time, your talent or your treasure, your method of practicing philanthropy is up to you. It is your choice as to how you choose to make a difference. Whether you write a cheque to help develop a soccer field or you show up to cook pancakes for several hours at the annual fundraiser breakfast matters not.

When you are committed to your community, you demonstrate ownership. You are open to helping the community solve its problems. You find a way to make a personal investment, publicly or privately, so your community and your community neighbours can experience the benefits.

You are, no doubt, a part of more than one community. To which ones do you feel an affiliation? Which ones do you serve? Here is a list of some possibilities.

Your community might be:

- the neighbourhood in which you live.
- the members of your mastermind group or it could be the people who drop in to your social networking groups.

- the members of your congregation in the church in which you worship.
- the people with whom you share a professional designation, a political party preference or a labour organization.
- the various tribes you have built on your social media platforms.
- the people in business with whom you gather from time to time. You may attend events at your local Chamber of Commerce or Board of Trade. Perhaps you are already a member. You may belong to a private Business-to-Business (B2B) networking group of which there are numerous clubs across the country.
- your personal extended family.
- parents like you who work together to help keep their sons and daughters playing sports like hockey or soccer.
- the group of people with whom you collaborate to develop solutions to existing social and environmental problems.

The volunteer activities in which you choose to engage in your communities can contribute to feelings of belonging and satisfaction. Just as it is difficult to put a price on what a volunteer hour is worth, it's difficult to put a dollar value on satisfaction. The benefits that come to you may be immeasurable.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT'S CANADIAN COMMUNITY** was small. It was practically non-existent. It was hard to get around on foot and so he was not entirely sure how many people lived nearby. Back in Russia, the neighbours were a mere stone's throw away. There was always someone around to say, "Good morning." There was always someone passing by their property on their way to buy a loaf of bread. Albert needed a plan.

Albert met a girl in Rosthern when he was getting the lumber to build his house. Anna, beautiful Anna, sat across from him at the dinner table. She had cooked the evening meal on two of the days he spent with Abram and his family.

What would he have to do to convince Abram that his daughter, Anna, would be well-taken care of as his wife? He would have to have more to offer than 160 acres of virgin farmland, a first-class outhouse and a warm bed.

Shelter first. Deluxe two-seater outhouse second. Then a horse. Albert made a commitment to himself to build his house, break some land, plant a crop, even if it was only potatoes that first year, and to speak for Anna's hand in marriage.

\* \* \*

**Commitment may be directed outwardly toward your various communities or inwardly toward your personal endeavours. Inwardly, commitment to your business, your employees and their professional advancement matters. Creating a day-to-day routine with your business as your focal point does several things. It sets an example. It delivers a realm of predictability. It reduces stress. It clearly demonstrates your priorities.**

Are you committed to the success of your business? Are you able to explain quickly and with clarity what is success for you? Is that the same as the success you are seeking for your

business? Will your business be successful when you achieve a certain net profit over a consecutive, three-month period? Will your business be successful when you can comfortably say that your passive income from your business has reached your target threshold? Without a beacon that defines success for you, it will be difficult to know when you arrive at your destination. Unlike buying a ticket to fly to Winnipeg, setting a course for an undefined target offers no direction. In other words, what would you have to accomplish to give you cause to celebrate?

How committed are you to being transparent and visible? Are you on the Internet? Do you have social media presence? Do you have a website? The banners on your pages are your signs. It used to be that a brick-and-mortar storefront required a weather-proof sign. A storefront without a sign is a sign of no business. For that matter, any business without a sign is a sign of no business. Some of the first signs in North America were carved out of wood. With the invention of neon signs, signs could be lit up after dark. That meant signs could still be working on behalf of the business even after the sun went down. Nowadays, when your sign is up on the Internet, your sign is available to online users around the world 24/7. Do you have a sign?

How committed are you to tracking your net worth? As an entrepreneur, being committed to your business means paying attention to all the lines on the balance sheet and all the personnel who play a part. What are you doing to take care of sustained productivity or skills gaps in your company? Whether it's conducting employee reviews, keeping an eye on the competition, or paying the bills, every decision falls on one set of shoulders—yours.

Does that mean you have to work double the hours of anyone who works for you? Does that mean you go without sleep? Work-life imbalance is perceived to be present when a person

thinks they are working too much in comparison to the amount of time they spend in activities when they are not working. Also, time on both sides of the work-life equation may not be the only factor that is not in balance. Satisfaction is key.

When satisfaction is present, balancing time factors may not seem so important. When imbalance is suspected, it can have a negative effect on the quality of life. When work life takes away from quality family life, recreation, personal pursuits, productivity or participation in personal social experience, resentment can build up. Stress can show up and lead to other problems. If being a head honcho hermit is not meeting your needs, what's one thing you could do today to get out of your lair and do something differently whether that something is work related or not?

\* \* \*

**THE REALIZATION WAS** sinking in. Albert was in Canada for good. Yes, he was feeling the strain of being alone. He sometimes went for days on end without contact from anyone. He was constantly trying to write things on the blackboard of his mind but they could disappear faster than he could blink his eyes. Being a solo homesteader was not as romantic an idea as it had first seemed. He was beginning to understand why the posters in England had said there were bonus dollars to be paid if you brought your wife and children with you to settle a homestead. You received \$10 if you brought your wife and another \$5 for every child over the age of 12. That would have meant that Albert would have had to become a father at the age of 11. The very thought made Albert laugh.

Albert may be a bachelor for now but he was not a confirmed bachelor. He was a bachelor with a vision and he had just the suit for the occasion.

Albert longed for his family back in Russia but he wasn't going to let his feelings keep him from fulfilling his dream. Albert was especially hungry for his mother's cooking. Taking a wife grew higher on his list of things to do. It would take time to make his dream come true and it would take strategic planning. It would take looking after himself with vigilance. It would take help but it would get done.

\* \* \*

**A friend of mine was facing crunch time on the job. The success of a project was on the line. Deadlines were looming overhead like vultures flying over carrion. Would the team have to settle for completion and let perfection suffer defeat? The stress felt like the entire weight of Mount Everest was resting on his chest making it hard to breathe. He was not well, and he needed medical intervention. He quickly learned that a hospital bed is a great separator from both home and office but what about the staff? Here is what he learned: when you trust your staff to not only get the job done but also make you look good in the process, they will. And they did!**

Do you give your staff opportunities to shine in the face of challenges? Does your staff look to you to address their needs or do you empower them to be resourceful? How do you give them space to express the need for change? Will your staff need upgraded skills? Will they need training to keep up with the trends? Describing the volume of ways in which you might demonstrate commitment to your employees could be the contents of another book. In a nutshell, when you show that your employees matter to you, your employees will let you know you matter to them.

Be the leader. Commit to your desire to stay informed. Commit

to your personal advancement. Commit to your health—both your physical and your psychological health—personally and professionally. Set the example.

It is possible to commit to your personal well-being with something as simple as monitoring your water consumption. For example, you can install a reminder on your phone to tell you it's time to have a drink of water. An article by the Mayo Clinic, states the average adult male needs about 15.5 cups or 3.7 litres of fluids daily and the average female needs about 11.5 cups or 2.7 litres of fluids a day. Some of your fluids will come from water, some will come from beverages and some will come from the food you eat. Watermelon, for instance, is almost all water. Is there a water cooler near your desk where you can go for periodic refills?

Commit to limiting the amount of time you stay sitting. Never let sit-down meetings stretch on and on without getting up and moving. Set a timer if you must. Consider standing meetings in a room with no chairs...except for those who may need a chair. Five or ten minutes on one's feet might speed the discussions. Do a Google search on the dangers of prolonged sitting. You might be surprised at what you learn. Many articles refer to a three-hour threshold for sitting. Getting up every 60 to 90 minutes (for a drink of water) could impact your productivity for the better. Consider getting a standing desk so that you can stand rather than sit when performing tasks such as word processing or data entry. Consider installing a treadmill at work. Would it work for you to make your phone calls while taking a stationary walk in your office?

How far should commitment extend? Who keeps an eye on your bottom line? How often? Who sets the goals? Who looks after your accounting? Are you expecting yourself to know everything there is to know about everything when it comes to operating a business? It is important to recognize that every business needs certain basic elements for it to function

as a business. These basics include time management, money management, human resource management, personal wellness management, Internet reputation management, business development management and business accounts management. What jobs are you good at, what tasks do you enjoy, what areas do you prefer to look after by yourself and what responsibilities might you prefer to be delegating?

Commitment means being mindful and vigilant. Commitment means taking action. On the other hand, what if procrastination sets in?

\* \* \*

**ALBERT HAD TAKEN** a crash course in Canadian currency in Montreal. That wasn't easy. Trading British pounds and Russian rubles for Canadian dollars was complicated. It was hard to trust just anybody to do this for him. He ended up with the equivalent of about 300 Canadian dollars in his waist pouch, which he had estimated to be about right. He wondered how long he could make his money last. Canadian bank notes were not widely in use and so he preferred to barter and negotiate for things of value rather than part with cash. He would use the cash only if there was no other option.

Albert's property was not near a river. He needed a crash course in digging a well. He needed a tub to take a bath. He needed an icehouse to keep meat and maybe a smoke house to smoke the meat. He needed some livestock like a cow or some chickens. He needed a place where animals could have access to water for drinking. So much to do and so little time. Albert had no idea how much things might cost or what he might have to pay, but he was sure of one thing. He needed to set priorities or he would end up not having a warm, safe place to sleep over the winter. Every decision he made over the next weeks and months could

mean the difference between living and dying. Procrastination was not an option.

He promised himself that as soon as he built his house, he would visit the contents of his trunk. He could not bring himself to break the shipping seal on it until he had a place to unpack his things. His tent was just big enough to give him space to sleep and space to dress and undress.

Albert had made arrangements with his nearest neighbour half a mile away, Vlad, the Ukrainian, for access to water from his well—a trip he made on foot in the evening two or three times a week. He was grateful that Vlad always watched for him and often sent him home with a care package. Sometimes it was a few eggs. Sometimes it was a chunk of smoked sausage. Sometimes Vlad invited him to stay for a bit and get warm by the fire.

Albert's eyes had caught sight of the thick, felt-lined boots hanging by the door at Vlad's place. He made a mental note that he would have to invest in some warmer winter footwear. He expected his fur-lined hat with the muffs for his ears would be a welcome feature of his winter garb.

Albert was homesick. He was physically taxed. He could not remember a time in his life when he had been so malnourished, but he had to keep the dream alive. He had no one with whom to discuss his day-to-day plans. He knew to the core of his being he had to do whatever it took to take care of his mind and his body. There was too much at stake.

\* \* \*

**Commitment to self-development in terms of both knowledge and skills could be the difference between success and failure. It could mean the difference between your business being a viable enterprise and having to close its doors. Many start-ups never make**

**it to year three, never mind year five. The reasons for failure are numerous (I counted over 50 on page one of Google alone) but the common thread suggests failure arrives as a result of the decisions made by the founders of the company. Be the decisions related to timing, lack of appropriate research, underfunding or an inability to scale up production, the decisions about how, when and where the money is spent to grow the business strongly influence the outcome. And failure is not likely to occur as a result of a single reason.**

Whether you are at the head of a corporation with hundreds of employees or you are a solopreneur, occupying the CEO chair for your company can be a lonely place. Talking to friends who have never walked in your shoes or signed a pay cheque on the front may not be your best choice for guidance. Unless you and your spouse are partners in your business, discussing matters with your spouse may only serve to bring your work home with you when distance from work and love from family is what you need. On the other hand, your spouse, your sibling, or a parent may be your best ally. Each situation is different.

When Eric Schmidt was the CEO of Google, he was interviewed about his experience hiring a coach. Eric reports his initial response to the idea was that he was “established” and did not need a coach. He initially did not accept the advice and then changed his mind. One of the things that Eric reported having learned from his personal coaching experience was that a coach can offer perspective. He also said that a coach can offer clarity. He added that he believed his coach had served Google well.

Consider hiring a coach for yourself and your business. Professional golfers often hire coaches, and sometimes more than one. A pro golfer might have a coach to improve their

short game and another to improve their use of a driver. A football team has more than one coach. Olympic athletes often work with several coaches: a coach for the intricacies of the sport and a coach for a mindset of success, to name two.

There are numerous advantages associated with having a coach. For starters, your coach might be your confidant—your most perfect listener. Your coach may direct you away from being distracted by activities that do not serve you. Your coach could be your mentor. Your coach could be the shortcut replacement to lengthy conversations with your walls.

Consider taking in webinars or participating in a Master Mind group. Napoleon Hill defined a Master Mind group as “at least two people working together in perfect harmony for the attainment of a definite purpose.” Napoleon’s writings teach that Master Mind groups help you expand your resources. The wisdom you share becomes part of your asset base in your community. The relationships and the trust you build grow from the problems you solve together. Consequently, what you have built inside the group should be able to carry over into attracting business outside the doors of the Mastermind group itself. I like to think of a Mastermind group in support of entrepreneurs as being like a special community that works together to help each other achieve their goals. Consider joining a mastermind group.

Consider working with a mentor. If you are not interested in having a mentor, perhaps you would like to volunteer your services as a mentor. Whichever you choose, there is no doubt in my mind that a mentor and a mentee grow as they learn from each other.

Seek the counsel of those whom you admire and respect. Arrange a meeting. Take them out for lunch. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. If the worst thing they can say is “no”, why wait? Even if they say no, they may still offer a suggestion that proves to be helpful.

If you are not committed to your business, it shows. Is it your intention to be around in five years from now? Ten years from now? If it is your intention to sit back and let others do the heavy lifting, you may find yourself feeling like you are sitting in a boat with no rowers, no wind in your sails and land in the far-off distance. This book would not have come to be without the help of many hands contributing to its refinement and completion. If longevity in your business is for you, are you working with a team with which you are able to collaborate? Are you investing in yourself? Are you leading by an example? Are you in training for the long haul? Hire a coach. Did that sound a little pushy? There is an old African proverb, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

\* \* \*

**BY THE TIME** the train reached Saskatoon, Albert had worked himself into a frenzy of excitement. He couldn't wait to get home. He decided he would not take a room for the night. It was not yet noon. He would head directly for his homestead. Albert hired the catch-as-catch-can livery service near the station house. The driver with his team of horses had a wagon big enough to transport his lumber in a single trip.

## 5 Camaraderie

Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

Barack Obama

**Even with** Vlad's generous acts of kindness, Albert felt alone. Back in Russia he had the constant company of members of his family. There was always someone around with whom he could share a task or collaborate on solutions to fix a problem. Here in Canada, he was left to have the conversation in his own head...unless he could get to the station house. The station house was the doorway to his new world. He knew he could benefit from the wisdom of those who had arrived here before him. If they were able to meet the requirements of homesteading, he could, too.

Vlad was helping but it was not easy communicating with him. Vlad needed to learn more English and it seemed that was not happening—at least, not yet. Maybe Vlad would agree to picking up some English from him in exchange for some help with his construction projects. Why not take advantage of the opportunity to learn from each other? Albert had never been a teacher. With his older brothers and his father, it seemed he was always the student, but he could give it a go.

\* \* \*

**No astronaut would ever make it into space without a huge team behind every mission. No airplane would be transporting people around the globe were it not for a large body of personnel developing everything from the blueprints to the prototype of a reliable flying machine.**

I would not have any of the awards I have received without a team effort. It's the people who I have had the privilege to serve who have taken the time to document my contributions and my service to the community and to people who conduct business in it. Some affectionately call me the coach's coach. Despite the personal challenges of working through mind-numbing pain and embracing the courage I needed to relearn the words that had been shrouded from my ability to find them in my brain, I had to believe I could come back, so to speak. Yes, it took years for me to build my credibility as an empowerment coach but my experience can tell you that there is such a thing as "peer advantage"; there is no "I" in team. Camaraderie is present. Camaraderie is energizing. Camaraderie is alive and well.

At the time of writing, I volunteer on the Selection Committee for choosing the next winners of the Women of Inspiration Awards. Working with the members of this committee is positively rewarding. Everyone pitches in. Many hands make light work. Camaraderie is the key that makes a difference.

Camaraderie is defined as spirit or feeling that comes with working together in an atmosphere of friendliness. People who experience feelings of camaraderie are likely to have known each other for some time and feel a sense of alignment on some level. Trust, loyalty and goodwill are features often associated with collegiality and camaraderie.

I spent seven years as a member and volunteer Ambassador of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. I was given the reins

to draft the revision of the manual guiding the activities undertaken by the Ambassadors. The Ambassador team often numbered twenty to thirty business owners. During several years of my membership there, I chaired the New Member Reception which was held quarterly. I treasure the alliances I made during my service there; while some have moved on, some are still actively on my list of contacts to this day.

With whom could you align? With whom could you develop a customer pairing? How would that work? Customer pairings are created when two businesses decide to support each other. It's like a "you scratch my back, I scratch yours" arrangement. In one example, you as a customer buy something from me and then I, the business owner, give you something, a coupon perhaps, that leads you to my friend's business.

Do you belong to a mastermind group? Do you belong to a business-to-business networking group? Or a Meetup group? Are you on social media? Are you an active participant? Do people retweet or share your posts? Like your page? Do you support others? Do you leave breadcrumbs like gratitude and congratulations in your wake? Do you show you like the posts of others? Are you posting selfie videos?

Increasing the number of friends or followers you have on social media helps build social proof. I invite you to connect with me on social media. Here is how you will find me. I am @DonnaDahl on Twitter. I am Donna Dahl on Facebook. I am Donna Dahl on LinkedIn. I have some favourite hashtags: #DreamDareDo #DonnaDahl #empowerment #WOI. Feel free to attach any of them to your posts.

Camaraderie opens the door to companionship. There is an old saying that goes, "To have a friend, you have to first be a friend." There is another that says you must give in order to receive. What are the ways you can demonstrate camaraderie? Here are some that immediately come to mind: mentoring

and being mentored, joining a business networking group, serving on a board as a member volunteer, doing volunteer committee work, and lending support to the causes of others. Believe it or not, your philanthropic activities also give you the opportunity to shine as a leader when you step up and reveal the assets including the brain trust you bring.

Camaraderie opens the door to entrepreneurial leadership. Joseph Jaworski, the founder and chairman of both Generon International and the Global Leadership Initiative, is quoted as having said, "Leadership is about...shaping the future...'and then having the courage to do what is required.'" Jaworski describes leadership as being about setting the stage for "predictable miracles".

Ideally when it comes to leadership, what follows, follows naturally and what follows ought to be for the greater good. The ability to listen and respond to need is one thing; the courage to step up and stand out is another.

\* \* \*

**VLAD HAD SEEN** the wagon go by his homestead the evening before. He was eager to help his neighbour build his house. He had never built anything out of wood before except his smoke house and his one-seater outhouse. He saddled up his horse right after breakfast and rode to Albert's with his hammer, his spade, his saw and enough water for the two of them for the day.

Albert could not have been happier to see Vlad. They hugged like they were long-lost cousins. Albert reached for his axe and carefully chopped away at a patch of tough prairie grass to expose the naked ground beneath it. Using his pocketknife, he began to draw a picture. It was a sketch of the house he intended to build. Vlad watched and then began to sort the lumber into stacks showing he understood the plan.

With his hatchet and four stout sticks of kindling in hand, Albert paced out the space that would mark the four corners of his house. Using his hatchet, he sharpened the stakes to a point and then pounded the stakes into the ground.

Albert's house would be sheltered from the wind by a bluff—a small grove of trees that would shelter his house on three sides—trees he could keep and not clear for farming if he was using this area as his domicile space. It would have an east-facing door and the window would face south.

Together they dug a hole in the middle of the area where they expected the frame for the floor to be set. It was Vlad's idea. The hole would be dug deeply enough to store some root vegetables for the winter. It might not completely keep things from freezing but it would extend the life of the food after the growing season came to an end.

Albert and Vlad assembled two-by-fours into a frame to which the boards for his floor could be nailed and moved it into place. Once nailed together, they hauled the pot belly stove out of the tent and set it on the floor where they thought it would be best placed in the house.

They sawed a door into the floor of the little one-room house and attached a leather strap handle with large tacks nailed into the floorboards. Vlad suggested that a small ladder into the root cellar and a few shelves could be installed once they finished constructing the house.

There was very little sawing to do. Albert had designed the abode to be eight feet by eight feet on skids that were leveled on a bed of rocks and he had done most of the sawing back in the sawmill at Rosthern. The skids would keep the house off the ground and the rocks would keep the wooden skids from rotting into the ground. All the boards had been planed and pre-cut eight feet long. The hard part was going to be assembling the trusses and lifting and nailing them into place. Albert was grateful for Vlad being there.

A strong 200-pound man like Vlad helping here meant that this house could have a roof sooner rather than later. The skies were clear. The sun was shining. There was barely any wind. They should be able to nail the boards across the trusses and cover the roof with tar paper before the sun set today. Vlad had brought some sausage and eggs with him. They would be able to have a simple evening meal and retire for the night.

Vlad made his way home on horseback by moonlight. Tomorrow was another day. Tomorrow they would finish the walls of the house and install the window.

The next day Vlad arrived with his horse pulling a wagon filled with rocks, some clay and two pails of water. These were the rocks that Vlad had collected from his first field. Vlad had had no idea what to do with them until now. He had simply gathered them into a pile in his yard. Today they would become the protection for the underside of Albert's house. Together Albert and Vlad packed and stacked the rocks tightly between the ground and the underside of the floor. They wet the clay collected from digging the cellar mixing it with straw-like, dry prairie grass. Hopefully, the rain would not wash it away. It wasn't a perfect solution but Albert could tell that this approach might help to keep animals from living under the floor of his house. It might help to keep the house warmer in winter, too.

Vlad was pleased with the result. Albert was pleased that he could give Vlad English lessons while they worked. Vlad wondered if next year, they could build a house of wood for Vlad, too. It was Day 41. Anything was possible. Albert wondered what he was going to be able to do to repay Vlad for the generous gift of his time.

## 6 Reciprocity

Faith moves mountains; love transforms hearts.

John Paul Warren

**A**lbert could not put a number on the weight he attached to the kindness of his neighbour, Vlad. Even if he had a scale that could weigh the steam engine on a train, it could not register the size of the gratitude Albert felt in his heart. Vlad's help in building the house was beyond measure.

If Albert had had to construct his house on his own, he would still be at it. With Vlad's help, Albert's pre-construction wood-cutting skills and their combined but limited construction experience they made it work. They were not only able to assemble his new home with degrees of logic but they were also able to add some features that Albert had not considered.

"That root cellar under the floorboards with an indoor access was positively genius," he thought. Albert missed being able to count on an extra pair of hands to help with doing the job that needed doing that day. He missed the conversation with his brothers and sisters around the evening meal. He even missed doing his daily chores.

But it was time to turn his mind toward being here in Canada. It was time to make peace with the longings in his heart. No amount of time spent buried in his memories was going to make

his tomorrows any different. It was time to think about how he might show Vlad the fullest measure of his appreciation.

\* \* \*

**Reciprocity matters and should not be ignored. Gratitude matters and practicing reciprocity is one way to express that gratitude.**

Reciprocity is defined by Merriam-Webster dictionary online as the quality or state of being reciprocal. Reciprocity includes mutual dependence, action, or influence. The emphasis is on the word “mutual.” Whatever is shared by one is matched by another in some way through words and deeds.

I think of reciprocity to be about a mindful and deliberate cooperative relationship for mutual benefit between two persons or organizations that interact. Another way of explaining reciprocity is the resultant behavior where two people or groups of people choose to give each other help and/or advantage of relatively equal measure.

Reciprocity can go beyond acts of swapping kindness back and forth among neighbours. Reciprocity can include community support as a customer for the businesses that serve the neighbourhood and vice versa. Imagine a private retail store owner being approached almost daily with invitations to make donations to community projects like little league team uniforms, soccer equipment, a slow pitch baseball tournament, or silent auction items to name some. If not one of those funding requests was ever once reciprocated with a purchase from his inventory, how do you think that would make him feel about his community?

Do you have feelings for the community in which you live? I don't mean the kind of feelings one might associate with love and affection. I mean the kind of feelings associated with

gratitude for those shop keepers who have chosen to conduct their business in your neighbourhood. How would you feel if all the small businesses in the strip mall near your home suddenly closed their doors?

Do you buy from these shopkeepers? Perhaps, you prefer to stop somewhere else on your way home. I grew up in a small town in a rural community—a farmer's daughter. My father had a philosophy about buying local. I remember him once telling me that if you don't fill up your car at the local service station and you drive to the next town instead to get a better price, you could be forced to drive to the next town permanently to fill up. What if a business in your hometown or your neighbourhood went belly up? Do you believe you have a responsibility to support local?

It's not uncommon for me to hear that consumers are prepared to be neighbourhood loyal with their shopping choices if prices, values and services are reasonably and responsibly competitive. That's what good neighbours do, isn't it? They practice mutual respect. Shopping local doesn't mean I should expect to pay less than the competition but it also does not mean that my pocketbook should be treated with disrespect.

I have a great deal of admiration for businesses serving their neighbourhood customers in a way that shows they are being mindful—mindful of the need for reciprocity—in order to support both the community and the business. In a recent conversation over coffee with friends, I was reminded of how certain communities throughout the world practice the art of the two-price system by discounting prices for the locals. Interesting!

Are you mindful of your acts of reciprocity? Is it important for businesses to practice local reciprocity by buying goods and services from each other? When a person or business buys from “away”, it eats away at the local economy. If you continue to purchase your groceries at the store across the

street from where you work, you could find that one day the grocery store in your neighbourhood has closed due to lack of business. Would that be okay with you? We all vote with our dollars. Where we spend/vote sends a message.

Are there times when you could justify buying your goods from “away”? It’s happening more and more all the time. With retail giants making it easy to order online, you could find yourself never shopping the aisles of a local grocery store or small appliance outlet, for instance, ever again.

There is a huge push to shop online. You can purchase everything from your mattress to your vitamins to every piece of your wardrobe online and have it delivered to your door within days. It’s like we are repeating a piece of 20th Century history in 21st Century style. It’s like we have gone back to the time when the catalogue brought the department store into the home and the train transported it to your stationhouse or your post office. Nowadays the catalogue is on the screen of your personal communications device and your parcel may one day be delivered by a drone.

I often hear businesses choose to buy from “away” because it is cheaper or because it is faster or some other reason important to them. I wonder if they would like it if people in their community bought the product or service they sell from another business that is from “away”, too. Reciprocity must benefit both sides. After all, reciprocity is a two-way street.

Reciprocity is a choice. It is a mindful decision to buy from a particular store on purpose out of respect and gratitude for the business or service you receive. Reciprocity is about “keeping the home fires burning” in the local economy, so to speak. If we don’t support one another within our various communities, we run the risk of local businesses having to shut down. Having no customers means having no business income. Again, that’s not to say that you should be expected to buy local when the product is not at the standard that you

would prefer, or the price is not within your range of acceptable cost. While impulse buying is an option so is conscious choice.

One of the most interesting acts of reciprocity is applause. Hand clapping is a demonstration of approval. It shows you appreciate the effort or the performance. A positive expression of support in the form of applause is a gift you not only want to practice giving but that you also want to experience receiving. Mentoring, volunteering and philanthropy may be considered appropriate extensions to the concept of reciprocity.

If you are not practicing reciprocity, what does that say about your role in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, so to speak, in your local community? What is your distinctively attractive Unique Selling Proposition (USP) if you are the business wanting to attract customers? How will you keep them loyal to you? And in the bigger picture, what can you do to help your customers remain loyal to supporting the local economy? Should you make a reciprocity policy a requirement for the businesses from which you buy?

I am reminded once again of the African Proverb in the last chapter. It talks about going further when you work together. Reciprocity and competition do not have to be mutually exclusive. Competition matters just as reciprocity matters. It’s competition that helps determine the comparative value. It’s competition that demonstrates the range of quality available in the marketplace. Time and time again changes in the retail landscape have forced businesses to change their focus in order to remain relevant. Some have had to close their doors. Some have evolved. Some are being added as I write.

Some of the interesting features in the fabric of business practice taking place over the past several years in Calgary and other urban centres include:

- Order, pay online and pick up at the store.
- Order. Pay online. Return to the store if unsatisfactory.

- Order dinner from restaurants that are part of an “eat in” campaign. That way each member of the family can have the dinner of their choice.
- Have access to more options for public transportation from taxis to ride share to car rentals based on hours not days.
- Have more convenient access to Canada Post postal outlets in places like drug stores and grocery stores rather than having stand-alone buildings.
- Making library fees for membership a thing of the past. Calgarians enjoy free library membership.
- Creating Meet Up and networking groups that attract like-minded individuals.
- Developing new ways for social media to meld with brick and mortar stores so that the urban landscape does not impede the advantages of offering small town business practices.

Some businesses have an intention that stretches nationally or internationally for drawing customers. Some businesses have more of a local motivation. Some businesses are online. Some are brick and mortar. Think about local companies that sell to local customers. In essence, they are in search of a level of community interdependence that gives them a roof over their heads, food in their bellies and customers in the door making purchases.

When it comes to being a player on the international stage, countries like Canada and the United States are young in comparison to countries that have been populated for hundreds or even thousands of years. I am fascinated by the way in which, for instance, some other countries practice interdependence within their neighbourhoods. In Mexico, a country with strong Spanish roots, I find that one bakery may

focus on making desserts while another might focus on making pastries, and still another will focus on baking bread. Here in Canada, it is possible to find that a bakery can often be a one-stop shop. A single bakery will offer everything. The specialty bakeries I have encountered in Mexico appear to support the notion of a business enterprise developing expertise in one thing and then sharing their specialty with the community in an interdependent economy. Ostensibly, niched or expanded, it seems the preferred result is that everybody gets to make a contribution to the bigger picture. Everybody gets to make a living.

Is it true that a rising tide causes all the boats in the harbor to rise? This aphorism suggests that doing things as a group can benefit each member of the group individually. Do you belong to a business networking group? I think of urban small business networking groups to be the 21st Century version of early to mid-20th Century, prairie small-town, western Canada brought to the big city. When I think of small-town ways of cooperating and collaborating and solving problems together, I can't help but think that small towns still in existence today would not have survived all this time if they hadn't practiced mutual support. In fact, some did not survive. Even if you don't own a business yet, becoming part of the social fabric and learning of the challenges as well as the triumphs small businesses may face could offer you practical guidance in a way that you might never glean from a textbook.

If you intend to be a successful entrepreneur, how will you respond to the changing face of the marketplace? Will you price match? Will you add value to the purchase? Will you offer incentives to buy local? Will you offer a loyalty program? How can you be vigilantly responsive to your customers changing needs? What is your customer service practice? How can you help your customers help you to give your business a more viral status on social media? Are you asking for testimonials?

Do you have a road map to go from success to standing out?

\* \* \*

As an aside, it is important to note that between 1908 and 1940, Sears Catalog Homes were available for purchase from, of course, the Sears catalogue. Sears was a company that originated in the United States and sold more than 70,000 kits to build homes throughout North America including Canada and Alaska. Further, these kit houses came complete with modern-day conveniences such as central heating, indoor plumbing and electricity, at an extra charge, of course. Some kits required sawing; some came with pre-cut boards. Either way, it seemed a welcome solution that could significantly speed up the construction of a home.

In addition, Sears was not the only company that was selling prefab homes as a kit. There were Canadian companies, too. The British Columbia (B.C.) Mills Timber and Trading Co. based in Vancouver manufactured prefabs between 1904 and 1910.

What is interesting to note is that the Canadian Bank of Commerce was one of the best customers of B.C. Mills. The mill supplied a prefab bank kit with a distinctive design that dotted the western Canadian Prairies. Some original buildings are still in existence today.

B.C. Mills had designed a way to construct the walls in such a way to keep drafts from getting inside the building. Unfortunately, while B.C. Mills Timber and Trading made a significant contribution to the evolution of Canadian architecture, the company was not able to sustain its life in business because the price of its prefabs was prohibitive to the early settlers. Hence, the brilliance of their designs featuring weather-tight joints died in the sawmill.

As short-lived as the B.C. Mills construction business was, the rapidly-built bank buildings were some of the most sophisticated structures erected on the prairies during the first decade of the 1900s.

*Their elegance contrasted against their sturdy structure became a metaphor for trust in the Canadian banking system.*

June 1, 1961, the Canadian Bank of Commerce founded in 1867 merged with the Imperial Bank of Canada founded in 1873 to form the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC). CIBC banks had an expansive footprint throughout Saskatchewan with branches in towns such as Kelvington, Coronach, Turtleford, Stoughton, Hafford, Norquay, Canwood, Central Butte, Watson, Radisson, Elbow, Moosomin, Radville and Nokomis. While many of these small-town CIBC branches have closed, the original buildings that still stand today remain prominent landmarks on the prairie landscape. You will find a picture of one of these banks here: <https://hermis.alberta.ca/ARHP/Details.aspx?DeptID=1&ObjectID=4665-0627>.

\* \* \*

**Give serious thought to setting a course for reciprocity, especially in your business plan. Create a reciprocity policy. Practice the business of giving and observe its influence on your being a receiver. The outcomes may surprise you.**

In addition, it was Zig Ziglar who said, “You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help enough other people get what they want.”

Albert Schweitzer is quoted as having said, “Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.”

Set a course to set an example and stand out as a reciprocity practitioner. That would be a great first step toward standing out as a leader.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT BUILT HIS** house with his own two hands from the plan in his head and the help of his neighbor, Vlad. He had measured every board and he had hammered nails until his muscles stiffened in pain and his hands hurt. They installed the potbelly stove and sealed the hole they cut for the chimney in the roof. He would make sure he had enough wood for firewood another day. He would do that when he was splitting wood to make the shingles for the roof.

Albert proudly and affectionately referred to his house as “The Homestead”. It turned out he had enough lumber to add a small porch-like structure attached to the house to help keep out the winter cold when he opened the door. The porch entry was barely big enough to turn around or change your mind, but it served the purpose of adding another measure of shelter. He could add a second exterior door on his next trip to Rosthern. Just inside the interior door was a space to hang a coat on the wall. A peg or two would help.

He surveyed the room. He wasn't sure if these thin boards were going to be enough to separate him from the North wind and freezing temperatures. There were places where he thought he could see daylight and he was told the spaces would only expand as the wood became drier. That would be a problem to solve for another day. He couldn't wait a year for the wood to dry. He needed his house before winter.

Albert's shopping list for his next trip to Rosthern was getting longer. He was thankful that he could get everything he needed so close to home even if it meant another trip. His list now included more tar paper, more boards, more nails, some sheep's

wool, a few arm lengths of muslin to cover the window, another door and a mirror. And then there was Anna.

Albert smiled. The space inside his house would work. The two most important features were his pot belly stove for cooking and heat, and his wood box frame with legs for his bed. He would no longer need to sleep on the ground.

But something was missing. Albert motioned for Vlad to follow him to the tent. Albert grabbed the leather handle at one end of the trunk. Vlad followed suit. He grabbed the other handle and lifted the trunk from the other end. Together they maneuvered the trunk through the door and into the tiny house. Albert stared at it breathing a huge sigh. Prairie Day 47. Nine bunches of five days, recorded as four sticks and a line through the sticks plus two more sticks, were etched with his knife into a block of wood. The tally was helping him keep track of the days. It was May 17 on the calendar. It was time.

While Albert fumbled for the key for the padlock, Vlad slipped out the door only to return with one of his prized bottles of homemade pepper vodka and the two cups from his kitchen shelf. They drank a toast and Vlad left Albert to his trunk.

## 7 Vision

Action without vision is only passing time.  
Vision without action is merely daydreaming  
but vision with action can change the world.

Nelson Mandela

**W**hen Albert closed his eyes, the movie playing in his head showed him fields of ripened grain swaying with a gentle prairie breeze. He heard his children laughing and he saw the hoof tracks made by the cows as they headed to pasture. He could see Anna hanging clothes to dry.

\* \* \*

**Without vision, there is no target. Without vision, there is no plan. Albert had a clear and certain vision.**

Take a blank sheet of paper and draw a line across it about one inch or two cm from the top. Just above the line on the far right-hand side write the words, “five years from now” On the far left-hand side of the line write the word, “now”. Place four markers on the line, dividing it into five equal spaces with each representing the five years ahead. At each of years one, two, three, four and five, make a statement about where you

plan to be with respect to your business. Where will you be one year from today? Two years from today? Five years from today? Some find it easier to do this exercise by starting at five years out and working backwards.

Looking at your future five years from now, will you have won a small business award? Will you have been selected as one of the Top 40 under 40? Will you have international recognition? Will you have doubled the number of employees on your payroll? Will you have been voted one of the best employers for whom to work? Will you be honoured as a member of the Order of Canada?

On another note, if accolades are not what you seek, what rings your bell? Some might phrase the question another way with, “What floats your boat?” Are you even seeking recognition or are you after profit instead? Are you serving happy customers? Are you hoping to be on The Dragon’s Den on CBC television?

As an entrepreneur, chances are good that you have a desire to make a difference. Maybe something “out there” could use an overhaul. Maybe you have a new, time-saving way to recycle glass. Perhaps the thought has crossed your mind that if others could just see the world the way you see it, things would be so much different and could be so much better. That’s the way I think of Einstein. I think he was out to change the way we look at physics. I think he wanted the principles of physics to be easily understood and easily applied in such a way that exploring matters of physics could be a sophisticated form of child’s play. He had a particular knack for asking elegant questions and then exploring for answers. He made it clear he wanted to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.

What is it about the conditions in our present circumstance that is not acceptable to you? What would you like to see done differently? Is there something the everyday consumer needs to support planet sustainability or energy conservation?

Leonardo DaVinci shared his view of his world in so many ways. A travelling show of the work of Leonardo DaVinci was making its way around the world a number of years ago. My husband knew of my interest in his work and arranged for us to visit the exhibit in Victoria, British Columbia. It was an experience of a lifetime. No amount of reading in books or watching documentaries could ever match being able to see the actual journals, drawings and artifacts resulting from his curiosities. While there are some who see him as a painter of masterpieces like Mona Lisa, there are those who see him as a visionary regarding flight. He drew a detailed study of the human anatomy. He designed a device that developed into a gun that could shoot multiple rounds in a spray-type pattern. He experimented with the concept of the turbine. Even if he might have entertained being satisfied with the status quo, I have to think that those who hired him also inspired him.

DaVinci was different. His multiple curiosities across divergent planes was a gift not often seen when it comes to influencing change. Did DaVinci live in a time when it was easier to cross boundaries that went from oil-painting artist to artillery inventor, or that went from pondering answers to questions about engineering the employment of water to create energy to discovering what lay beneath the exterior shell of human skin? Perhaps. The wisdom of the 21st Century tends to want to pull us into a niche that contains pinpoint focus. The articulation of a specialty suggests expertise in a way that no generalist could possibly deliver.

Does restricting diversity make specialists more valuable or more credible? Maybe. Not necessarily. Sometimes the skills from one area of expertise can apply to another in a marriage of sorts that had never before been considered. For instance, think back to a time when someone might have wondered what would happen if you poured concrete over iron rods when constructing cement walls? Would that make the walls stronger and less likely to crumble over time?

Today, these iron rods called rebar are used in places like walls and sidewalks as a common component of construction with concrete. In addition, for safety reasons, specially designed applications of rebar have been developed for constructing concrete multi-story buildings in seismic zones where earthquakes are common—thus making the buildings more resilient.

One idea builds on another. One idea gives birth to another. The post WWII, expansive picture window that required a huge hole to be cut in the exterior front-facing wall of the family home gave birth to window-covering draperies to offer privacy from the outside world and protection from the rays of the sun. The picture window added a large opening for natural light to enter the dwelling but it simultaneously put its occupants into a sort of fishbowl with a distinct lack of privacy. In another example of ideas that have merged, the camera, the telephone and the computer have now been combined into a small and personal hand-held device commonly referred to as a Smartphone.

During the latter part of the term ending in the spring of 2019 when the New Democrats (NDP) were the party in power in Alberta, there were numerous companies across the province competing for business to replace the windows in homes. With a provincial government program offering a subsidy to homeowners, was it possible that every window company in the province wanted a piece of the window-replacement pie?

Several pieces of advertising literature about windows arrived in the mail almost daily. Some offered financing. Some offered a discount for multiple windows. Some offered a discount for seniors. Some said their windows were manufactured in Alberta. Some said the windows came with a lifetime guarantee that could be transferred to a subsequent owner. Replacing aluminum windows with triple pane glass windows set in vinyl frames was promised to make homes more energy efficient with less heat loss over the winter

months. It seemed like window companies were virtually coming out of the woodwork. In the spring of 2019, with a provincial election looming large on the horizon, the subsidy for window replacement provided by the NDP government could disappear. That fact alone could stimulate urgency on the part of the consumer.

How many more homeowners would decide to take action and participate in the subsidy program before the time ran out? What if the replacement window market was all but saturated? How do you get more people to move forward on replacing their old, energy-inefficient windows when saturation is your biggest competition?

What if your company is no longer viable? After decades of dependency on the horse for transportation during the early 1900s, some forms of related business became extinct. In 2018, for instance, there is no longer a need for a neighbourhood blacksmith except in rare cases. Times change. Products and services advance. In the 2000s there is access to travelling farriers who will take care of the shoes for your horse. In addition, services like access to freezer space in a community meat locker at a local butcher shop to store a side of beef went away when it became possible to purchase a deep freeze for personal household use. It was no longer necessary to can everything that needed preserving over the winter; some things could be kept in a frozen state and cooked as needed.

The nature of the marketplace evolves over time as the goods and services needed by the masses are modified or re-invented. And we see business generated and sustained by the power of consumer purchases. We can only guess the outcomes if the gasoline engine of the motor vehicle will eventually be completely replaced by electric motors. If so, the gasoline service station will become a thing of the past and the possible future enterprise of selling or renting pre-recharged batteries may save the consumer waiting time at a recharging station.

Sometimes a good thing simply runs its course and when the end arrives, that is the end. What will you do when the “gold rush” demand you created is over? Think of Atari. Think of black and white television. Think of the ice box. Think of the flip phone. Think of the fax machine. Think of cassette tapes and 33 Long Play records (LPs). Think of the surrey with the fringe. Think of silent movies. When products that satisfied a need are no longer of use, production stops and availability ceases. The businesses that sold these products must either find new products to fill the shelves, change the focus of their enterprise or make the decision to close their doors.

The printing businesses that once did all their production with a Gutenberg press came to be no longer in existence unless they purchased newer and updated, labour-saving equipment. The gasoline-dependent automotive industry has already established recharging stations for its battery-operated cars. It is, apparently, now possible to travel from coast to coast east to west in Canada without burning a single litre of gasoline.

Does your vision extend past a certain level of need? How timeless is your vision? Is it scalable? Is it sustainable? How long could it last? Is your vision current? Is it relevant to the current marketplace? Have you written it down on paper? Does it have a timeline? Can it be measured?

What if your vision needs a reset? Sometimes it’s hard to let go of something that you created but falls short. Sometimes it’s hard to let go of a dream that is not manifesting. You are attached to it and you have an emotional if not a financial stake in its future. Sometimes all you need is a new timeline or a new method of delivery. Sometimes it’s time to find a mentor. Sometimes it helps to hire a coach who works with you as you think out loud with accountability. Sometimes it’s time to consider alternative possibilities and move in a new direction.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT HAD WANTED** to unpack his trunk since the day he first set foot on his homestead land. He chose to wait. There didn’t seem to be much point to unpacking until he had real walls made of wood to protect him from the rain and the cold, and proper spaces to put things. Every day as he stared at that monster of a trunk on the other side of the tent he was more and more drawn to breaking the shipping seal and removing the contents. There was hardly a day that he did not think of his homeland back in Europe. He missed his parents. He missed the companionship of his brothers and sisters. Perhaps revealing the contents of the trunk would lift his spirits.

Albert took his hunting knife from its sheath and split the seal. Then he unlocked the padlock with the key he had been carrying on a leather cord around his neck and released the hasp. The lid practically sprang open. It scraped his knuckles as it flew past...but only a little. A friendly battle scar, he thought as he examined his injury and the dribble of blood that gave evidence of the event.

He could tell that his mother had had her fingers in his cookie jar, so to speak. In fact, the cookie jar was really a homemade cookie tin. It had been carefully packed underneath the feather tick and there were cookies inside the tin—ginger cookies—his favourite. He held the cookies to his nose. They were rock hard and they didn’t smell fresh but it didn’t matter. He chose a cookie from the tin, broke it in half, closed his eyes and popped it in his mouth. It tasted like home.

The goose feather tick! He didn’t mean to ignore it. He recognized it immediately. It was the one that he had on his bed back in Russia. His mother must have slipped it into the trunk at the very last minute because he could remember sleeping with it the

night before he left. He held it tightly to his face and breathed a deep sigh. It smelled like home.

Albert continued to remove the items from the trunk while taking mental inventory. The more he unpacked, the more he came to realize that where he was now was where he was going to be forever. It was as though each item he drew from the trunk was a weight that further confirmed his decision to seek his dream. He was in this for the long haul and he would find a way to making his dream come true. His family had worked hard to build this trunk and pack it tightly with treasures. He was going to work hard to make them proud.

Satisfied that he had found some extra clothing that he could layer on when it got colder and that he would be able to sleep more warmly with his feather mattress, he placed his treasures back into the trunk to keep them dry. He secured the trunk with numerous knots tied with rope as if shipping a package by mail. With another cookie in his mouth, he locked the padlock onto the hasp once again. Another trip to Rosthern could not happen soon enough. He needed shelves and maybe a chest of drawers or two. A curtain for the window would be good. Hopefully, everything would be here when he got back.

Tomorrow he and Vlad would tackle the construction design of the shelter for the horse. The day after that they would start to tackle the pit latrine and the shed to place over it. The well would have to wait.

It was May 23, day 53 of his 90-day plan. June 29 would be Prairie Day 90—celebration day Number One. Things were moving forward. Maybe he could implement a second 90-day plan before snowfall. There was no time to waste.

Maybe Anna would be allowed to marry him. He would find out on his next visit to Rosthern. Fingers crossed.

\* \* \*

**It has been my experience that one of the most common slip-ups entrepreneurs make is that they have vision but lack focus. They have their eye on the prize. They can see the big picture and the reward for making the money but they have a hard time aligning their daily activities with the intended outcome. Imagine you are going to run a marathon in a year from now. Will it be possible for you to finish the race if you have not spent some time daily in training and preparation?**

Focus is required to follow through with the rigors of regular training. Focus is required to run the full length of the marathon. It's one thing to show up. It's quite another to commit to the race mentally with vigorous amounts of both physical and mental endurance.

Okay, so vision alone is not enough. There is evidence of that on many different fronts. The first thing that comes to mind is the numerous designs for flying machines before building one that worked. Vision is not enough. Will is not enough. It's results that matter. Once a workable design was achieved, travel and mail delivery changed forever.

Visions for success often need both an end goal and benchmarks in between. Some think of vision as having both a short game and a long game. The short game tends to emphasize sales. The long game emphasizes relationships. How far out does your vision extend? Days? Months? Years?

Translating vision into action with results can be like assembling the prefab furniture kit you just bought because you believe you intuitively know all the pieces that need to get fitted into the project. You organize and arrange the items according to your personal experience. You might think it's so easy to put together that a child could do it without reading directions. On the other hand, you might find it complex and difficult to find the prerequisite starting point for success if you haven't read the directions.

When translating your vision into reality, think about that marathon. If you were training a group of potential marathoners to run with you, wouldn't you be developing a training plan complete with diet recommendations and endurance exercises? Wouldn't you be concerned with consistent attention to the training and monitoring of the team's progress?

One of the most overlooked skills required of an entrepreneur is the self-discipline piece. If you have never been in a situation where you were required to manage your own time, you might be entering a severe learning curve regarding your daily calendar. I have observed fluctuations like a seesaw contrast of freedom versus workaholic. There are those who would work without a break for days on end and there are those that simply believe that tomorrow is another day. Play today. Work tomorrow.

Even if you are leading a team of one and that one is you, leading with vision means translating vision into steps. Orderly execution builds confidence. Flexibility and resiliency matter. Celebration of benchmarks achieved builds more confidence. As a solopreneur, you alone are the creator of the road map to the destination. Some proprietors choose to rely solely on their own wits and skills while others choose from a range of supports including hiring a coach, setting up a board of directors and joining a mastermind group.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT'S THIRD TRIP** to Rosthern starting on Day 61 of his 90-day plan was even more successful than all the rest of his visits. Maybe it would depend on how you defined success, but Albert was beaming! He got his wish. He asked Abram, the head of the family he stayed with when he travelled to Rosthern, for the hand of his daughter, Anna, in marriage. Abram said yes but made the yes conditional on Albert completing certain tasks. His

Anna deserved to have certain things in place as a new bride. Albert made a commitment to Abram that he would. They shook hands. The contract was set.

Now what? Albert was never quite sure if he was doing things according to protocol. He was basically going along by the seat of his pants. He trusted that if he took a misstep, someone would correct him. Vlad and Abram were not always available to ask. So when in doubt, he relied on what he thought he remembered of his upbringing in traditional Russian protocol.

Anna spoke fluent Russian and German. She was only 17 but she had a way of telling stories at the evening meal that made everyone laugh. She was taking classes in English once a week after church on Sunday. Anna could sew a little and cook a little and now she would have the gift of time to learn. Her mother could teach her how to run a kitchen and cook for a family. She had already helped with a harvest. She was talented and smart and beautiful. She was so radiant whenever Albert smiled at her that she almost took Albert's breath away. This yes from Abram would give him cause to work faster and harder than he ever had. Abram would tell Anna about the courtship to come after he left for home.

Now Albert needed to be on target to obtain the deed to his homestead, he needed a horse with a cart and he needed to dig a well. That was the promise he made. Was Abram testing his mettle? No matter. Albert had just upped the stakes for achieving his success. In addition, Albert still had to return to Abram's farm before winter to spend a week or two being a farm hand as part of the trade agreement they had struck to pay his debt for the lumber. Harvest would be a good time to lend a hand.

Albert gathered his new acquisitions including the shelving and the chest of drawers and prepared them for shipment. Even Anna's mother had helped with gathering the fabric and the spices like salt and pepper for the kitchen. Abram must have told her about their conversation. He could only guess.

This time Vlad was going to meet him at the train with his horse and wagon. Albert would be able to give Vlad more practice with English conversation. He wanted Vlad to know he had chosen a wife. He could hardly wait to give him the news. Life was good.

\* \* \*

**How strong is your vision? How far does it reach? Does it hold your focus? “If you are working on something that you really care about, you don’t have to be pushed. The vision pulls you”, according to Steve Jobs.**

Do you agree?

Don’t let the naysayers rock your boat. Don’t let them impede your progress. Gather yea-sayers, not naysayers. Dreamers who are doers need cheering sections and not jeering sections. Doers get it done!

The world today might be a totally different place without the availability of air travel, digital telephone service, underwater exploration devices and even electricity to help light up the world after dark. The world would be a different place were it not for the contributions of people like Donna Strickland playing with lasers, Prince Harry creating the Invictus Games and Leonard Cohen’s passion for writing poetry. George Elliot, the pen name of Mary Anne Evans, a nineteenth century writer is credited with having said, “It’s never too late to be who you might have been.”

Hold the vision. Keep it alive. Trust yourself to be pulled. Commit to service. Build the benchmarks. Know your boundaries. Share your gifts. Make a difference. Stand out.

\* \* \*

**ALBERT’S MOTHER WAS** always reciting one Russian proverb after another as he was growing up. It seemed she had a proverb for everything. That night as he lay with his head on his makeshift pillow waiting for sleep to arrive, the proverbs arrived one after the other in a steady stream. He could hear his mother’s voice. Her recitation began with “Look after your clothes when they’re spick and span, and after your honour when you’re a young man.” It was followed by “Many hands make light work” and then “With a helper, a thousand things are possible.” He thought to himself, “Wasn’t it interesting that the teachings from his homeland could follow him here to Canada.

His thoughts turned to Anna and the promise he made to Abram. He closed his eyes, folded his hands in prayer and expressed thanks for the blessings of having a helpful neighbor, a roof over his head to call home, and the gift of a homestead. With a deep sigh filling his lungs with air, he paused to compose his thoughts and give special thanks for the clear and certain promise of being blessed with a wife in his future. Today was good. Tomorrow could be better.

## 8 Next

A cloth is not woven from a single thread.

Chinese Proverb

Four things come not back: the spoken word,  
the spent arrow, the past life, and the neglected opportunity.

Chinese Proverb

**A**ll Albert had to do to visit his vision for his future was to close his eyes. He could close his eyes any time he wanted and the vision would appear. Having the promise of Anna in his future was like having honey for his daily bread. What's the next one thing that Albert could do to impress Anna?

As soon as he asked himself the question, He knew the answer. He would unpack the trunk and try to dress up the place like his mother would have done.

\* \* \*

**DREAM. DARE. DO. That's my tagline.**

What is one thing you can do next in support of your business?  
In support of you standing out as a leader? Is it your intention

to make a difference? Within your company? Within your community? In a global movement kind of way?

Stand out. It matters. It is entirely possible that you are just one decision away from setting course in a whole new leading and influential direction.

Making a difference is a choice. Decisions for change can result in new and different outcomes. Be courageous. Be mindful. Choose. The next one thing you do could create a ripple effect for the better. Will you accept the opportunity? Will you take that defining step?

Sometimes, on the road to creating an invention, pleasant surprises happen. Accidental inventions arrive. Unintended solutions appear. An extra pair of hands, or even more, shows up. Sometimes unexpected inspirations drive amazing results.

In the world of business, enterprise has been known to spill over previously guarded boundaries. An idea for a business can stumble its way into becoming a solution to a problem you couldn't put your finger on before. A pill that might have been originally designated for one purpose may be found to work well for treating some other malady as well. I think of medications like acetylsalicylic acid commonly referred to as aspirin for short and methotrexate, for example. Both medicines have multiple applications. Sometimes ideas re-surface because the technology to support the innovation has finally arrived. Walking under water with a breathing apparatus and nuclear-powered submarines come to mind—ideas that Jules Verne, the man often called the father of science fiction, wrote about long before they became manifested on the planet.

Did you know fiberglass as we know it today was invented by accident? While experimenting with ways of fusing a colored trademark onto a bottle, powdered glass was fed into a flame. The unintended result was a heap of cotton-like fibers. The process was adapted to make glass-fiber air filters for

ventilating equipment. Glass wool, which is one name for this product called “fiberglass” today, was invented in 1932–1933 by Russell Games Slayter of Owens-Corning, as a material to be used as thermal building insulation. It is marketed under the trade name Fiberglas, a term which has become a genericized trademark.

Sometimes the path to a goal is direct and right on and sometimes it takes a detour. An employee at 3M corporation made an accidental discovery that later resulted in the invention of the Post-it Note. Spencer Silver was attempting to develop a glue for use in space when he stumbled upon a glue that would stick to a paper well enough to work as a book mark without damaging the book. The man in China who was digging a well on his land unearthed a pottery clay shard. The discovery of the shard was the beginning of the currently active archaeological dig uncovering the thousands of human-like, terracotta warriors at Xian.

\* \* \*

**BEFORE HEADING FOR** bed, Albert separated his latest haul into two stacks: the items that he could store outdoors in the tent and the ones that he needed to keep indoors. The next morning, he put up some kitchen shelves and placed the chest of drawers near the bed.

It was time to unlock the trunk and do some unpacking. That feather tick for two was going to find a permanent home on his platform bed built for two. He found the two feather pillows squished flat as pancakes wrapped around three wooden boxes. He shook them repeatedly with a snap until they appeared plump and inviting. Inside one box was a bottle of vodka encased in a pair of handknit woolen socks. He made a motion with his hands

as if to be sending kisses to his mother. Inside the second wooden box was a pair of woolen hand-knitted mitts and inside the mitts he found two sets of eating utensils. Two sets, not one. Albert smiled. If only his mother knew.

In the third box, he found the watch. It was a pocket watch complete with the gold chain and the leather fob. He could already imagine himself wearing the watch in his vest and removing it to check the time. That must have been why his mother had insisted that he have a proper vest to go with his suit. He could feel himself in the role of husband and chief provider for his future family. He stood up making motions with his hands as if to practice the routine he had seen his grandfather do so many times. It felt natural. It felt good.

The watch was, indeed, a surprise. The inscription on the back stopped him in his tracks. It was in Russian. It read:

*To Albert*

*Keep time*

*Make time*

He guessed at the time, set the hands and wound the watch.

Keep time. Make time. He vowed he would. He declared that tomorrow would be a day of rest.

Under the layer of the two embroidered bath-size Turkish towels, he found his neatly folded, three-piece suit. He gathered the suit vest from the trunk, attached the fob to the button on the inside of the pocket and let the chain hang from his outside vest pocket. He closed his eyes as if to imagine the movement of the hands directing him to get on with taking the next critical steps toward his survival and his future marriage.

Albert continued to unpack the trunk and found places to stow some of the things. The boxes served as storage containers

under his bed. A stack of items like clothes to keep him warm in winter were separated to go back into the trunk. More boxes with surprises inside included things like two blocks of hand-made soap infused with lavender and rosemary, a letter from his sisters, shaving tools, a brush for his hair, and numerous miscellaneous household items including a complete set of dishes for four with only three pieces broken.

Then there it was. The case about which he had all but forgotten. He recognized it immediately. Was this the reason the dishes broke? He could hardly believe his eyes. It was his violin. He examined his fingers. They were a little the worse for wear after all that hammering and sawing. He removed the violin from the case as if lifting the most delicate of eggs from a nest, carefully rosined the bow, tuned the strings, and drew the bow across them. The remnant sounds of Russia instantly ignited his memory banks and touched his heart. Tears streamed down his cheeks as he played.

He put the violin back in the case and turned his attention toward tomorrow. Vlad had shown him that he could witch water and he motioned that he would come by in the next few days to find the place to dig the well. Vlad had even offered to loan him his horse so he could start to break land. The risk was simply too much for him. What if the horse stepped in a gopher hole? What if...? There were too many possibilities of things that could go wrong. Albert did not want the responsibility.

\* \* \*

**What's the next one thing you can do as an entrepreneur on your way to standing out? The Meister Eckhart quote at the front of this book reads, "It is time to start something new and trust the magic of new beginnings."**

Throughout history people have made the move to leave

the comfort zones of their upbringing and seek fortune on unfamiliar turf. That move may have been initiated for reasons of personal safety. It may have come about as a result of fear of danger or even persecution. It may have been born on the wings of hope for an optimistic future.

Take, for instance, the Irish who left Ireland between 1845 and 1855 numbered over two million people. You have but to do a Google search on the Internet about the Irish Potato Famine. You will uncover the fact that a blight overtook the one staple food that was a huge part of the Irish diet: potatoes. According to the records of history from numerous sources on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, many starved. Also, many fled to the United States of America. According to an article written by Brendan Daly @IrishCentral in January of 2017, the exodus of these emigrants eroded fully 25 per cent of the population of Ireland.

Sadly, many Irish died crossing the Atlantic. And many who survived the trip aboard ship had difficulty adjusting to life outside of Ireland. The language was different. They didn't know who to trust. They were no longer part of a rural, agricultural environment.

The period of time spanning two weeks and four days in 1956 between October 23 and November 10 was life-changing for many people born in Hungary. What may have started as a student protest against the government quickly grew into a march on the streets of Budapest. According to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) archives posted online, Canada welcomed the exodus of some 35,000 Hungarian refugees following the revolution.

Other groups have found themselves accepting refuge within Canada's border. More than 60,000 Vietnamese who have frequently been referred to as the Boat People found refuge in Canada. They fled Vietnam by boat and ship following the

end of the Vietnam War in 1975. In 2017 25,000 Syrians in search of living in peace were welcomed into Canada.

Canada has grown significantly over the years because of immigration. In 1867 at the time of Confederation the population is reported to have been 3.5 million people. By 1901 the population of Canada was a little over 5 million. By 1914, the population had grown to 8 million, and just a little over 100 years later, to over 37 million. All numbers are courtesy of Canadian census data reported online.

When it comes to Canadian soil, Canada has welcomed thousands of landed immigrants who have chosen to explore the opportunities that await them. Whatever their reasons for choosing Canada, their journey here is not unlike the one that Albert took. Homeland memories are tucked carefully away in the recesses of their minds. Anticipation gets wrapped up in excitement and bordered with fear of the unknown. Each and every one of them have had to come face-to-face with new customs, new ways of doing things, and decisions about making their way in the world. Hope is the single constant thread that keeps dreams alive.

Short term, it's all about managing the day-to-day matters of living: having food to eat and clothes to suit the climate. Long term? It's about livelihood, identity and relationship. It's about setting goals. It's about taking steps to achieve those goals on purpose and with a plan. Long term it seems only too Canadian to practice patience more by the barrelful than by the spoonful.

While patience and common courtesies might be common threads throughout Canadian culture, so is the regard for living in peace. Perhaps, it could be said that Canadians as a whole are drawn to peace. Those not born in Canada may have been refugees. They may have fled their homeland in search of peace. Peace is the invisible umbrella that serves

as a roof over everything. It seems that an attitude of living in peace finds a rather stark contrast when it comes to things like seeking to stand out. For refugees, standing out in their previous environment may have been life-threatening. The very thought of standing out might feel like trying to mix oil and water. If standing out compromised freedom, why stand out at all?

The very thought of standing out can come with strong emotional discomfort that leads to unstable levels of success. One might even go so far as to say that it is contrary to the homesteader mindset to stand out. Instead of standing out, do what needs to be done. Lend a hand where you can. Keep your eye on the greater good. Build a better world. Public display of attention is not required; it may be counter-productive or even refused. The satisfaction comes from participation, achievement and results.

From one end of Canada to another, standing out is different things to different people. Standing out can be something like throwing your hat in the ring to run for the nomination in your political riding. Standing out can be competing for a Canadian championship in curling. Standing out can be being the barbecue king/queen of the family. Standing out can be being the valedictorian for your class. Standing out can be being the best snow angel on your block making sure that all the homes owned by seniors and those less able have their walks shoveled clear of snow. Standing out can be taking on an executive position in an organization you support.

Standing out does not mean that what you do comes with applause. It does not mean that your community is going to put on a parade in your honour. Standing out means taking ownership for a concern or a cause. Standing out means putting yourself into a position of leadership. Standing out means accepting the role of mentor. Standing out means volunteering your gifts of service to lead. Standing out can

mean you are extending yourself past the boundaries of your comfort zone especially if your standing out attracts unwarranted criticism. The court of public opinion can be cruel as well as warm with praise.

Through years of observation spread across numerous venues across the country, it would seem that standing out Canadian-style does not mean blowing your own horn never mind blowing so hard that all those within earshot are deafened by the sheer noise of it all...tuning out the message. Standing out means finding a way to deliver your message with simultaneous impact and respect. Standing out means taking responsibility for your actions while carrying them out peacefully with dignity.

Is it okay to take steps to stand out? Whatever you say, the odds are that if you don't, someone else will. When you stand out, people will notice you are creating influence. When you stand out as a role model, people want to join your tribe. Whether you are in a profession or a trade, whether you are an entrepreneur or an employee, whether you are applying for a job or you are running for election, you are in a competition for space to practice your skills. If you don't find a way to stand out, how do you expect to come out on top? If you don't stand out, can you expect to lead?

What's the next one thing you will do to stand out? Pick your identity. Will that be the person you have been, the person you are now or the person you intend to be in the future? Is it your intention to stand out as a business owner? Is it your intention to stand out in your family or your community? In your city or town? In your province or territory? Is it your intention to stand out in the country or around the world? Will that be a slam-dunk burst of success as an entrepreneur or will it be something you build deliberately over time? Fast or slow, the amount of time you take is up to you. Choose your

challenge. Devise your plan. Set your course.

It was Pablo Picasso who said, “Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success.”

\* \* \*

### **It was Prairie Day 62. What else could he accomplish in the next 28 days?**

Albert had big plans. Albert decided he would lead the charge to build a school near his homestead for the children to attend. It might seem a little too early to build the school because there were no children in the community as yet. But Albert felt the sooner the school is built the better...if he was to have a say in the matter.

Everybody knows that every school needs a bell and Albert knew that he could get a bell for the school shipped from Montreal. He also wanted to order a piano for the school. Not today.

First things first. The next time he made the trip to town he would inquire where the land was set aside to build the school nearest to his homestead.

In the meantime, he was getting the well dug. It was part of the contract for marrying Anna. Vlad stopped by to lend a hand most afternoons after daily chores. it was too dangerous to dig the well without a rope around his waist and without a spotter who could rescue him if something went wrong.

Shoring the sides of the well with boards to keep the well from caving in on him was a critical step. It was time-consuming but necessary. It helped having Vlad’s advice every step of the way.

He had never dug a well before or even seen it done. It also helped to have Vlad haul up the pails of soil by rope the deeper he got. Hopefully, he would reach the water table before he ran out of rope.

It was Prairie Day 79. The well would soon be finished. Albert drew a handkerchief from his pocket to wipe the sweat from his brow and called to Vlad to pull him to the surface. He checked the time and examined the inscription:

*Keep time*

*Make time*

Albert may not have broken even so much as an acre of sod but he would have a roof over his head for the winter and he would have water for his horse. He was pleased with his progress. Life was good.

Abram would come to know he had successfully dug the well when he would go to Rosthern to collect the pump.

## 9 From Entrepreneur to Leader

Challengers inspire us to take giant steps  
long before we might ever become giants.

Donna Dahl

**A**lbert believed his future children deserved to have access to an education. While he could teach them enough to write their name, count and do a little mental arithmetic, this was not enough. He had seen firsthand when he was in England and in Montreal that learning opened doors. It was the learned ones who were working with their minds and not taxing their bodies with the rigors of heavy labour. Albert, himself, had finished six years of school back in Russia. He had learned to read books in Russian and he was already reasonably functional in speaking English.

If his future children were to have access to an education, there would need to be a school nearby. When Albert paid a visit to the township administrator, he learned that four plots of land in the township had been designated as property upon which a school could be built. He also learned that each school in the district would need a teacher and an elected school board that would hire the teacher.

Albert decided to step up and volunteer to head the project of building a school. He put the word out every chance he had.

It did not matter to Albert if any other members of the community shared his vision to build a school. What was important to him was that he was going to be better able to make life here on his homestead attractive to Anna if there was a place for worship and a place for their children to attend school. At least, that's what he told himself. He was committed to making Canada his home and he would find a way.

It was early July. It was Albert's Prairie Day 103. Two homesteaders with farms nearby showed up on the day he turned the sod to begin the construction. One of them said that he had a small pot belly stove that he could donate to the school to help keep the children warm. And so the construction of the school began. When they could agree on the size of the school and the layout for the doors and windows, they began to make a list of the materials they needed to complete the project. The more that could be rummaged from the other homesteaders in the community, the less they would need to purchase. They would have to do more than pool their money and pool their resources. Maybe there was a way that they could attract more help. They made a plan.

Albert wanted to have a firm handle on the construction of the school before he and Anna were wed. Having a school could be a center of social activity for the homesteaders around him. He thought it would help Anna to connect to his community. If she could make connections with some of the other homesteaders, she would have an easier time adjusting to being away from her family. And in the distant recesses of his mind, Albert thought it might give him added reason to play his violin.

\* \* \*

**So what does standing out have to do with leadership? What if you chose not to stand out? Could you still lead?**

I am reminded of the tortoise in Aesop's Fable about the tortoise and the hare. Tortoise chose to challenge his challenger. Issuing the challenge to race against Hare set him apart from his peers. It was a spontaneous "put up or shut up" kind of move. It was not what he intended. He never meant to say anything. It just happened. Yet, there he was. Could Tortoise alone lead the charge for peace for his neighbours? If he could do so, he would surely make a difference. The day-to-day aggravation would come to an end. That would be personally rewarding for him. Could Tortoise pull it off? His integrity demanded it.

Bryce Courtney, author of *The Power of One*, is quoted as having said, "The power of one is above all things the power to believe in yourself, often well beyond any latent ability you may have previously demonstrated."

In another quote, "Life opens up opportunities to you, and you either take them or you stay afraid of taking them." Those are the words of comedian Jim Carrey.

Leading means committing. Taking a leadership role is a commitment—a promise—to those served that the goal will be achieved. It acts as the conveyor belt that helps transform the experience from idea or dream all the way to fulfillment. Leading is not leading without there being followers, and it is the followers that will seek to be mentored by the one setting the example. It was Albert Schweitzer who is credited with having said, "Example is leadership."

What else do leaders do? Is there more to leadership than leading by example? Leadership is a popular topic. There is much written on the subject. You could spend days online or seated in a library reading about leadership. Douglas R. Conant, in a blog article on leadership, cites that there are

seven things that separate leaders from the rest. Leaders practice trusting in order to gain trust, they have a unique blend of caring for people while sticking to their guns to get the job done, they have a clearly articulated plan and that plan includes participatory engagement to achieve success... often beyond expectations.

In short, leaders not only empower themselves but they empower others to believe they can. Leaders empower others to get the job done. Leaders motivate, challenge and inspire.

Leadership may be claimed but unless a leader identity is granted by others, it has no inherent value. In “Developing as a Leader: The Power of Mindful Engagement”, an article published in Science Direct, the authors Susan J. Ashford and D. Scott DeRue report: “A claim of leadership by itself does not result in a leader identity. A leader identity must be granted by others for it to be internalized, recognized and endorsed by other individuals and the organization more broadly.”

Can you dress the part to get the part of leader? According to Ashford and DeRue in the same article, looking the part may make a difference. Certain styles of dress “elicit perceptions of power and status. After all, there is a reason that male political figures and senior executives are often dressed in dark suits and red ties at important functions—because research suggests that this particular attire is associated with power and leadership.”

Is there a uniform for authority? Is there a uniform for conformity? Is there a dress code that deserves to be followed in the workplace? Does the uniform of business translate into more success? More attention? More respect? As the leader, your guidance will foster the standard you prefer to be followed.

As stated above, a claim of leadership by itself does not result in a leader identity. Just because you might think of yourself

as being a leader, it does not mean that others agree with you.

Do you relate to the leadership qualities in others? Could you be rewarding leadership qualities in others when you offer up applause? To me, applause is a special form of praise and recognition. It’s a special expression of thanks from the audience for having taken the step to stand out. In a way, we are applauding a leader when we read their blog or buy their book...when we watch their video or attend their seminar... when we quote a passage or share their social media post.

Being a leader and standing out is more than a logo...more than a brand. Being a leader and standing out happens due to many things that may not necessarily be visible or self-evident. Consider the items in the following list of potential identifiers:

Actions

Advocacies

Attire

Beliefs

Commitment

Community

Consistency

Contributions

Credibility

Followers

Goals

Identity

Influence

Mannerisms

Neighbourliness

Persuasion

Philanthropy

Position

Purpose

Quotes

Reciprocity

Resiliency

Service

Title

Transparency

Trust

Values

Think of someone whom you regard as a leader. Perhaps you consider that person to be a mentor. Does that person reveal characteristics of service to others, for instance, or reciprocity? The presence of these or the lack thereof will have influence over your own ability to lead. Being a leader and standing out can be about talent and achievements that go beyond the accepted norms.

Leading and standing out can be about being recognized in your own community by your peers—your “fellow man”—for the work you do and/or the contribution you make. Leading and standing out as a leader may occur as a result of the accomplishments you have achieved and the leadership you have shown. It is important to be attentive and mindful as a leader not only in terms of getting things done but also in terms of the way in which things get done.

Taking on a role as leader triggers questions about personal motives. The court of public opinion will have its say. How do we know? A leader is often subjected to criticism and objection but may also be the perfect breath of fresh air needed in response to an issue. When people agree with your vision and they are eager to be a part of your team, they may choose to follow you. They may like your social media presence and they may share your posts. When you have a group of loyal followers, it may be said that you now have your very own community.

When you stand out, your core values come to the forefront. What you believe and what you say stands to become as naked as the Emperor who had no clothes. Some are more comfortable with the increased attention than others.

Being a standout entrepreneur may not give you acclaim. Being a standout entrepreneur may not make you rich or bring you awards. Standing out may be more a function of what you communicate from within than standing out in comparison to others around you. Commit anyway. Demonstrate your commitment by walking the walk and talking the talk. Commitment is like conviction. It’s the fuel that drives your passion. What’s your level of conviction in your success?

Ethics, values, beliefs, and practices do matter. When you believe in yourself to move mountains, your energy can get mobilized and things start to happen. Belief can be like a battery with an unlimited supply of vigour. When you practice gratitude, energy gets amplified. When you practice advocacy, you are in a position to simultaneously build projects, build teams and inspire future leaders.

Your ability to lead comes from within you. It starts with believing in yourself as a leader. Take the plunge. Test the waters. Start your business. Accept the nomination. Let your name stand. Volunteer to chair a committee. Enter

competitions. Get your name out there. Will you be named to the top 40 under 40? Top 7 over 70? Small business of the year? Woman of Inspiration? You may not be able to control the outcome of a contest but if you never enter, you most certainly will never win.

It was Tommy Douglas, veteran politician, former premier of Saskatchewan, and father of universal healthcare in Canada, who once said, “We should never, never be afraid or ashamed about dreams...Where people have no dreams and no hopes and aspirations, life becomes a dull and a meaningless wilderness”. My slogan is “Dream. Dare. Do.”. I challenge you to dream. I challenge you to set your example. I challenge you to step forward and stand out.

\* \* \*

**WHEN THEY WERE** married in the spring of 1900, Albert and Anna received a team of two Percheron Horses as a wedding gift from Anna’s family. Albert felt like he had become the wealthiest man alive on that day. He was on cloud nine. Not only had he married the most beautiful woman he could have imagined to be his wife but he could now speed up his timeline to receive the deed to his land. He would be able to use his first horse for getting around without fear that he was putting his farming operation at risk and Anna was free to take the horse and cart for a ride. He would be able to break more sod faster than ever and he could repay Vlad for his kindness with time and labour in kind.

Gratitude flowed through Albert’s thoughts like a fast-flowing river. He reached for the fob, withdrew his pocket watch from his vest and visited the engraving on the back: "Keep time. Make time". Things were working out.

Albert had a way about him that seemed to work when it came time to get things done. He was able to get that school built and

he was able to get that barn built at the school. With the barn, the children would be able to ride their horses to school and give the horses shelter for the day.

What was special about the school to Albert was the iron bell that was shipped by rail from Montreal. It had come to Canada from England by ship. It was Albert who had volunteered to collect the donations for the purchase of the bell. It now hung, stately and strong, in the steeple-like structure above the entry to the school. When the bell was rung, it could be heard for miles. The community now had a home for worship, for meetings, for dances and parties and weddings. It was a start.

Albert sat on the first school board as a trustee and helped hire the first teacher. That first teacher was his wife, Anna. She loved children and she was perfect for the job. While there were no books at first, all the learning took place by rote memory. It seemed well enough in the beginning as Anna was still learning how to write English herself.

Albert became a recognized leader of the community. His plan to follow the construction of the school with the construction of a church was supported without hesitation. The school had become too small for the members of the community to use for worship and the furniture was not very conducive to adult use.

When the time came for Albert to build his barn, the whole community of nearby homesteaders showed up with hammers, saws and ropes to get the job done. Albert thought it was the finest example of a barn-raising he had yet experienced. He was finding his way to give to his community as well as to receive. You should have seen his smile.

\* \* \*

**Have you read Seth Godin's *Purple Cow*? This book title alone sends a powerful message. Godin's work as an author writing books about marketing has an established reputation. My take on his book? *Purple Cow* is his way of saying how can one cow stand out in a whole herd of cows that all look the same? It's a great question. If you intend to stand out, will you do that with distinction? Will you do that with fanfare, with silence, or will you be content to be just a little mauve? Purple or mauve, red or a pale shade of grey, you set the magnitude of the target.**

There is standing out and then there is standing out. Is it safe to say that you, the reader, want to stand out in some way? You may already stand out. You may be the family go-to person. Your name may be well-known in your home community or your enterprise may have expanded its footprint beyond your borders and celebrated internationally.

Having a leader mindset, you strive to be your best. You strive to give your best. You strive to do your best. The list of others who do things that are similar to what you do may be long. No matter. You are unique. Some of you may have chosen to be inspired by successful competitors. Some of you may have mentors and some of you may have a plan entirely of your own making. The odds may be against you to be standing out...but not insurmountable...not hopeless. Standing out for some of you may be short lived but even though standing out may not be a permanent position of status, that's okay. If you want to be a leader, it's important to take your turn.

Is it your goal to stand out? Choose your platform. Choose your audience. Choose what sets you apart—what you do that is unlike all the others who do what you are doing. Describe your uniqueness. Focus your energies. Connect. Communicate with your supporters. Step forward.

It is not necessary to be an entrepreneur before becoming a

leader. Albert showed he was community-minded long before he harvested his first crop and sold it for profit. Albert's commitment contributed to his advantage. He volunteered. His efforts captured attention.

Engage your audience. Begin the conversation. Open discussion in a mutually relatable debate. Relate to your followers. Invite ideas and contributions. When you embrace dialogue, you are connecting with the people who are your potential customers. Give them reasons to count on you. Give them reasons to choose you. Give them reasons to work with you and be loyal to you.

## Epilogue

We make a living by what we get,  
but we make a life by what we give.

Winston Churchill

I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do  
know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are  
those who have sought and found how to serve.

Albert Schweitzer

Effective leadership is not mandating sweeping changes  
but encouraging others to step beyond  
their comfort zone and accept challenges.

Thomas A. Wilson

You never change your life  
until you step out of your comfort zone;  
change begins at the end of your comfort zone.

Roy T. Bennett

One has but to turn attention to the prairie skies in the fall of the  
year to see flocks of Canada Geese flying in formation. The geese  
were there in the time of Albert and they are there today. Their

system for moving large multitudes of birds during migration is nothing short of astounding. They take turns at leadership and they take turns taking a more passive role. Every member of the team gets to practice being a team player and also a team leader. Every leader gets to take a break from being at the helm.

To get to that distinctive vee formation in the sky, every goose must learn how to fly. The parent geese are usually charged with the responsibility of teaching the intricacies of flight to this year's hatchlings.

Not on this day. What I am about to share with you is something I learned on the fly, so to speak. I learned about being open to recognizing and appreciating the gifts that may arrive during the unexpected. The particular event to which I will draw your attention took place while being on the observation deck during Goose Ground School at a nearby golf course.

Goose Ground School you ask? You don't mean ground school for geese, do you? Is there such a thing?

My husband and I were golfing at a Par 3 not far from our home. At Hole No. 5 we encountered a pond about 30 meters (100 feet long) and about 10 meters (30 feet wide) filled with dozens of this year's goslings swimming in it. Something seemed odd. All these geese in the water at one time didn't look like one of those mommy goose and daddy goose times when the parents were out for a leisurely swim with their offspring.

This was more like a flock made up entirely of young geese appearing to be swimming in unison...well, more or less in unison...moving across the water from one end of the pond to the other. Some of the geese were fast and some were slow and some needed extra time to get upright after turning somersaults in the water. Sound interesting? The synchrony of the geese swimming together...or trying to...caught our attention so we joined the crowd of pairs of spectator parent geese that had gathered around the pond...and we watched. After all, a few minutes of distraction

from our game of golf couldn't hurt.

We noted that when the young geese moved across the pond from one end to the other, they appeared to be following a lead goose and imitating what the lead goose was doing.

When moving in one direction, they seemed to be floating like hovercraft across the pond without moving their wings or creating even so much as a ripple in the water. When they arrived at the edge of the shoreline, some would simply turn around in preparation to go back the way they came. Some would attempt underwater acrobatics, where more often than not, they would tip over sideways scrambling to keep upright with their heads above the waterline and feet in the water. It was funny to watch them trying to carve out a space for themselves, not unlike trying to make a space for yourself in a crowded line dance or Zumba class.

When the geese were in position in the water and comfortably separated, the leader began flapping his wings and making noise until all the student geese were following along. Then they began to move across the water with webbed feet propelling them as though they were getting ready to walk on water. When the lead goose reached the other end of the pond, the flapping stopped. The bodies of the goslings gently settled into the water as they turned around and headed back to the other side of the pond—gliding in silence in preparation to repeat the exercise. This went on several more times as we watched.

We came to the conclusion that there was only one explanation for what we were seeing. This had to be Goose Ground School. The geese born this year were being groomed for independent flight. They were being trained in important goose migration skills like formation take-off, wind-direction assessment and wing muscle-mass development. When the instructor goose leading the pack thought the students had had enough practice for one day, flight class abruptly ended with all the student geese stepping out of the water to join their parents for grazing snacks.

I wish I had had my phone with me so I could have recorded the whole event. How many times have you said, “I wish I had...or “I wish I would have....?”

It takes a particular mindset to be open to observe the gift that appears in only that one single optimum moment. Being able to attend a preflight lesson at Goose Ground School that day was an unexpected pleasure. No one minded that we took a few extra minutes at Hole No. 5 to savour the sight.

What does stopping to watch Goose Ground School have to do with Entrepreneurship? For me it all boils down to being open to with mindfulness for the unexpected gifts that show up from time to time. Sometimes those gifts are happening right before our eyes and sometimes they arrive in the form of shared experience through story or song. Opportunities for Entrepreneurship are everywhere. If you live life on the sidelines, you will never learn to fly. Sometimes you have to get your feet wet and take part.

Sometimes you can give recognition as a member of the audience. Your heartfelt applause for the contributions of others can have influence. When others share their experience with us, we can expand our own experience exponentially without actually having to climb Mount Everest or swim Lake Erie. When others allow us to peek through their window to see inside their world, we grow and gain insight.

Sometimes in business and in life that’s all it takes—a coach, a teacher, a mentor—someone who will share their experience and enrich our abilities to take advantage of life’s unexpected gifts. Sometimes it’s that light-bulb idea or that rare opportunity that opens a door or shows the way along a new path. What books do you read? Is there someone whose podcasts you follow? Do you belong to a business networking group? When is the last time you took a mentor to lunch?

Create your own version of a business flight school. Take advantage of opportunities to mentor and be mentored. Take a

class. Join a mastermind group. Buy a book that inspires you. Hire a coach. Have coffee with a peer and share experiences. Attend a webinar. Set up an information interview with someone you admire. Volunteer. Teach a class. Seize opportunities to share your expertise.

Plan for tomorrow. Do something that takes you out of your comfort zone with a view to being more personally empowered. Albert did. You can, too.

# Bibliography

Alberta Culture and Community Spirit, Historic Resources Management Branch. "Alberta Register of Historic Places." Government of Alberta Hermitis (Heritage Resources Management Information System) ©1995-2019. <https://hermitis.alberta.ca/ARHP/Details.aspx?DeptID=1&ObjectID=4665-0627>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Ashford, Susan J. and DeRue, D. Scott, "Developing as a leader: The power of mindful engagement." Science Direct Vol. 41, issue 2, Pages 146-154. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/organizational-dynamics/vol/41/issue/2>. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Bill Waiser. "History Matters: This Worse than useless telegraph line." Saskatoon Star Phoenix, updated 01 March 2016. <https://thestarphoenix.com/opinion/columnists/history-matters-this-worse-than-useless-telegraph-line>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Breaking Talents Showcase. Angel City Chorale Choir with "AFRICA AWESOME America's Got Talent 2018 Audition AGT, S13E06, YouTube., 10 July 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3wwqgoQwFE>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Brendan Daly. "Facts about Great Famine emigration out of Ireland revealed." Irish Central, 24 Jan. 2017. <https://www.irishcentral.com/news/new-facts-about-great-famine-emigration-out-of-ireland-revealed-139540423-237788421>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Bryce Courtney. "The Power of One Quotes." Goodreads. <https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/649656-the-power-of-one>. Accessed 16 Nov. 2019.

CBC Digital Archives. "1956: Hungarian refugees welcomed to Canada." CBC Radio-Canada, 16 Dec. 1956. <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/hungarian-refugees-welcomed-to-canada-in-1956>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Christian Cassidy. "B.C. Mills' kit Bank of Commerce in Elkhorn is closing." West End Dumplings Blog, 27 Feb. 2017. <https://westenddumplings.blogspot.com/search?q=mills+kit+bank>. Accessed 21 Nov. 2019.

CIBN. CIBN Leadership Summit. 24 Oct. 2018. <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=ng8wh6cab&oeidk=a07efm2n1hsef8ed84d>. Accessed 21 Nov. 2019.

City of Saskatoon History and Archives. "History." <https://www.saskatoon.ca/community-culture-heritage/saskatoon-history-archives/history>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Cohen, Herb. You Can Negotiate Anything. Lyle Stuart Inc., 1980.

Dahl, Donna. Demystifying Marketing: Bridging the Gap Between You and Your Customer. Ma Ko Ye Marketing, 2008

Dahl, Donna. Lessons I Learned from the Tortoise: Reflections on speed, tenacity and competition in life and in business. Ma Ko Ye Marketing, 2012.

David Baxter. "Southern Sask. bank to close after more than 100 years in business." Global News, a division of Corus Entertainment Inc. Posted 10 July 2017 and Updated 11 July 2017. <https://globalnews.ca/news/3588695/southern-sask-bank-to-close-after-more-100-years-in-business>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Davin Hiskey. "Post-it notes were invented by accident." Today I Found Out, 09 Nov. 2011. <https://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2011/11/post-it-notes-were-invented-by-accident/>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Denise Chow. "Donna Strickland's long journey from laser jock to third woman ever to win physics Nobel." Mach Science, 4 Oct. 2018. <https://www.nbcnews.com/mach/science/donna-strickland-s-long-journey-laser-jock-third-woman-ever-ncna916451>. Accessed 7 Nov. 2019.

Douglas R. Conant. "What Do Great Leaders Have in Common?" Conant Leadership under Leadership Inspiration, 14 Sept. 2017. <https://conantleadership.com/what-do-great-leaders-have-in-common/>. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019

Explore Your World. "Jeremy Wade Returns To Animal Planet In All-New Series 'Jeremy Wade's Mighty Rivers.'" Discovery Newsroom. 5 March 2018. <https://corporate.discovery.com/discovery-newsroom/jeremy-wade-returns-to-animal-planet-in-all-new-series-jeremy-wades-mighty-rivers/>. Accessed 11 Nov. 2019.

G. E. Mills and D. W. Holdsworth. "The B.C. Mills Prefabricated System: The Emergence of Ready-made Buildings in Western Canada." ParksCanada, 24 Oct. 2006. <http://parkscanadahistory.com/series/chs/14/chs14-2g.htm>. Accessed 21 Nov. 2019.

Godin, Seth. Purple Cow. Penguin, 2002.

Hadfield, Chris. "An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth: What Going to Space Taught Me About Ingenuity, Determination, and Being Prepared for Anything." Random House Canada, 2013.

Hadfield, Chris. Space Sessions: Songs From a Tin Can. Warner Music CA, 2015.

Jaworski, Joseph. Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996, p. 182.

Jeremy Norman. "Morse Transmits the First Message by Morse Code 5/24/1844." Hook & Norman, Origins of Cyberspace (2002) no. 208. <http://www.historyofinformation.com/expanded.php?id=551>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Jim Carrey. "Jim Carrey Quotes." Brainy Quotes, Copyright 2001-2019. [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/jim\\_carrey\\_411027](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/jim_carrey_411027). Accessed 16 Nov. 2019.

Josh Linkner, "The 21 Most Creative Job Titles." Forbes, 04 Dec. 2014. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshlinkner/2014/12/04/the-21-most-creative-job-titles/#181508293335> Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Kalbach, Warren E. "Population of Canada". The Canadian Encyclopedia, 28 March 2019, Historica Canada. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/population> Accessed 20 Nov. 2019.

Kevin Weedmark. "Future of building central issue at Elkhorn CIBC meeting." The World Spectator, 06 Feb. 2017. [http://www.world-spectator.com/news\\_story.php?id=371](http://www.world-spectator.com/news_story.php?id=371). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Lacey Mason. "Why Witty Job Titles Are All the Rage." Brazen Life Neighbor, 25 Nov. 2013. [https://patch.com/washington/renton/why-witty-job-titles-are-all-the-rage\\_45970f2a\\_2](https://patch.com/washington/renton/why-witty-job-titles-are-all-the-rage_45970f2a_2). Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Lambert, Maude-Emmanuelle. "Canadian Response to the "Boat People" Refugee Crisis". The Canadian Encyclopedia, 03 May 2019, Historica Canada. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-response-to-boat-people-refugee-crisis> . Accessed 20 November 2019.

Library and Archives Canada. "Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/land-grants-western-canada.aspx>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Mayo Clinic Staff. "Water: How much should you drink every day?" Healthy Lifestyle, 06 Sept. 2017. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-lifestyle/hutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/water/art-20044256>. Accessed 11 Nov. 2019

Napoleon Hill, "Napoleon Hill's Mastermind Principle." Mastermind Success Alliance, 25 Dec 2014. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e\\_KTQBoctQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e_KTQBoctQ). Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.

National Archives of Canada. "Advertising for Immigrants to Western Canada 1870 to 1930." <https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/hist/advertis/ads2-03e.html>. Accessed 07 Nov. 2019.

News Page. "Canada meets target to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees." Associated Press in Toronto, 01 March 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/01/canada-target-resettle-25000-syrian-refugees>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2019

Nobel Foundation. "Nobel Prize in Physics 2018: Groundbreaking inventions in the field of laser physics." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 02 Oct. 2018. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/10/181002091942.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/10/181002091942.htm). Accessed 19 Nov. 2019.

PDF. "How to Read Range Road and Township signs." County of Wetaskiwin. <https://www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca/DocumentCenter/View/439/How-to-Read-Township--Range-Road-Signage-PDF>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

PDF. "Railway Station types." station types – Province of Manitoba.

<https://www.gov.mb.ca> > internal\_reports > pdfs > railway\_stations\_types. Accessed 20 Nov. 2019.

Penny Street. "Our BC Mills Legacy. Heritage Vancouver Newsletter, Volume 15 Number 5, November/December 2006. [http://www.heritagevancouver.org/pdf\\_newsletter/hvs-news-2006-05-screen.pdf](http://www.heritagevancouver.org/pdf_newsletter/hvs-news-2006-05-screen.pdf). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Sears Archives. "Historic Homes." <http://www.searsarchives.com/homes/1908-1914.htm>. Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.

Speaking Page, "He has spoken to the world from the biggest stage." <https://chrishadfield.ca/speaking/>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Stanwick, Annette. *Forgiveness: The Mystery and the Miracle*. Heart message Publishing, 2007

Statistics Canada. "Population." Government of Canada. 2018-03-27. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/12-581-x/2018000/pop-eng.htm>. Accessed 14. Nov. 2019.

Survey General of Dominion Lands. "Survey Monuments Chart." ISC. <https://www.isc.ca/About/History/LandSurveys/SurveyMonuments/Pages/SurveyMonumentsChart.aspx>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2019

Telecommunications. "Plug pulled on the world's last commercial electric telegraph system." New Atlas, 17 July 2013. <https://newatlas.com/last-telegraph-message/28314/>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

Television. "Mighty Rivers." <https://jeremywade.co.uk/television>. Accessed 11 Nov. 2019.

Tom Bates. "Everybody Needs a Coach- Eric Schmidt- Google CEO." Fortune, 24 June 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kngyyeMel5c>. Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.

The Arts and Crafts Society. "Sears Roebuck Kit Homes by Year of Introduction – 1908 To 1940." ©1995-2011. <http://www.arts-crafts.com/archive/sears/>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Tom Bates. "Everybody Needs a Coach- Eric Schmidt- Google CEO." Fortune, 24 June 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kngyyeMel5c>. Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.

Tommy Douglas. "Tommy Douglas Quotes." AZ Quotes.com. [https://www.azquotes.com/author/4101-Tommy\\_Douglas](https://www.azquotes.com/author/4101-Tommy_Douglas). Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Canadian Bank of Commerce (Watson, Saskatchewan)." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 15 Sept. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:CiteThisPage&page=Canadian\\_Bank\\_of\\_Commerce\\_%28Watson%2C\\_Saskatchewan%29&id=915802403](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:CiteThisPage&page=Canadian_Bank_of_Commerce_%28Watson%2C_Saskatchewan%29&id=915802403). Accessed 21 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 8 Nov. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:CiteThisPage&page=Canadian\\_Imperial\\_Bank\\_of\\_Commerce&id=925200099](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:CiteThisPage&page=Canadian_Imperial_Bank_of_Commerce&id=925200099). Accessed 21 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Chris Hadfield." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 07 Nov. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris\\_Hadfield](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Hadfield). Accessed 08 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Dominion Lands Act." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 25 Sept. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominion\\_Lands\\_Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominion_Lands_Act). Accessed 20 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Glass fiber." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 08 Nov. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glass\\_fiber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glass_fiber). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Homestead principle." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 02 Oct. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homestead\\_principle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homestead_principle). Accessed 07 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Hungarian Revolution of 1956." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 10 Nov. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian\\_Revolution\\_of\\_1956](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian_Revolution_of_1956). Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Hutong." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 12 Oct. 2019. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hutong>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Nik Wallenda." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 8 Nov. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nik\\_Wallenda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nik_Wallenda). Accessed 21 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Rosthern." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 24 Sept. 2019. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosthern>. Accessed 11 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Sears Catalog Home." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 27 Sep. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sears\\_Catalog\\_Home](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sears_Catalog_Home). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Siheyuan." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 12 Oct. 2019. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siheyuan>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2019.

Wikipedia contributors. "Visiting card." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 13 Oct. 2019. [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:CiteThisPage&page=Visiting\\_card&id=921057436](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:CiteThisPage&page=Visiting_card&id=921057436). Accessed 10 Nov. 2019.

World Population. "Canada Population." Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/canada-population/>. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Ziglar, Zig. *Secrets of Closing the Sale: For Anyone Who Must Get Others to Say Yes*. The Berkley Publishing Group, 1984

# Index

## A

acre 109  
 acres 33, 57  
 advantage 10, 74, 121, 126  
 advantages 65, 78  
 alphabet 42  
 apples 49  
 April 5, 38, 47  
 axes 2

## B

B2B 56  
 bath 47, 62, 102  
 beacon 58  
 bedroll 46  
 beer 44  
 bell 86, 108, 119  
 benches 37  
 blessings 97  
 boards 48, 80, 82, 108  
 boots 25, 46, 63  
 border 33, 41, 104  
 borders 120  
 brand 23, 35, 36, 37, 38, 50, 51  
 BRAND 35  
 British 51, 80, 87  
 business vi, 5, 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, 19, 20,  
 21, 22, 28, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40,  
 45, 48, 49, 50, 52, 56, 57, 58, 61,  
 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 69, 75, 76, 99,  
 100, 107, 114, 117, 118, 126,  
 136, 137, 139  
 Business 36, 56

## C

camaraderie 68

Camaraderie 137  
 campaign 5, 10, 78  
 Canada vi, 4, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 24, 31,  
 32, 33, 35, 40, 41, 47, 51, 53, 59,  
 73, 78, 79, 86, 90, 97, 105, 106,  
 112, 118, 119, 123, 139  
 Canadian 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 14, 24, 29, 31,  
 32, 41, 49, 51, 57, 62, 80, 104,  
 105, 106, 136, 137  
 catalogue 51, 76, 80  
 celebrity 36  
 cell 45  
 chair 21, 64  
 chairs 61  
 Chamber 28, 56  
 chickens 47, 62  
 church 16, 56, 95, 119  
 coach 13, 22, 24, 66, 90, 94, 126, 127,  
 139  
 Coach 26  
 coaching 13  
 coffee 75, 127  
 commitment 52, 55, 57, 60, 61, 95,  
 117, 137  
 Commitment 53, 57, 62, 63, 115  
 committee 70  
 Committee 68  
 community 3, 11, 19, 32, 38, 40, 41,  
 43, 46, 49, 54, 55, 57, 65, 74, 75,  
 76, 77, 78, 89, 100, 106, 107,  
 112, 116, 119, 120, 121  
 Community 115  
 courage 13, 68, 70  
 customer 37, 39, 48, 50, 69

## D

dahs 43

dits 43  
 domain 15, 36, 70  
 Dominion 32, 33  
 door 37, 47, 49, 63, 69, 70, 71, 76, 78,  
 82, 83, 126  
 Door 2  
 dream 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 60, 63,  
 90, 92, 137  
 Dream 99, 108, 118

## E

east 2, 33, 41, 71, 90  
 eggs 17, 63, 72, 103  
 employees 57, 60, 64, 86  
 empowerment 13, 68, 69, 139  
 Empowerment 26  
 entrepreneur 117, 121  
 Entrepreneur 111  
 Entrepreneurship 126  
 Europe 91  
 European 38

## F

failure 63, 64  
 failures 6  
 farm 3, 7, 14, 15, 25, 31, 32, 44  
 farming 3, 4, 7, 17, 31, 46, 71, 118  
 feather 91, 101  
 floorboards 73  
 fob 102, 118  
 footprint 10, 81, 120  
 foreman's 41

## G

geese 7, 124, 125  
 Geese 123  
 golf 124, 125  
 golfers 64  
 government 31, 32, 47, 104  
 Government 2, 49

grain 7, 15, 31, 41, 51, 85  
 gratitude 117, 136  
 Gratitude 118  
 grid 32, 40

## H

Halifax 1, 53  
 harvest 6, 7, 95  
 harvested 121  
 health 10, 13, 54, 61, 137  
 history vi, 9, 11, 19, 32, 33, 36, 41, 43,  
 103, 104, 136  
 homestead 1, 2, 4, 16, 29, 32, 33, 41,  
 44, 47, 48, 51, 59, 66, 70, 91, 95,  
 97, 108, 112  
 Homestead 2, 82  
 homesteader 1, 4, 6, 24, 29, 59, 106  
 homesteaders 1, 3, 37  
 Homesteaders 15  
 horse 2, 5, 25, 31, 38, 44, 46, 47, 48,  
 49, 52, 57, 70, 89, 92, 95, 103,  
 109, 118  
 hotel 1, 41, 47  
 house 1, 18, 25, 31, 33, 37, 38, 41, 43,  
 44, 47, 52

## I

ice 24  
 identity 13, 17, 19, 20, 22, 36, 37, 105,  
 107, 114  
 Identity 115  
 Internet 34, 35, 36, 45, 58, 62, 104

## J

job 19, 21, 22, 23, 27, 37, 60, 73, 107,  
 114, 119

## K

kit 80, 93  
 knife 83, 91

**L**

latrine 92  
 leadership 8, 70, 106, 113, 116, 123, 124  
 Leadership 27, 138  
 legacy 14  
 letter 14, 42, 53, 103  
 lumber 44, 47, 48, 57, 66, 82, 95

**M**

management 21, 37, 62  
 Manitoba 32  
 marriage 50, 57, 87, 94, 102, 137  
 master 69  
 mastermind 55, 94, 127, 139  
 Mastermind 65  
 mentor 65, 90, 106, 116, 126  
 mentors 120  
 mile 32, 33, 63  
 Mills 80  
 mindful 62, 74, 75, 76, 100  
 Mindful 114  
 Montreal 1, 41, 53, 62, 108, 111, 119  
 Morse 42, 43  
 mother 1, 16, 17, 53, 91, 95, 97, 99, 102  
 Mounted 1, 31, 41  
 muffs 16, 63

**N**

neighbour 5, 31, 53, 63, 70  
 networking 22, 55, 56, 69, 78, 79, 126  
 Nobel 11, 12, 86  
 NUANS 36

**O**

opportunities 35, 60, 105, 113  
 Opportunities 126  
 opportunity 70

**P**

padlock 83, 91, 92  
 PAIRSGolf 137  
 pancakes 55, 101  
 pencil 53  
 persistence 6, 49  
 platform 1, 13, 36, 101, 120  
 platforms 36  
 plow 1, 2, 31  
 poles 42  
 police 31  
 post 32, 46, 76  
 potatoes 48, 57, 104  
 prairie 1, 2, 3, 25, 31, 32, 39, 42, 44, 48, 53, 79, 81, 85, 123, 137  
 Prairie 5, 25, 47, 83, 92, 108, 109, 112  
 prairies 42  
 proverb 66, 97, 136  
 Proverb 77, 99  
 province 54, 88, 107

**R**

railroad 31, 32, 38, 51  
 Railroad 41  
 range 33, 77, 94  
 RCMP 31  
 reciprocity 75, 77, 81, 136, 137  
 Reciprocity 73, 76, 116  
 reputation 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 62, 120  
 ribbons 33  
 risk 16, 35, 37, 39, 48, 76, 103, 118  
 river 55, 62, 118  
 River 33, 41, 54  
 road 25, 38, 50, 54, 79, 94, 100  
 Road 33  
 Rosthern 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 57, 82, 92, 94, 109  
 Russia 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 15, 17, 24, 29, 31, 47, 57, 60, 91, 103, 111

**S**

Saskatchewan 2, 32, 38, 41, 136, 139  
 Saskatoon 1, 38, 41, 43, 46, 53, 66  
 sausage 63, 72  
 sawmill 41, 44, 80  
 school 108, 111, 112, 119, 126  
 School 124, 125, 126  
 Scott 114  
 section 33, 41  
 seed 3, 6, 7, 48  
 shelter 4, 37, 46, 82, 92, 119  
 shelters 48  
 sign 15, 58  
 sod 4, 25, 109, 112, 118  
 solopreneur 23, 64, 94  
 station 1, 25, 31, 39, 41, 43, 44, 47  
 Station 12, 37, 38  
 suit 16, 59, 83, 102, 105  
 suitcase 1  
 survey 2  
 Survey 32  
 system 13, 32, 33, 40, 43, 51, 75, 77, 80, 124

**T**

tar 82  
 team 7, 53, 55, 60, 65, 66, 74, 94, 117, 118, 124  
 telegraph 37, 41, 42, 43, 47, 52  
 television 11, 12, 18, 51, 86, 90  
 tent 63, 83, 91  
 tents 2  
 testimonials 37, 79  
 Thumbs 45  
 ticket 39, 41, 58  
 title 3, 11, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 29, 49, 120  
 Title 116  
 township 32, 33, 39, 111

trademark 100  
 train 1, 25, 29, 31, 33, 38, 39, 41, 44, 46, 51, 91  
 trunk 1, 16, 28, 63, 83, 91, 92, 99, 101, 102, 103

**U**

Ukrainian 25, 63

**V**

vegetables 71  
 vest 16, 102, 118  
 video 12, 39, 115  
 vigilance 50, 60, 136  
 vision 3, 5, 6, 14, 59, 90, 93, 94, 96, 99, 112, 117, 118, 137  
 Vision 85  
 vodka 83, 101  
 voice 4, 13, 21, 29, 46, 97  
 voices 14  
 volunteer 55, 56, 65, 68, 112  
 Volunteer 20, 127

**W**

wagon 2, 66, 70, 72, 96  
 water 10, 25, 32, 33, 52, 54, 61, 63, 87, 100, 103, 106, 109, 124, 125  
 website 6, 13, 34, 36, 58  
 window 47, 71, 72, 82, 88, 89, 92, 126

## Acknowledgments

Thank you to one and all who contributed to the development of this manuscript. From the sharing of the first draft of a few chapters with a select few to all the listeners in the PV Writers Group audience Saturday after Saturday who gave me enthusiastic encouragement to keep writing, I owe a debt of gratitude. I had no idea that my story about entrepreneurship would capture such universal appeal.

Thank you to all those who have read a chapter here or there and said they could not wait to read the rest. Thank you to all those who shared pieces of their Saskatchewan family history to help me weave the fabric that is Albert.

Reflecting on the African proverb cited in this book, it is, indeed, true that if you want to go far, go together. I am grateful for the reassurances I received to write. It was emotional for me to learn that my work on the Canadian content of this manuscript appealed to readers beyond Canadian boundaries.

In the interests of reciprocity, there are numerous individuals and business owners with whom I have made a lasting connection and I wish to acknowledge their mindfulness when it comes to building community. Kerry George is one. As Kerry's business grows, she continues to remain responsive to the needs of her audience. It is her day-to-day vigilance to her business, her willingness to grow with the expansion of the city, and her

vision for successful tomorrows that directs her when serving her community of small business owners who are members of the Canadian Imperial Business Network (CIBN). One of her gifts is developing community. Monica Kretschmer's Woman of Inspiration Awards program has reached national acclaim in celebration of the accomplishments of women. At the time of writing approximately 40 women have been honoured as Women of Inspiration across a diverse set of categories. Her gifts? Camaraderie and recognition as well as philanthropy as she builds her charity, The Nest Foundation. Richard Patterson, CEO of PAIRSGolf, is passionate about giving golfers options about the way they play the game—not unlike using a checkerboard to play both checkers and give-away on the same game board or playing surface. The gift he brings is commitment to expand the sport and a vision for how to help make that happen. When I think of Hassan Nasser of Avalon Hair Salon and Spa, I am reminded of what his father, Mike, contributes to the conversation: “The size of the city does not matter. It’s the size of the community in your heart that matters. Happy customers are loyal customers.” Hassan’s gift? His commitment to be his personal best serving his community by competing on an international level. When Flo Lye comes to mind, I think of the enormous number of hours she has logged in support of conflict resolution. Her skill set is a most suitable marriage with her company, Arrow Comedy Training. Her vision? To support research into the health benefits of comedy as well as providing a fund-raising alternative for the community. Vera Goodman, one of Calgary’s 2017 Top 7 over 70, practices reciprocity on the world stage as an advocate for everyone receiving access to the gift of reading. If Vera’s dream comes true, her concept of the Story Circle Model of Education will become a significant option for learning in schools throughout the world. The sum total of their combined efforts is influential and impactful, and reflects the essence of Canadian prairie business practices well.

Thank you especially to Mark Laurie of Inner Spirit Photography for my author photos. Thank you especially to Donna Gray whose

editorial guidance in the writing of this manuscript was masterful, elegant and powerful. Thank you especially to Kerry George who ignited the inspiration to write this book when she invited me to speak at the Canadian Imperial Business Network (CIBN) Leadership Summit in the fall of 2018. Thank you especially to Laretta Stevens who is my constant and sure-footed technical expert when it comes to making a manuscript into a book. This book would not be a book without her. Thank you especially to my husband, Ron, whose counsel and wisdom I regard with the highest esteem.

## Books also by Donna P. Dahl

Lessons I Learned from the Tortoise:

*Reflections on speed, tenacity and competition  
in life and in business  
(print and eBook versions)*

Demystifying Marketing:

*Bridging the Gap Between You and Your Customer*

Trade Shows

*Marketing your business in less than thirty seconds*

Trade Shows

*Building Your Thirty-Second Business*



## About the Author

Donna P. Dahl, author and empowerment coach, has been recognized not only as a contributor to her community and a valuable business mastermind member but also as a coach's coach and thought leader. She was awarded the Woman of Inspiration Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2016, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 and the International Women's Day 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award for Outstanding Service to Business in 2011.

In all, including her master's thesis, Donna has written nine books. She has also written numerous articles for both print and online publications. She appeared as a weekly show host on the Women's Information Network. She is a popular guest speaker and workshop presenter. *Lessons I Learned From the Tortoise* has received numerous five-star reviews on Amazon. "Albert", as she affectionately refers to this manuscript, is her tenth book.

Donna is a graduate of both the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Alberta. She holds a master's degree in educational psychology and proudly affirms that she was born a Saskatchewan farmer's daughter. Her farming experience is reflected in this book. Donna lives in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

DonnaDahl.ca