

Burke Hedges'
Success X Factor
Positive Change for a Better Life

"Life is not what happens to you, but what you make of it!"

This month I'd like to speak about change. If there is one thing we can depend on, it is that things will change. We can either get mad and resist the change, living our life in misery and unhappiness; or we can be flexible and embrace the changes that occur and look for opportunities that wouldn't otherwise have been there. Which way would you rather live?

Change – or Be Changed

“Change is not an optional thing. We cannot vote and say we want to stop it. In fact, we are changing faster than ever before. But part of the United States’ strength is that it has embraced change.”

-- Bill Gates

Disturbing Trend #1: Manufacturing Jobs are Declining. Employment Projections data indicate that manufacturing employment will decrease 5.4 percent over the 2004-14 period.

Disturbing Trend #2: Job Security is a Thing of the Past. The average American worker will have 10-12 different jobs in 4-5 different career areas during their lifetime.

Disturbing Trend #3: Jobs are being moved offshore. Consulting firm Forrester Research has predicted that, in the next 15 years, 3.3 million U.S. service industry jobs and \$136 billion in wages will move offshore to countries such as India, Russia, China and the Philippines.

What does this mean to you and me? It means that we are just now entering an era of unimaginable changes in our world as we make the transition from the Old Economy of the Industrial Age... to the New Economy of the Information Age.

Some of those changes are going to benefit millions of Americans in the long run, such as breakthroughs in science and medicine. Other changes will hurt millions of Americans working in traditional manufacturing jobs, as global competition and automation whittle away at their jobs.

Warren Bennis, a distinguished professor of business administration at USC, describes how automation and technology will transform manufacturing this way:

“The factory of the future will have only two employees, a man and a dog. The man will be there to feed the dog. The dog will be there to keep the man from touching the equipment.”

Bennis' factory of the future may be an exaggeration, but it certainly drives home my main point. That is, good jobs will be scarce... and life will be rough... for Americans who can't – or won't – make the paradigm shift from thinking of themselves as employees...to thinking of themselves as the company called YOU, INC.

But if you look at this situation from a different perspective, you realize that as technology changes, it creates thousands of opportunities as well. Thousands of people will be hired to produce and install the new technology, marketers will be hired to design packaging, and advertisers will be hired to get the word out.

We are living in a fast-changing world. Whether we like it or not, we do NOT have a lot of control over the external changes in our world. What we do have control over, however, is how we REACT to those external changes. As I see it, the key is to dramatically improve the fair market value of YOU, INC. so that you can take advantage of change, instead of change taking advantage of you!

The great Czech novelist Franz Kafka once said, *“In a fight between you and the world, bet on the world.”* Well, the world is changing.

As management guru Tom Peters put it, and I quote: *“Change is disruptive...But it doesn’t make any difference. You gotta do it anyway. We’re in an era where, literally, to learn to love change is the only survival course.”*

If you are sincere about wanting to dramatically improve your fair market value, you have to get better! And it only stands to reason that in order for you to get better, you must make some changes in your life.

That’s why I always say, *“For things to get better, you have to get better. For things to change, YOU have to change.”*

You know, when it’s all said and done, wouldn’t you agree that most of us are after the same thing? Wouldn’t you agree that we all want to own our own home and drive a nice car? ... we all want freedom to come and go as we please ... we all want financial security ... we all want good health for ourselves and our families ... and we want our kids to get a good education so they can grow up to get their fair share of the American Dream.

If those are some of the things you want out of life, but you’re headed down a road that’s not taking you there, you’ve got to change your direction or your approach, right? In the words of the famous motivational speaker Jim Rohn: *“If you want your next five years to be a whole lot better than your last five years, you’ve got to make some changes in your life.”*

Why not, stop for a moment and ask yourself, “what can I change about me, that will improve my fair market value?” If you’d like some help in making changes that will accelerate your success in achieving your dreams, visit my website at www.burkehedges.com Consider taking the YOU, INC. self-development course.

Seize the day,
Burke Hedges