

Becoming A Legend...

Leadership Advice From The Halls Of Fame

Beacon to Your Business Success.

By Hank Moore, Corporate Strategist™

Are you a legend? Do you admire people who went the distance? Have you celebrated organizations that succeeded? I hope that you are and will continue to be distinctive.

This essay is to give insights into those who leave legacies. The secret to long-term success lies in mapping out the vision and building a body of work that supports it. The art with which we build our careers and our legacy is a journey that benefits many others along the way.

These are the ingredients that make a legend:

- ✓ Significant business contributions
- ✓ Mature confidence and informed judgment
- ✓ Courage and leadership
- ✓ High performance standards
- ✓ Professional innovation
- ✓ Public responsibility
- ✓ Ethics and integrity
- ✓ Cultural contributions
- ✓ Giving to community and charity
- ✓ Visionary abilities
- ✓ Commitment to persons affected (stakeholders)



I have been blessed by receiving several Legend honors. What I remember the most are the ceremonies and the nuggets of wisdom that flowed. The commonality was the zest of giving back the honors to others.

The first was a Rising Star Award, presented to me in 1967 by Governor John Connally. That was the first time that I was called Visionary, and that experience told me to live up to the accolades later. The governor whispered to me, "Get used to wearing a tuxedo. Live up to the honor by saluting others."

That same year (1967), I met singers Sonny and Cher, little knowing that 26 years later, I would be inducted into the Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame and that they would hand me the award. I remarked to Sonny that I often quoted his song "The Beat Goes On" as analogous to change management, and he was pleased. Cher recalled the 1971 occasion where she and I visited at a jewelry store on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, California. I remembered that we drank champagne in a pewter cup. Her quote: "There are new ways to approach familiar experiences," and I have applied that to corporate turnarounds.

It was by being inducted into the U.S. Business Hall of Fame that I met Peter Drucker. We subsequently worked together, doing corporate retreats. You'll note his endorsement on the back cover of my signature book, *The Business Tree™*.

One year, I received several awards. I got a Savvy Award, for the top three community leaders. I was a Dewar's profile subject. I had gotten a standing ovation at the United Nations for volunteer work that was my honor to do (especially since it enabled me to work with my favorite actress, Audrey Hepburn).

Subsequently, I was judging a community stewardship awards program. I quizzed, "Why is it that the same old names keep popping up? There are great people to honor other than those of us from business, high society or other top-of-the-mind awareness. What this community needs is an awards program that people like us cannot win."

I was then challenged to come up with such a program, the result being the Leadership in Action Awards. At the banquet, the swell of pride from the winning organizations was heartening to see. These unsung heroes were finally getting their just recognition for community work well done.

One cannot seek awards just for glorification reasons. However, recognition programs are a balanced scorecard that involves the scrutiny of the company and its leaders by credible outside sources.

Awards inspire companies of all sizes to work harder and try more creative things. Good deeds in the community are not done for the awards; they just represent good business. Receiving recognition after the fact for works that were attempted for right and noble reasons is the icing on the cake that employees need. Good people aspire to higher goals. Every business leader needs to be groomed as a community leader.

Recognition for a track record of contributions represents more than "tooting one's own horn." It is indicative of the kind of organizations with whom you are honored to do business. The more that one is recognized and honored, the harder that one works to keep the luster and its integrity shiny. Always reframe the recognition back to the customers, as a recommitment toward serving them better and further.

Characteristics of a Legend

- Understands that careers evolve
- Prepares for change, rather than becoming the victim of it
- Realizes there are no quick fixes in life and business
- Finds a blend of perception and reality, with emphasis upon substance
- Has grown as a person and professional...and quests for more enlightenment
- Has succeeded and failed...and has learned from both
- Was a good "will be," steadily blossoming
- Knows that one's dues paying accelerates, rather than decreases

Best Advice to Future Legends

Fascinate yourself with the things you are passionate about. Be fascinated that you can still be fascinated. Be glad for people who mentored you. Be grateful for the opportunities that you have had. Be proud of yourself and your accomplishments. Do not let the fire burn out of your soul.

There comes a point when the pieces fit. One becomes fully actualized and is able to approach their life's Body of Work. That moment comes after years of trial and error, experiences, insights, successes and failures.

As one matures, survives, life becomes a giant reflection. We appreciate the journey because we understand it much better. We know where we've gone because we know the twists and turns in the road there. Nobody, including ourselves, could have predicted every curve along the way.

However, some basic tenets charted our course. To understand those tenets is to make full value out of the years ahead. The best is usually yet to come. Your output should be greater than the sum of your inputs. This is accomplished by reviewing the lessons of life, their contexts, their significance, their accountabilities, their shortcomings and their path toward charting your future.

- Whatever measure you give will be the measure that you get back
- There are no free lunches in life
- The joy is in the journey, not in the final destination
- The best destinations are not pre-determined in the beginning, but they evolve out of circumstances
- You've got to give in order to get
- Getting and having power are not the same thing
- One cannot live entirely through work
- One doesn't just work to live
- As an integrated process of life skills, career has its place
- A body of work doesn't just happen. It is the culmination of a thoughtful, dedicated process, carefully strategized from some point forward. ♦

~ Hank Moore, Corporate Strategist™ and a Silver Fox Advisor

