

IF WE FAIL TO LEARN, WE FAIL TO GROW

“If you are not willing to learn, no one can help you. If you are determined to learn, no one can stop you.” – Zig Ziglar

In the last 41 years I've invested a great deal of time and money in learning all I could about customer service. And the return on investment has been great – I'm now positioned as the world's leading service strategist. I've had countless opportunities to learn, and I've realized that the more difficult the situation, the more likely I will learn something of value from it that will enable me to move ahead with confidence.

Mark Cuban epitomizes this principle. In his early twenties he bought a \$99 computer and taught himself to program by reading every manual he could get his hands on. The result? A thorough understanding of the technology he was selling, and the insight to make it better.

Mark has the kind of wealth every startup and entrepreneur dreams of – and he's earned every cent himself. Described by Wikipedia as an American businessman, investor, film producer, author, television personality and philanthropist, the self-made mogul and star of Shark Tank founded his first company at age 25. He's now estimated to be worth in the neighborhood of \$3+ billion. Still driven and determined, he knows what he wants, and he has the self-belief and ambition to make it happen.

Jeff Bezos and Steve Jobs were raised by adoptive parents. Nelson Mandela changed the world from a jail cell.

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.” – Mahatma Gandhi

Invest in your success. In my book, *Moving Up*, I repeatedly remind the reader that it's about their life, that it's about succeeding in whatever you choose to do. It can be anything you can dream of, but it will always be about taking chances and being proactive and ready. Great things won't happen unless you can believe it, see it in your mind and focus on the goal.

“Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow. – Ralph Waldo Emerson

I've taken great pride in learning from the great people in my life. First was my mother, who passed away in 2003 at age 102. She gave me the self-confidence and self-worth to reach my goals.

Another person I've been blessed to share time with was the late

Paul Meyer, leader of the Success Motivation Institute. Paul taught me to set goals and use visualization and affirmation to make money. He, too, gave great credit to his mother: “My mother planted the belief in me that the riches of all creation belonged to me if I wanted them and claimed them.”

Vernon Hill, an American businessman, is the founder and chairman of Metro Bank, a UK retail bank with 66 stores and assets worth \$28.6b. Vernon taught me to never give up, and to do what others wouldn't think of doing. He's also a good friend.

Bill Frenzel, the late Minnesota congressman, was on the House Ways and Means Committee. His gifts to me were priceless. He showed me the benefits of being a good listener, and he walked the talk – he was humble, yet he was one of the most influential members of Congress.

Learn from your mistakes. The process of learning from our mistakes is an invaluable component of all success. It's something we should run toward, and never run away from.

Every successful company has its ups and downs, but the best ones look at it differently than the ones that simply give up. Starbucks has experienced its share of failures and setbacks. When the economic downturn caused the coffee-house industry to implode, Starbucks was unprepared for a world where caffeine lovers could no longer afford \$5 for a cup of java. Despite the odds, the brand managed to refine its business model and adapt to the new economic conditions.

You're either growing or dying mentally every day. Learn about your company, learn about your products, and learn about your customers.

With learning comes self-fulfillment.

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