

THE VOTE

With election news filling the airwaves, I thought you might enjoy the following joke.

While walking down the street one day, a U.S. Senator is tragically hit by a truck and dies.

His soul arrives in heaven and is met by St. Peter at the entrance. “Welcome to heaven,” says St. Peter. “Before you settle in, it seems there is a problem. We seldom see a high official around these parts, you see, so we’re not sure what to do with you.” No problem, just let me in,” says the man.

“Well, I’d like to, but I have orders from higher up. What we’ll do is have you spend one day in hell and one in heaven. Then you can choose where to spend eternity.”

“Really, I’ve made up my mind. I want to be in heaven,” says the Senator. “I’m sorry, but we have our rules.”

And with that, St. Peter escorts him to the elevator and he goes down, down, down to hell. The doors open and he finds himself in the middle of a green golf course. In the distance is a clubhouse. And standing in front of it are all his friends and other politicians who had worked with him. Everyone is happy and in evening dress. They run to greet him, shake his hand, and reminisce about the good times they had while getting rich at the expense of the people. They play a friendly game of golf and then dine on lobster, caviar, and champagne.

Also present is the devil, who really is a very friendly guy who has a good time dancing and telling jokes. They are having such a good time that before he realizes it, it is time to go.

Everyone gives him a hearty farewell and waves while the elevator rises. The elevator goes up, up, up and the door reopens on heaven where St. Peter is waiting for him. “Now it’s time to visit heaven.”

So, 24 hours pass with the senator joining a group of contented souls moving from cloud to cloud, playing the harp, and singing. They have a good time and, before he realizes it, the 24 hours have gone by and St. Peter returns.

“Well, then, you’ve spent a day in hell and another in heaven. Now choose your eternity.

The Senator reflects for a minute then he answers: “Well, I would never have said it before, I mean heaven has been delightful, but I think I would be better off in hell.”

So St. Peter escorts him to the elevator and he goes down, down, down to hell. Now the doors of the elevator open and he’s in the middle of a barren land covered with waste and garbage.

He sees his friends, dressed in rags, picking up the trash and putting it in black bags as more trash falls from above.

The devil comes over to him and puts his arm around his shoulder. “I don’t understand,” stammers the Senator. “Yesterday I was here and there was a golf course and clubhouse, and we ate lobster and caviar, drank champagne, and danced and had great time. Now there’s just a wasteland full of garbage and my friends look miserable. What happened?”

The devil looks at him, smiles and says, “Yesterday we were campaigning. Today you voted!”

Live a Life That Matters

I've discussed the importance to live a purposeful, meaningful life to thousands of people throughout my career. We've also taught hundreds of leaders to do the same in our True Growth Academy. Just recently, a beautiful PowerPoint presentation on this subject showed up in my inbox. I hope you enjoy reading the words as much as I enjoyed reading them.

Ready or not, it will all end.

There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours or days.

All the things you collected whether treasures or baubles, will pass to someone else.

Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance. It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed.

Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will finally disappear. So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists will expire.

The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away. It won't matter where you came from, or on what side of the tracks you lived, at the end.

It won't matter whether you were beautiful, or brilliant. Even your gender, skin color will be irrelevant.

So what will matter? How will the value of your days be measured?

What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built; not what you got, but what you gave.

What will matter is not your success, but your significance. What will matter is not what you learned, but what you taught.

What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, or sacrifice that enriched, empowered, or encouraged others to emulate your example.

What will matter is not your competence, but your character.

What will matter is not how many people you knew, but how many people will feel a lasting loss, when you're gone.

What will matter is not your memories, but the memories that live in those who loved you. What will matter is how long you will be remembered, by whom and for what.

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident. It's not a matter of circumstance but of choice.

Like you, sometimes I make inappropriate choices and allow frustrations and disappointments to interrupt the joy of living. That is usually followed by a conversation about how "stupid I was to make such a choice".

Living enjoyably is a constant challenge. I now have *Living a Life That Matters* filed in my daily reading file. Reading this content every morning provides excellent guidelines for the choices that will be made throughout the day. Then at the end of the day, you can spend a few minutes thinking about the successful choices you've made to *Live a Life That Matters*.

Dear Reader...

Welcome to summer as 2010 passes before our very eyes.

You're going to want to read the article titled, *Receiving The Gift of Feedback*. It's available to you through logging onto www.teammax.net and click on the Company Blog. The article's content focuses on how to become a professional at receiving feedback. Effective leaders seek feedback from every source, particularly that which is not favorable (ouch!). Your ego can get in the way to use feedback effectively, thus I think you'll like the section on controlling your ego. Email your comments about the article to me, lcole@cei.net. I look forward to hearing from you.

The last seven weeks have been a flurry of writing activity. I'm co-authoring a book with Byrd Baggett, *97 Ways to Promote Your Sales Career*. The manuscript must be at the publishers by July 1! We had about 10 weeks to finalize it. This assignment speaks to the fact this newsletter is a couple weeks late. We'll soon start writing a companion book on improving leadership and teamwork. Stay tuned — more to come.

If you want to attend a developmental process that can be truly life changing, you need to be with us for the **True Growth Academy** scheduled for September 14 – 17 in Boerne, TX. We've had attendees who initially lacked the motivation to be a peak performing participant, because they were sent to the Academy by their supervisor. To a person, these individuals have since given us glowing reviews. You'll have to admit that is excellent testimony. How many developmental activities have you been sent to and considered your participation a waste of time? Trust me, you'll appreciate the fact you attended the Academy. Effective leadership begins with you! The **True Growth Academy** is all about helping you. Call me and we can discuss the details.

I'm out of space. I recently attended my high school reunion. Do yourself a favor and attend yours.



RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Crucial Confrontations by Kerry Patterson and three co-authors is an excellent read. It's the second in a two book series — *Crucial Conversations* is the first and it's on my "to do" reading list.

Barbara Ehrenreich wrote *Bright Side*. Her argument is that positive thinking is overrated. She makes very interesting points, e.g., how some media ministers have abused people's hunger for positivity.

I found Rick Hanson and Richard Mendius' description of the evaluation of suffering particularly interesting in their book, *Buddha's Brain*

Perceptions are more real than reality itself according to Bud Hadfield founder of Kwik Kopy. You will also enjoy his customer service philosophy as described in his book, *Wealth within Reach*.



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THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT...

“Ultimately, happiness comes down to choosing between the discomfort of becoming aware of your mental afflictions and the discomfort of being ruled by them.”

~ Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche

“I finally figured out the only reason to be alive is to enjoy it.”

~ Rita Mae Brown

“Organizations are no longer built on force. They are increasingly built on trust...this presupposes that people understand one another. Taking relationship responsibility is therefore an absolute necessity. It is a duty.”

~ Peter Drucker

“By concentrating on the positive, we create a sense of optimism and energy.”

~ Christopher Novak



“If I were given the opportunity to give a gift to the next generation, it would be the ability for each individual to learn to laugh at himself.”

~ Charles Schulz

“Knowing your peace of mind is up to you, not the world, is the most powerful and secure state of mind you can achieve.”

~ Lee Jampolsky

“I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people.”

~ Indira Gandhi