

## **IF I COULD 'DO IT OVER AGAIN'**

**By Ken Korkow**

There are times when I wish I could have some "do overs" in my life.

One of the first things I would change, if I could, would be *not* investing the time and money that I did in getting my MBA. Yes, my Master in Business Administration degree was a "stepping stone" to my first job. Yes, it provided a good network of relationships. And yes, the degree gave me confidence. But it was similar to the diploma that gave the scarecrow confidence in the classic film, "The Wizard of Oz." He did not really need it – he only believed that he did.

In my pursuit of the MBA, which many business leaders consider a prerequisite to success in the work world, I learned many things that just were not pertinent – or even true.

No, I am not a Luddite – one of those people that resist progress or change. I just try to be realistic and practical. In my everyday search for bottom-line truth, I have always strived to find what *really* works. And time and experience have taught me that most of the "knowledge" acquired during the quest for an MBA does not work. Let me give you a case in point: finances.

While I was a student, our MBA mantra was: "The function of business is to maximize profits within legal and ethical constraints." I learned that, believed it, and adhered to each word.

In the process I became the head of several different organizations. I had the "toys," the material rewards that come from making profits the top priority in your company. I became wealthy, beyond anything I could have imagined. However, as I continued this quest to "maximize profits within legal and ethical constraints," swallowing that philosophy completely, I became a manipulating "people user." I left a trail of broken relationships in my wake, and nearly lost my marriage in the process.

I am not trying to condemn everyone that has earned an MBA, but I understand too well how that course of academic training can skew a person's goals and values. I have since come to embrace something far better than an MBA. What is better than an MBA? It is the realistic, practical, bottom-line truth that comes from only one source: the Bible.

You see, the Bible talks a lot about finances, too. In fact, it says more about finances than it talks about heaven and hell! For more than two decades I have become a diligent student of the Bible and have concluded it holds more truth, more practical guidance for everyday living – including the workplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – than 1,000 MBAs could even hope to offer.

The New Testament summarizes the value of learning and applying the Word of God: "*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man (and woman) of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work*" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

My best advice for business and professional people is to study God's Word *every day*. If you do this with sincerity and an honest, open heart, you will be amazed at what it has to say about your life – and your work. Without question, it is life-changing.

*Ken Korkow lives in Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.A., where he serves as an area director for CBMC. This is adapted from the "Fax of Life" column that he writes each week. Used with permission.*

**CBMC INTERNATIONAL:** Jim Firnstahl, President  
1065 N. 115<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 210 • Omaha, Nebraska 68154 • U.S.A.  
TEL.: (402) 431-0002 • FAX: (402) 431-1749 • E-MAIL: [info@cbmcint.org](mailto:info@cbmcint.org)  
Please direct any requests or change of address to: [www.cbmcint.org](http://www.cbmcint.org)

### **Reflection/Discussion Questions**

1. Do you have an MBA, or know someone that does? What do you think have been the benefits of having an MBA? What do you think about the concept that the primary function of business is maximizing profits within legal and ethical constraints?
2. Do you agree with Mr. Korkow, or do you think an MBA is an important ingredient for success and advancement in today's business and professional world? Explain your answer.
3. How do you respond to the statement that studying and applying the Bible is much more valuable – and useful – than a prestigious MBA?
4. Did you know the Bible has much to say about finances? If you did, can you cite some examples? If you did not, does this make you more curious to read the Bible and discover what it says on that topic? Why or why not?

*NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to review some other passages that relate to this topic, consider the following verses:*

Joshua 1:8-9; Psalm 119:9-11, Ephesians 2:10, 4:14-16; Colossians 3:16-17, 23-24