

Are You An Entrepreneur? **As appeared in ISHN's "FDO"** **January 2000**

The story goes that a consumer was purchasing a book at a large book retailer and after waiting in line for some time he finally reached the check out counter. The check out person didn't utter a word - took his book, rang it up and handed him his receipt still without speaking.

The customer commented "Can't you even say 'thank you'?" with which the check out person matter of factly said "it says it on the receipt..... next"!

This consumer vowed not to go back - and hasn't - his book (and other) purchases are now by Internet, which might not be people to people but in some ways are more personable, thoughtful, insightful, resourceful, respectful and certainly gracious.

When I pull up amazon.com it welcomes me personally "Hello George J. Hayward ... welcome back to amazon.com!" it starts out.

It proceeds to help me satisfy my immediate need - along with other suggestions of like interests - gives me a lot of info, including posting reviews good and bad - testimonials from other subscribers like me, a very competitive price - one click purchasing, thanks me for the purchase, confirms the order - tells me when it will ship, then tells me when it was shipped. It will even let me know about things that may be of interest to me based on previous purchases. It also gives me an onsite account status of current and past purchases history! It is a pleasurable experience - each time.

Gee, I wonder where it was "learned", all this stuff (and more)? It was learned from some entrepreneurial person(s). I've said it before, competition is between people not machines. Jeff Bezos of amazon.com vs the folks at Barnes & Nobel - guess who's the real entrepreneur? Barnes & Nobel doesn't have a clue (yet).

Another story: Heard one recently about a fella who has been asked to quote on several pieces of business. The prospect calls after several weeks inquiring about the whereabouts of the quotes and was told "the printer's down, it will be a little bit longer 'til I get it to you" - yeah right! You don't have to be an entrepreneur (but it helps in attitude) to know that at worst case it could have been hand written or some other means (i.e. E-mailed, duh?) C'mon, work with me!

Personally, I think an entrepreneur goes beyond what's asked - he or she assumes the role of someone who runs a business at their own financial risk. They organize and manage their business as it is their own - it's a conditioned state of mind - it can be the difference between you and the other person who doesn't have that entrepreneurial attitude.

How do you get it? (be an entrepreneur?) You can start right now - pretend you just got fired, you're working for yourself, it changes your outlook and attitude - posture yourself immediately in this new role. Position yourself to do the things that you would do if you "owned the joint" - all the time. You and others will immediately notice the "new you", the entrepreneurial you! It's kind of like "The Brand You" of Tom Peters - if you combine the two - lookout!

Additionally, thought I would share this with you which I shared with our people at the beginning of the decade.

Looking Ahead - The Next Decade, a few positive thoughts!

With the collapsing of the Iron Curtain - world peace comes a few steps closer. More global markets will open - create more employment - more but different problems, too. Mergers and acquisitions will result in foreign and US ventures. Focus will shift from Japan toward Europe - larger population than US - behind times - needs to catch up. What would you think of a World Series or All Star Game in Japan or a Super Bowl or Pro Bowl in Europe in the 90's? More women in work force - projected at over 55% in 1990. A cure for aids? Digital tape and TVs. High tech - environmental - recycle - ergonomics - more diversification with specialization needed. More customer driven - not principal driven (principal as in manufacturers United Sales Associates represents). More solutions to problems - not more problems.

The key is in the ability to manage rapid change and the flexibility to adapt accordingly. After that - imagine a new century and a new millennium.

George J. Hayward
January 1990

What do you see ahead?

Think about it.
George J. Hayward