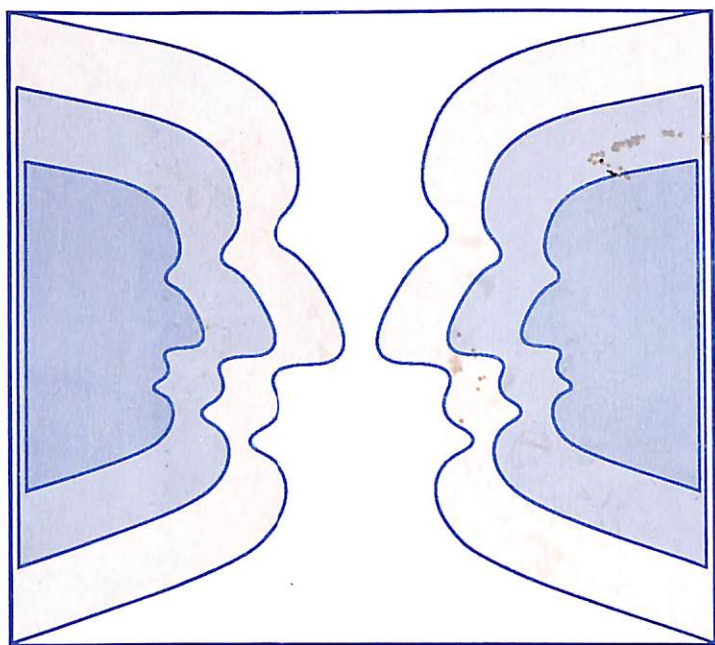


The You and I in Business and Life

What makes people give their best



Nagam H. Atthreya

The You and I in Business and Life

What makes people give their best

N. H. Atthreya



Starsong Publications
a division of Innovision
P.O. Box 1317
Los Altos, CA 94023-1317

Atthreya, N. H.

The You and I in Business and Life – What makes people give their best

Fourth Edition – 1987

Publication history:

First Edition – 1966

Second Edition – 1970

Third Edition – 1975

ISBN 0-942207-05-X (pbk.)

4th Edition, copyright © 1987 by N. H. Atthreya

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher. Printed in the United States of America.

Published simultaneously in India by MMC School of Management Books Division, Bombay.

ISBN 0-942207-05-X

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

To Sir Walter Scott

A great son of Australia

A great friend of developing countries

Contents

Foreword	7
Introduction to the Fourth Edition	9
Introduction to the Third Edition	13
A Word About This Book	17

SECTION I – A PROBE INTO RELATIONSHIP – A Person to Person approach

1. The External Customer	23
2. The Internal Customer	27
3. The Starting Point	29
4. It Depends	31
5. If I Were a Customer	33
6. I Shall Not Reject	37
7. Instead	39
8. Now to the Role Man	45
9. The Next Step	47
10. Other Compensations Apart	49
11. Not Enough If You Approve	51
12. If You Don't	55
13. What If You Play-Act	57
14. If Just a Business Contract	59
15. A Further Clue	61
16. Tomorrow's Business	65
17. Relationship is Personal	67
18. The Unwritten Contract	69

19.	This Great Giving	73
20.	Relationship is Reciprocal	77
21.	Not What You Are But How You Are	83
22.	Adjusting to Reality	85
23.	Family Included	87
24.	If You Include Family	91
25.	The Terms	97
26.	Building it Negatively	101
27.	At an Hour of Crisis	105
28.	And Positively?	109
29.	"If I Were You"	113
30.	If the Other Man Does Not Respond	117

**SECTION II – A FURTHER PROBE
INTO RELATIONSHIPS**

– the inner man

31.	Why a Further Probe?	123
32.	One Way That Works	127
33.	One Way That May	131
34.	I Give Myself a Chance	133
35.	The Difficult Customer	137
36.	An Axiom With a Potential	143
37.	Some Guideposts to Reflective Action	147

	Afterword by David Thornburg	151
--	------------------------------	-----

Foreword

It is an honor and a pleasure
to write a foreword to a book
dedicated to Sir Walter Scott
and written by our Management Colleague,
N. H. Athreya
to help readers find and state their goals,
evaluate them and work towards their attainment.
The problems involved are ones
that face every country and all people,
but especially the Management group
who are trying to help work out solutions.
If we share our findings,
we shall make contributions
of benefit to us all.

New York City
11 April 1966

Lilliam M. Gilbreth

Introduction to the Fourth Edition

When I started editing the book for the U.S.A. Reader,
one little problem loomed large;
and this is the gender problem.
In India it is humorously disposed of as
'man embraces woman!'
'Madam Chairman' is common
and 'Chairperson' is not.
When I see the incessant struggle
of the writers in the U.S.A.
to wrestle with this problem of gender,
I fondly hope there is at least one language in the world
where we have a common word for 'the human being'
and the related pronouns,
instead of this man/woman, his/her.
Such a word will be a simple, natural one,
not contrived.
My 'man', 'businessman' and the related pronouns
are used in the sense of such a word.
That hoped-for-word suggests to me phrases like
'the divine fragment', 'the spark of divinity',
'the human marvel',
the creation that is capable of great giving.

My life-long concern has been:
How can we create and maintain a climate
for one to exercise this capability
on a sustained basis?

Universal Mind connects, if allowed to.
This it does through a human being.
The Indian saying is: *Daivam manushya rupena*.
Loosely translated, God himself comes to you
only in the form of a human being.
The human being in this case is Ron Voth,
my good friend in San Jose.
He read the book and he showed his appreciation
by buying and giving two dozen copies to his friends.
One such friend is Dr. David Thornburg, this publisher.

Every brick helps.
A good word is a brick.
A good word came from prominent authors like
George Morrissey, Dorothy Jongeward, Muriel James,
Helen Reynolds, Robert Blake, M. Scott Myers,
William V. Haney and Spencer Johnson.

The great humanist Dr. (Mrs.) Lillian M. Gilbreth
helped me with a valuable Foreword.

Professor C. M. Shukla, K. Venkataraman
and Usha Chandrasekhar
made significant suggestions
regarding sense, sequence and style.

To all of them my grateful thanks.

A special thanks I owe
to the publisher, Dr. David D. Thornburg,
who went into publishing
to give every book his personal touch,
and who has given this book
a double dose of such a touch.

A feature consciously added to this edition
is an invitation to the Reader.
The coming pages may help
to confirm, clarify what you already know.
They may help produce an 'aha'.
They may help you move further and faster.
Whatever it does,
you may like to record your response
and thereby become my co-author in a sense.
I have provided space
for your unique contributions.
It is as much your book as it is mine.

Nagam H. Attthreya
July, 1987

Introduction to the Third Edition

The book in its first two editions was kindly received by many readers: to all of them, my grateful thanks.

In particular I wish to thank Mr. F. R. Boucher of the ILO (at Istanbul 1966) who took time off to write a three page letter giving many suggestions to further refine the presentation. He thoughtfully concluded his letter thus: "Normally, I would not criticize a book in anything like the above detail but I was attracted to it so much that I felt you might like to have the views of one enthusiastic reader. As you gathered from my introductory remarks, I found the writing and the message very creditable and praiseworthy indeed and I congratulate you on a fine effort."

Among others, the leading behavioral scientists
Dr. Robert Blake and Dr. M. Scott Myers,
helpfully commented on the book at length.

I also wish to make a reference to just two reviewers,
for their understanding reaction,
though separated by cultures and climes.

One is Mr. Robert Doyle who wrote a three page review
in the *Training and Development Journal*
of the American Society of Training Directors.

He commented:

"...is very exciting but just a little difficult to describe...
the book is extremely easy to read.
It is about an hour's worth of reading
and a lifetime's worth of application..."

The novelty of the presentation in this book
did annoy some reviewers and probably readers too.

One Indian reviewer called it "verse or worse".

Not so Mr. Douglas Scott.

Reviewing in *Management* (New Zealand), he said:

(using the author's way of typographical presentation):

It is home-spun philosophy
with an oriental twist
and like all good examples of art,
well drawn and very instructive...

Attthreya says more on this subject
in one hour's reading time
than most author's
from more management advanced countries
do in five.

To these and many other understanding reviewers,
my sincere thanks.

In the second edition, I have added a new chapter
Now to the Role Man
to explain an aspect that needs to be explained.

This is substantially
the same as the second edition.
I have made a few
editorial changes
to emphasise what I think
needs emphasis.

N. H. Attthreya

A Word About This Book

Being in business and growing in business:
I believe these are desirable goals.

More so when we look at business
in a larger sense,
in the sense that people
give and take of themselves.

A large part of 'business'
is transacted between two individuals,
say, you and I.

If the you-I relations are
not conducive to business transactions,
business does not result and,
if it does, it is inadequate.

Human relations, therefore,
are neither sentiments nor philosophy:
they are a business proposition.

This business proposition
seems to be more in the nature of an art,
and a **disciplined art** at that,
than a set of techniques.

Like an art, however,
it is personal;
but it lends itself
/ to certain basic approaches.

All these approaches have one goal –
good business and growing business,
business today and business tomorrow.

I have taken the point of view
of one in business,
in the **broadest** sense.

I have permitted myself to take the place
of the person on the other side of the table
from time to time.

*(To avoid possible confusion,
I have used type like this,
whenever I do that).*

I may call these 'reflections'
in the sense they arose out of
my observing people at work

and asking myself questions like:
Why is one business situation highly productive
and why is another not?
Why is one becoming brighter
and why is another becoming dimmer?

I have also reflected on business
as a feature of free life.

It seems to me that
business tends to bring
the best out of a man.

But the democratic system as such
will not bring the best out of a man;
it is the way we do business in such a system
that will.

To my way of thinking,
freedom and prosperity depend much
on the way we utilize
the resource of resources,
the human resources;
and the you-and-I relations skill
plays a decisive role
in such utilization.

Let me restate
the broader concept of business
as I see it:

Living together with others,
whether at work or at home,
is being in business.

For the simple reason that
unless the other person gives us,
gives us freely, gives us fully,
gives us continuously, gives us gracefully,
we become perceptibly ineffective.

And this giving does not depend on us or on him
but on the continuing relationship between us two,
on the constructive climate we have brought about.

How to build such a relationship,
how to bring about such a climate,
how to build a climate
wherein people will give their best:
towards **these**
this book seeks a framework for action,
a few guidelines for action.

Bombay

1 Jan. 1966

N. H. ATTHREYA

SECTION I

A PROBE INTO RELATIONSHIP -

A Person to Person Approach

1 *The External Customer*

I am in business.

I want to be in business.

I know this is possible
only so long as people come to my 'counter'.

I once thought that
so long as I have a product or service they want,
I will be in business.

I don't think so any longer.

I am assailed by this doubt:
It is possible that my counter is deserted
even though I offer a product or service
that they want.

Will people desert that way?

I should think they will;
I have done so myself.

I have walked away from a shop;
I have been 'driven away' from a shop.
In one shop, the people were indifferent to me;
and, in the other, they were insolent.

If I am indifferent to a customer,
or if I am insolent to one,
he need not stomach it,
and still do business with me.
He can quietly walk away,
and shop at another counter;
and he so often does.
This is a free country
and, in most areas, he can pick and choose.

Customers do not tell me and go away –
they just go away.
They do not give me a chance
to explain or make amends.

This I should say to their credit, however.
In our country, people prefer to stick to one 'shop';
and their sense of tolerance is of high order.
They take a lot of rough treatment.
Only when they feel:
"This is the limit",
they quit.

Once they quit,
it is almost impossible
to get them back.

Of late, I notice, people are less tolerant.
They suffer less nonsense.
Perhaps they will suffer still less
if they have more choices;
the choices are still limited.

From the customer's point of view, however,
there is a case for more and more
competent competition in every sphere of business.

To get a customer to my shop is difficult enough;
To get one back who has turned away
is much more difficult.

If the customer has walked away
because of an act of insolence,
I fear another possibility.

He may speak to other customers about me.
I know what that could mean.
He does not merely go away himself;
he takes away others too from me.

And he does it all quietly.
Only when the mischief has gone far,
I come to know.

When I say 'mischief',
I do not say it in any derogatory sense.
In his place, I would have done the same thing myself.

If I am indifferent or insulting,
why should you continue to do business with me?
If I do not take care and thought
to assure your presence at my 'counter',
why should you be there?

2 *The Internal Customer*

I have another type of customer:
I refer to my staff,
my employees.

I call them 'customers' because
they can choose to do business with me,
and they can choose not to.

Perhaps I can describe them as
'internal customers'.

They can work with me
and help me meet the needs of
the external customers.

Or they can walk away and work for someone else;
they can walk away and work for no one in particular;
they are free men and women.

There is also the other possibility.

Because of their economic conditions,
they may not physically walk away;
they may **mentally** walk away.

I at times say to myself:
"Let them walk away.
Why, I can even drive them away!"

In saying so, am I realistic?

Even if I can do this,
how long can I do this?
How long will the present economic situation last?
Am I not feeling the pinch already?

Further, if I get the reputation
that I drive people away,
will I have people coming to me,
to be driven out at will?

Perhaps I need not worry about this customer –
the internal customer –
if I am going to do everything myself;
but that way can I be in a **growing** business?

3 *The Starting Point*

To be in business, therefore,
I am tempted to conclude
that I will have to assure
the physical and mental presence
of my customers –
the external customers
and the internal customers.
This then is the starting point.

Negatively speaking,
I should see that people are
not given an occasion to go away.

I have to watch out for work behaviour
which will give people the impression
that I am indifferent to them
or that I am insolent to them.

In point of fact,
I may not be indifferent to one

or insulting in behavior.
I may be plain preoccupied.
This explanation, it is a pity,
does not help.

If the customers get the impression
they are not wanted,
they will choose to walk away;
they are not concerned about
the facts of the case.

Positively speaking,
I should take care to make
their presence **welcome**;
I have to make them feel their business is precious,
which it is.
I should be alert.

4 *It Depends*

Specifically what should I do?

This seems largely a matter of the situation, ingenuity and judgement.

What I may do in a book shop
I may not do in a jewelery shop.
What I do in a jewelery shop
I may not do in a manufacturing shop.

Also, in one type of shop,
I will have more to do with external customers,
and, in another, with internal customers,
both in terms of number and importance.

Basically, therefore,
I should consider approaches
that are likely to assure
the physical and mental presence
of the customer
and a live climate for business.

**If I place myself
in the position of the customer,
and look at the proposition,
I may perhaps get a few clues.**

Let me try.

5 If I Were A Customer

*If I were a customer,
I have something to give.*

*You are interested in me
because of what I can give.*

*Being human, and therefore imperfect,
while I have something to give,
I do not have everything to give,
I have plus*
and minus* too.*

It is possible that you look at my minus.

* The words 'plus' and 'minus' have been used to mean 'merits' and 'weaknesses', essentially for reasons of flow of the language.

*Either because you are generally
opposed to minus
or to the minus I have,
you may reject me.*

*When you reject me,
you may display it
or you may not display it;
but it becomes obvious.*

*When you reject me,
I do not feel comfortable.*

*I do not want to be there
to annoy you with my minus;
and I do not want to be there
to please you with my plus either!
I am no customer for you.
I am in no business relationship with you.*

*I may have prettly little –
and that little you want;
otherwise, you may not choose
to do business with me –
and I tell you:
you don't have even that little
if you reject me.*

*If I can,
I will physically walk away from the scene.*

*If I cannot
for reasons of economics, say,
I will stage a mental walk-out.
I will be there;
and still I will not be there.
I will do
get-by-work,
just enough to keep out of trouble.*

*This too
only so long
as I have to.
My wish is to get away from the scene.*

*When I do walk away,
I may not go alone –
I may like company!
I may take others with me!*

*When you reject me, therefore,
you are not rejecting just one:
you are probably rejecting many more.*

*This may sound unreasonable.
The fact is, this is realistic.*

*There is no half-way house;
either you have the whole of me
or you have none of me.*

**If you reject me for what I have not,
you shall not have what I have got.**

9

6 *I Shall Not Reject*

Let me resume the position
in which I actually am.

I am in business
and I want to be in business.

To be in business,
the customer's presence is basic.
I can't be very much in business,
if I reject my business public.

Even after a customer knows I reject him,
he may be there but that is only physically.
He will be mentally out;
he will not be enthusiastic in doing business with me.

Perhaps I will have to tell myself constantly:
I shall not reject a single member
of my customer public.

Being human,
I will notice the weakness in the other man;
but since I do not do business

with the weaknesses of a man,
I need not get much concerned about them;
I need not reject him for his weaknesses.

I know it is not easy –
not to reject people is not easy.

I realize its implications though.

The fact of rejection is bad enough;
the act of rejection can be worse.

The way I reject him may make him feel so bad
that he may not like to stop with going away
from my business scene;
he may walk away with a quarrel:
he may like to teach me a lesson or two.

Whether he has decided to 'teach' me a lesson,
and if he has, what lesson, when, and how,
I will not know,
until he does teach me that lesson,
or attempt to do so at any rate.

By rejecting,
I may not merely lose a friend;
I may gain an enemy;
I can visualize what gaining an enemy can mean
to my business.

7 *Instead*

Rejecting people comes easily to me –
I can quickly spot what is wrong with any one
and can give eloquent expression to it.

This has been made easy
because of a number of factors,
mostly historical.
To recount a few:

As a people, we are clever –
and we have prided ourselves on our cleverness;
and one mark of cleverness seemingly is
to quickly see
what is wrong with a thought,
a proposition or a person.

Another mark of cleverness
is to express our disapproval
in 'choice' language,
in a powerful fashion,
in a way the adversary shudders!

This presumably started
as an intellectual pastime
by the more leisurely class
in more prosperous times.

The times have changed
but not this pastime!
The situation has changed
but not the sting.
The purpose has changed
but not the approach.

Unfortunately, this obsolete practice
still retains a respectability
in circles that matter.

When an approach has been in the air I breathed,
when such an approach has been held respectable,
when I have been absorbing it even as a child,
when I have been practicing it for years,
when it has become second nature,
even the thought of jettisoning
this dear, old habit
is painful.

As I recall my purpose, however,
I come to realize
I want results.
I get results by doing things,
and by getting things done.

To get things done
I have to depend on other people.
To get things done
I should know
to what they **respond** favorably.

To rejection they do not.

Rejection is likely
to keep them out of my business scene.

That is why as one who means business,
I concluded:
I shall not reject.

But the question arises:
How do I do that?
What do I do instead?

One answer is:
Tolerate people.

Another – a more positive one – is:
Accept people,
channel the energy from rejection to acceptance,
shift the focus from minus to plus.

When I think of it,
I find it is not that hard.

I can accept a customer for his plus.
Businesswise, that is what interests me:
plus is what I do business with.

Since I am concerned with the plus,
and since I cannot get the plus without the minus,
I accept the whole of him.
I accept him as he is: I do not impose any conditions.
My acceptance is unconditional, unreserved.
When I do accept a person,
I suppose,
it becomes obvious to him.

I would not take chances though;
I would make it **obvious**.

How do I make it obvious?
There is no set method, I suppose.
Much depends
upon the situation on the one hand
and my ingenuity on the other.

What is vital is that
I take the initiative.

I referred to the phenomenon of
physical walk-out and mental walk-out.

Acceptance tends to assure
that neither of these happen.

If I accept a person and he notes that I do,
he feels like doing business with me.

How much of business
and how well
is a different question.

Basic to it is the fact
that he should **feel** like
doing business with me.

8 *Now to the Role Man*

The customer, the internal customer more so,
is not one man – he is two:
he is a role man;
and he is a whole man too.

The role man in man varies;
he is bound by the context.

Not so the whole man in man;
the whole man in man seems **the same**,
whatever the role of the man.

Age, status, salary or clime
does not make a difference.

One characteristic of this whole man
is his instinctive sense of human dignity.
He maintains that self respect is not for sale.

If the whole man in man is not recognized,
if he is not given his due,
he tends to stage a walk out.

If the whole man in man walks out,
the role man can achieve pretty little.
The intangibles that could have been 'for'
turn to be 'against.'

**Assuring the vibrant presence of the whole man
is the beginning of business.**

Unless, however, both the 'men' –
the whole man and the role man –
are treated right,
we can't have the best from the customer.

So far we had a look at the whole man.
Let us now have a quick look at the role man.

9 *The Next Step*

If the other man
is in a mood to do business with me,
half the battle is won.

I am saved the defeating task
of extracting things from him.

How much he will give,
how well he will give,
is, however, another proposition.
Being in a mood to do business
and doing business are not the same.

This *other* proposition
is important to me.
For a growing business,
it is necessary that
my customers
give more of what they can give.

What will make them do so –
what will make them
give willingly,
give liberally,
give their best?

If I were in their place,
if I were at the receiving end,
what will I think, feel and do?
Let me visualize,
let me place myself
in the other man's shoes.

10 *Other Compensations Apart*

When do I do business with you?

*I do business with you
when I give you what I have,
when I give more of it,
when I give more of it willingly.*

*I tend to give,
I tend to give more of my plus,
if what I give
and the way I give
are approved.
Approval whets my giving sense.*

*Other compensations apart,
hearty approval in itself
is welcome to me.*

*I desire and like approval –
like most people I suppose.
The converse also is true.*

*If I do well and give well
and you do not approve,
I feel discouraged and
I tend to hold back.
I expected approval and
I did not get it;
you expected my doing or giving and
you will not get it!*

*When I say you will not get it,
don't take me literally.
I will do just enough and no more.
I will do the minimum to escape trouble.*

*If that is all you want of me,
you need not bother to approve
of my giving or doing.*

11 Not Enough if You Approve

*It is not enough if you approve of what I do.
You will have to show your approval.
And for an obvious reason.
I cannot read your mind;
can you read mine?*

*If you do not show your approval,
I do not know whether you approve or not:
I tend to think that you don't.*

*When you do show your approval,
I do more of what you approve of;
I give my plus and more of it.*

That is not all.

*I tend to do other things
that are likely to win your approval.*

More approval – that pleases me.

*Welcome as approval is from any quarters,
your approval has unique significance for me,
yes, if you are somebody special to me –
if you are my boss, say.*

*Once I know you are capable of giving approval,
and I can hope to gain approval from you
through legitimate efforts,
you will see me making a conscious effort
to step up my plus
and step down my minus –
at least as far as we two are concerned.*

*While so stepping up my plus,
I may surprise myself:
I may do outstandingly.*

*If you notice my outstanding performance
and tell me you have noticed it,
you will see me making effort
to repeat that outstanding performance,
to outreach myself.
I see a point in repeating the performance.*

*I know I can't repeat it everyday
but I will repeat it as often as I can.*

*Just as your approval
makes me give more of what I have,*

*your appreciation makes me outreach myself
from time to time.*

*I know
giving what I have,
giving my best
outreaching myself:
all these give satisfaction
but if there is your approval,
if there is your appreciation,
I have an incentive to give.
I tend to tell myself:
Here is a person who can recognize good work done;
I should repeat it,
I should do it for him.*

12 If You Don't

*If no response is forthcoming,
I will have second thoughts;
I will like to be back where I was,
yes, where I can well be.*

*If you do not notice an outstanding performance,
if you do not reveal you have noticed,
and if you do not show your appreciation,
maybe, I will repeat my outstanding performance
once more – to give you a chance,
maybe even a second time.
Or probably even a proverbial thrice.*

*If still you do not respond,
if you take it all for granted,
if you tell me, in so many words,
I am only doing what is expected of me,
or what I am paid for,
or that it is just my duty,
I ask myself:*

*When all is said,
it is extra effort, extra exertion.
Why exert?
This man has not the eyes to see,
the tongue to give expression,
and the heart to share.
Let me do what other people do,
namely, do just enough to get by.*

I don't rise to my heights.

*If I do rise
I don't maintain it.
Tell me, why should I?*

*I did say it gives me a pleasant surprise
if I do outstandingly;
let me add
it pains me and hurts me
when I do not give my best.
The thought that pesters me is:
Why should I do it for you?
You don't seem to deserve it.*

*I know you don't like me voicing my feeling that way;
and I do not normally voice it in words –
I voice it in action!*

13 What if You Play-Act

Perhaps you say:

*"What if I don't internally approve
but show or pretend
that I approve?
Yes, to placate you."*

You may please try.

*We are talking of a business relationship,
not a one-time, social, party relationship.
You can't keep up the pretense for long.
If you do not mean it,
it will out.*

*There is no substitute for sincerity
and insincerity becomes evident
sooner than you expect.*

*Once it becomes evident
do you hope to enjoy my respect for you?*

*After all, what do I expect you to approve?
I ask you to approve my strengths;
I ask you to appreciate when I give outstandingly;
does that sound unreasonable to you?*

*Perhaps it does –
maybe your concept of fairness
differs from mine.*

14 *If Just a Business Contract*

*Maybe,
our relationship is just a business contract –
you give me something,
and I give you something in turn.*

*If that is all that you want,
you need not make any additional effort;
you can go about as you ever did.*

*You can try to get the most from me
and I can try to get the most from you.*

*When effort is thus called for on either's part,
it becomes a sort of tug of war –
I try to give you the minimum
and you try to extract the maximum
and give me the minimum.
Being generally clever,
both of us succeed in this game,
up to a point.*

*Of course with unfortunate effects
on business purpose,
namely, utilization of resources
and creation of wealth.*

15 *A Further Clue*

This gives me a further clue
to business-building action.

I should be
alive to notice,
and alert to express.

Attention, approval and appreciation
seem to be heart-warming to the other man,
and certainly response-winning.

So provided,
the average man tends to give his best,
and giving his best pleases him –
as it pleases me.

As it happens,
I do not give my attention
and show my appreciation,
probably because of

a habit, a prejudice,
and a fear, a baseless fear.

Yes, a baseless fear;
the fear that he will
show his outstretched hand
for more compensation.

How many times
did I show appreciation?
And how many times
did he show
his outstretched hand?
When I reflect,
I am convinced,
man is not all that mean.

Since I do notice plus items,
since I approve and appreciate
a fine job outstandingly done,
I can make it known and quite sincerely.

The situation also demands
that I do it all **quite sincerely**.
Otherwise,
the recipient will see through it.
Once he does,
he will reject me,
he will have no association with me.

Since I am primarily concerned
with what helps my business,
and since in itself it seems good and true,
why should I be insincere?

16 *Tomorrow's Business*

There is another vital aspect to my business:

I want to be in business
not merely today
but tomorrow as well.

I am not inclined to say:
After me, the deluge.

**Today I make tomorrow,
knowingly or not;
and I want to make it knowingly.**

It is not merely my immediate tomorrow
that is involved;
it is the long term tomorrows
I stand for.

I believe
my business tomorrow,

my growth tomorrow
is possible,
only if the giving on the other man's part
is continuous and in increasing measure.

I should assure this giving,
I should assure this kind of giving.

17 *Relationship is Personal*

I have my self-interest;
and if I can,
I would like it to be
mutual self-interest.

I want the customer to give me
or give through me.

Why should he give me?
Why should he not give others?

If others give what I give,
why should he do business with *me*?
What is *that little extra*
that I give that others do not give?

It cannot be a **thing** – things others can give.

It has to be something else – what can that be?

It has to be something exclusive –
something of myself:
only I can give that
and no other can.

What can that 'something of myself' be?

Let me once again
place myself in his position
and try to visualize
how he may think or feel
or tend to act and react.

18 *The Unwritten Contract*

*No one wants to hear this,
but let us face some grim facts.*

*I may be a 'slave' –
thank God, there are no more slaves in this country –
and you may choose the whip.*

*If I do submit to that,
your whip will get you
only a limited quantity of my plus.*

*'Limited' because
I am capable of more than motions.
Limited because
my hands are a small part of me.
Limited because
I am the regulating agent.*

*I may give my best for a time
through an error of judgement!*

*I should not have given you
in the first instance, perhaps;
but it is not too late;
I can still hold back,
I can withdraw at any stage.*

*If conditions permit,
I step out.
If conditions do not,
I stay in,
but I step back in my giving.*

What about the contract, you may ask.

*What contract? The one that is written?
That I will keep
and I hope you will keep it too.*

*What of the unwritten contract?
The one that goes beyond the
lawyers' wordings?*

*Is it not this unwritten contract
that makes for good and growing business?*

*If this latter type of contract
does not interest you,
it is okay with me.
I would prefer it
but I cannot press for it.*

*You have to see a point in it yourself
and choose to come out with your best.
When all is said,
circumstantially speaking,
you have more scope for initiative
than I have.*

*As I indicated,
I do take the initiative;
but at some stage,
I give up.
I fear
my enthusiasm
is mistaken for weakness,
because of
my unenviable economic and social position.*

*Weakness often invites exploitation;
and I will not deny this phenomenon.
What I deny is
that my enthusiasm
will last,
no matter how you respond.*

19 *This Great Giving*

If this is true,
namely, there is another type of contract,
what can I do about it?

You keep back
and I keep back;
you come forth to give
and I come forth to give;
this does sound logical to me.

Business is not worth speaking about
when either of us tend to keep back.
I say 'either'
because one keeping back almost forces
the other person to hold back.
Whoever starts the trend,
has started killing the business;
and I do not wish to start the trend.

Business booms
when there is giving on both sides –
when there is competition in giving.

Man's capacity to give is great
and it can hardly be even imagined.
Since it gives him
genuine pleasure to give,
it is not being unfair to him either.

This great giving becomes possible
when there is competition in giving.

Who will start this competition?
One who is more able?
And that is myself, I suppose.

Do I compete in giving?

Have I not a false sense of business?
I say 'false'
because I tend to give the least and get the most.
Such a sense is altogether unhelpful.
Yes, in the long run,
yes, in terms of tomorrow.

The right sense of business
seems to be one of fair giving and fair taking –
since fair taking is in the other man's hands,
it is fair giving as far as I am concerned.

Do I give?
Do I give fairly?
Do I give gracefully?

Or do I give what I need to,
what the law prescribes as the minimum?
Do I give just 'what is good for him'?

Do I give in equal measure?

Do I really compete?

If I do not,
is he likely to compete?
And if he does not,
where will the business be –
is not his giving
a determiner of business?

20 Relationship Is Reciprocal

The reciprocal nature of business between me and the other person does not quite stand out in some situations.

To explore it a little further, therefore, let me take one type of relationship and place myself in the other man's shoes.

I agree to give.

I agree to give what I have.

I agree to give my best from time to time.

This is good

but this is hardly enough for you.

For a good and growing business, you need my continued giving.

I will continue to give

if you are interested in me,

interested in me as an individual,

not a mere hired hand.

*If your interest in me
is short term,
for the moment,
for what I happen to have,
and no more,
don't blame me
if I respond the same way.*

*It is true that
because of the economic conditions now,
I may need you now
more than you think you need me.
If your wish is
to take undue advantage
of this situation,
go ahead;
but remember:
Relationship is reciprocal.*

*Man-to-man relationship is different
from material-to-man relationship.
If you touch a hot metal rod,
you know how the material will react to you –
promptly, sharply and mercilessly;
it has no understanding, no sympathy, no mercy.*

*Man is different.
He will provide for your ignorance.
He will provide for your indifference.
He will even provide for your insolence.*

*He will bring to play compassion.
and forbearance
and tolerance
and all that will excuse you,
and save you
from the normal and natural consequences
of your action.*

*But he will do it all
only for some time;
he has a limiting point.*

*Under today's pressures,
this limiting point is
becoming less and less remote.*

*You may talk of loyalty and the like.
I like such words myself
but loyalty is a two-way street.*

*If you are not interested in me,
please tell me,
why should I be interested in you?*

*You may say
I am too much ego-involved;
and perhaps you are right:
we are all ego-involved,
aren't we?*

*If my existence,
if my well-being,
if my growth,
does not mean anything to you,
by the same token,
I can say that
your existence,
your well-being,
your growth,
does not mean anything to me.*

**One way to make me think of you then
is for you to think of me.**

*If each of us thinks about himself,
there is no transaction,
there is no living together,
there is no working together.
For these to be,
we should concede
relationship is reciprocal,
and think of the other.*

*If you feel kindly to me,
I feel kindly to you.
If you feel bitter to me,
I feel bitter to you.*

I am no saint.

*I may see a point
as to why I should
feel and act
differently from you.
I may even feel and act so
if I am better off than you are.
When I am not,
I see little point
to make the effort.*

Please do not feel concerned.

*If you are rude to me,
I will **not** be rude to you;
my reaction will not be immediate.
You know it – I cannot afford the immediate reaction.*

*But do you realize that
you cannot afford the later reaction?*

*Action and reaction
are equal and opposite.
This is so in the physical sphere.
In the human sphere,
the reaction may not be equal;
it may be greater!
How much greater
depends upon me
and the opportunities I create for myself.*

*The reaction that I should have displayed
if circumstances had permitted
has registered;
it has affected my attitude to you;
it has formed part of my relationship with you.*

*In the positive sense too,
relationship is reciprocal.
Probably more so.
I am capable of high giving.
I get frustrated
when I am 'prevented' from giving.
Believe me,
I get both a sense of relief and delight
when I give my best.*

*In either sense, therefore, we can compete –
the negative sense and the positive sense.
Only, the negative competition
will take both of us away from business purpose;
and the positive one will take us
more and more toward
the business purpose.*

*This phenomenon of reciprocal relationship
seems central in living and working with people.
To expect the relationship to be in any other way
is certainly tempting but will prove illusory.*

21 *Not What You Are But How You Are*

*Towards some people
I feel like being in a business relationship –
being in a relationship
of great giving and taking.*

To others I frankly don't.

*Who are those people
I feel like being in business relationship with?*

*Those that are interested
in me
as a person,
and not a mere business party.*

*When they are interested in me as a person,
I get interested in them as a person.*

*How you are to me
determines
how I will be to you.*

*You may be rich.
You may be clever.
You may be highly qualified.
You may be unusually intelligent.
You may be extremely attractive.
All that means little to me:
What you are means little to me.*

*My attitude to you,
as far as business is concerned,
does not depend on
who you are
but how your are –
to me,
yes, to me.*

*How are you to me?
That is the one question
that determines my relationship with you.*

22 *Adjusting to Reality*

Relationship is reciprocal.

How you are matters to me more than what you are.

Can these be true?

As I try to put myself
in the other man's place,
I am getting convinced
these statements are true,
maybe a little uncomfortably true,
but true.

Since reality will not adjust itself to me
and I have to adjust myself to reality,
I relate these two phenomena to my business,
to the *future* of my business.

Since relationship is vital,
and since relationship does not happen,

since the helpful, cordial, outgoing,
eager-to-do business relationship does not happen,
I should *cultivate* relationship.

I should cultivate relationship
consciously, and thoughtfully.

I have to take the lead.

For one thing,
I call myself a leader.
For another,
I have more opportunities and facilities
to take the lead.
For a third,
my stakes are high.
For a fourth,
I seem to see the significance of things
than I can expect the other person to do.

I should take the lead in cultivating relationship
with my business public.

By business public –
I am merely reminding *myself* –
I mean any person
whom I want to do something for me
or through me to something I stand for.
This may be tangible or intangible.
This may be against a consideration or gratis.

23 *Family Included*

If 'tangible' and 'gratis' can be included,
my business public may include
my family members as well!

Indeed I want them to be
in 'business relationship' with me –
I want them
to extend me affection and the like.
I want the intangibles
they alone can give;
I want them
to give me in good measure.

They are, then,
as important to me
as my external and internal customers.
In fact, more so.

While business is important,
my being is much more important,
and only my family members
can make my being worthwhile.

Are my family members
in 'business relationship' with me?
And what is the state of such business relationship?
How do I consciously contribute to it?

Do I reject any of them?
Yes, for what they have not got?

Am I so obsessed with what they have not
that I tend not to respond to
what they have got?

Do I accept them as they are?
Or, do I impose conditions?

Incidentally,
do they impose conditions on me
to accept me –
or do they accept me as I am?

Do I approve of all the plus things they do?
And do I show approval?
And quite promptly?

Or do I take it all for granted?
After all, I am the bread-winner,
and don't they owe it all to me?
(Do they?)

And do I appreciate,
and do I show my appreciation
when they go out of the way,
and do something for me?

And do I see the need to cultivate this relationship –
or do I think it silly to keep this relationship
in good trim?

External customer is okay.

Internal customer is understandable.

Family members? – Seems silly! Doesn't it?

24 *If You Include Family*

I mentioned the family
and a question may arise on that account.

"I have an adult family member.
I am interested in his welfare.
He has some inadequacies.
Should I not point them out?
In his own interests,
should he not get rid of his weaknesses?"

Indeed he should get rid of his weaknesses;
but that is his concern.

It cannot be ours.

Let us recall and review a few home truths:

Every person has his plus and minus,
his strong and weak points,
his strengths and weaknesses.

Every person lives and thrives
by his abilities,
not his disabilities.

Often enough,
what draws us to him
is his plus.

In a tangible or intangible fashion,
we wish to be benefited
by his strong points.

Unconsciously,
our focus is on his strengths
and this is as it should be.

We should know
and he should know
that what interests us
are his strong points.

It is true
that he has got his weaknesses.
It is true
we do notice them.
But it is equally true
that the weaknesses are essentially his concern.

For one thing,
this does not quite concern us.
For another – and this is important –
only **HE** can do anything about them.
We can guide him and aid him –
if *he* feels suitably inclined.

If he is not 'one of us';
we may concede all these points.

If he is 'one of us',
we tend to tell ourselves:
"I am more interested in him
than he is in himself".

The crucial question is:
Does he concede that?

I wonder.

I suspect that
we can never equal him
in his interest of himself.

If we leave the minuses to the man himself,
we can save a lot of embarrassment
to the concerned person
and to ourselves.

Our generous nature and our solicitude
may urge us to notice, point out and urge correction;
but we should give this a second thought.

The man's minuses
are not of interest to us –
and should not be.
Primarily, they are his business – not ours.

The presence of minus hurts him;
and he can be interested in doing something about it.

It is possible
that he gets rid of some of his minuses
to oblige us, to please us.
This he may volunteer to do,
if he wishes to please us.
He will wish to please us
if our relationship with him is right,
if it is pleasant and healthy.

Indeed much depends
upon his attitude to us.
If he thinks we are the person to help him
in getting rid of some of his minuses,
he will come to us and seek our guidance.
All that we can hope to do
is to create such an inviting climate.

We will do well to desist
from advising, cajoling and threatening:
we may get a negative effect if we persist.

In other words,
there should be a climate
for doing business (in the larger sense)
between two people.
The best we can do is
to concentrate on building this climate.

25 *The Terms*

ANOTHER WORD OF EXPLANATION

from the author regarding the terms.

I tend to use the same words –
for example, customer and business –
in more than one sense.

May I attempt
to restate and explain the terms?

I describe a 'business situation' as one
where two people are
in a give-and-take situation.

What they give each other
may be tangible or intangible.

It is not the things exchanged
that make it a 'business situation',
but the act of exchange.

The other person may be
an 'external' customer

or an 'internal' customer.
There is a fair amount of difference
between the two types of 'customers'.
There is also quite some
in common between the two.

The internal customer can be
further classified
into 'temporary' relationship as at work
and 'permanent' relationship as at home.

When two people work or live together,
however temporarily,
for business transaction,
they should respond to each other happily.

Healthy 'business' transactions take place
where there is an outgoing climate for business,
when the concerned parties
feel like giving to each other freely.
And this climate is all important.

This climate does not happen.
It has to be brought about.
It has to be brought about by one
who has a larger stake, longer stake.
And this can be brought about
only when he has an awareness of its importance
and an understanding of what is involved.

It is precisely to see what is involved,
to realize how the person at the other end of business
thinks, feels and acts
that I have suggested from time to time
that we place ourselves in his shoes
and look at the scene.

I realize that
human relationship is a complex phenomenon,
and words are an inadequate medium to explain it.
That is why I do not go beyond providing myself
with a framework for understanding action.

26 *Building It Negatively*

Relationship can perhaps
be looked at in many ways.

As a businessman,
I can look at it in two major ways –
one that spoils a relationship;
and the other that builds.

Spoiling a relationship
is tantalizingly easy.

You can snap it,
just like that.

But what is the cost?

Did I say spoiling the relationship?
Perhaps 'rupture' is what describes it right.

Many of us are quick to take an offense,
and slow to forget and forgive –
if at all.

The chances of rapproachment
are few and far between.

Once the relationships get spoiled,
the gap becomes wider,
and still wider;
the attitude to each other
becomes worse,
and still worse.

Spoiled relationship
has ghastly consequences;
and it is worthwhile
to see how relationships
do get spoiled.

One way to spoil a relationship
is the way I say a thing.
What I have said has spoiled relationships
but, more often, it is the way I have said it.
As I look back, I tell myself:
If I mean business,
I should watch my words,
but much more, the tone of my voice.

I at times think I am clever
just because I can be offensive
and get away with it.
I do not think I really get away with it.

Apart from tone of voice,
there should be many things else;
but the point is
that I should be vigilant.

I should not spoil relationship
because of lack of tact or judgement,
or errors of commission or omission,
or pride of purpose or power.

People did give more allowances for my whims
only a few years ago;
but they seem to be less tolerant today.

27 *At an Hour of Crisis*

"You may have more to give than take
and still I may avoid you.
I may avoid you because
you are arrogant, offensive,
stingy, cynical or egocentric.

By avoiding you
I may be a loser
in economic values,
but I have other values too.
I do not live by bread alone.
Do you?"

If I can think this way,
so can others.
They may avoid me,
or worse still,
they may be waiting
for an opportunity
to let me down.

This is significant.

If I am arrogant and haughty
and if thereby I alienate my people,
I cannot hope for their support
at an hour of crisis.

Probably they are just praying for such an hour!

Even as a matter of strategy or discretion, therefore,
it is suicidal to do things
that are known to spoil relationships.

I know it gives me an interesting feeling
when I snub, cut, tease,
and otherwise make people
feel like a worm.

But the worms can turn.
They may not be able to turn
in normal times.
They may turn
only in an hour of crisis.
And when that hour comes!

If we do not provide
for that possible hour,
we will repent.
Even in normal times
the offensive behaviour

does not make sense.
People may suffer us
and do business with us despite;
and do business grudgingly of course;
but is grudging business any business?

By business
I do not mean
the conventional business.
I mean a state
where we want people
to do something for us
or through us,
either for something in return
or free.
If this giving is not
smooth, free, liberal, great,
it is not much of a business to speak of.

In terms of conventional business,
this further note may be added.
If those who are in business
do not measure up
in cultivating the customer public,
business as a system
may not last long –
even as it is, one observes,
it is limping.

28 *And Positively?*

Not spoiling a relationship
is important we have seen.

Building a relationship
is equally important,
if not more so.

This clearly is the positive approach.

There are unlimited ways
of building a relationship;
the limit is set only
by one's ingenuity.

I will refer here to just one item
which is so obvious
that I tend to neglect in my day-to-day relationships.

If I please you,
you feel like responding –
you feel like pleasing me;
you feel like doing things
that will please me.

Despite this fact,
despite this fact it pays to please,
I do not care to please.

Why don't I?

Maybe, because pleasing is not easy.
To please others actively
and consistently is not easy.
It calls for an effort, thought
and some personal discipline.

Pleasing is not easy
for another reason.

Some do not respond
and some respond only indifferently.
When I expect enthusiastic response,
and when I do not get it,
my forward action gets inhibited.

Furthermore,
if I expect response,
it seems to put the other man on guard.
He tends to think
I am using this behavior as a lever;
and he resists.

Such reflections have led me to the belief
that I should not relate my behaviour
to the immediate response of the other person;
that I should instead argue:
Is it pleasant for me
to be pleasant to the other person?
If it is, why need I hesitate to please?

Streaks of sadism are in me too.
There have been occasions
when it pleased me
to displease the other man.
Once I became conscious, however,
of the implications
of the resulting relationship
on my business today and tomorrow,
I started playing it down.

I agree
it involves expenditure
in terms of thought, time, and at times cash,
to legitimately please the 'business' public.
But it seems worthwhile in itself;
and it pays in the long run.

29 "If I Were You"

To please people is desirable
but I can't please people
in a mass fashion, in a routine fashion:
pleasing is so personal.

This means I should know
each member of my business public.

It is obvious that each person
is different from the other.

It is obvious that each person is unique.

It is obvious that each person is complex.

It is not so obvious
but it is true that
each person is changingly complex.
To understand a person therefore is not easy;
but it is essential.

People have told me: "If I were you".
I have also said: "If I were you".
When I think it over,
I find I have been impulsive.
What do I mean by "you"?

You are the product of your past
and so am I the product of my past.
Unless I know all that has gone before now,
how can I say, "If I were you"?

It is not merely
what events have happened so far
that make the "you"
but also the way
you have reacted to them.

And how you react to an event
depends in part upon your purpose.

It means more.

It means the pressures around you,
pressures that were,
pressures that are,
and pressures that would be.
Those pressures too are changing.

The person, the past, the purpose, the pressures –
at least these are four major variables.
The interactions and the end product
make you or me.

I know I cannot adequately understand you –
or, even me!

But I should make an attempt to –
if I were to please you,
if I were not to belittle you,
even unconsciously,
if I wish to build relationship.

By introducing this element,
I know I am making my business difficult;
but bypassing this understanding,
I find I will be making business
much more difficult –
again in terms of tomorrow.
Life is short
but not short enough,
for reactions not to happen.

What concerns me is
not merely repeat business,
but business as a system,
as a way of living.

I can say:

"I will do what I please
and you do what you please";
and still be in business.

But how long,
and how well?

We may argue that people have done so
for centuries
and we have not been 'written off';
but the rate of change has accelerated,
and we are already seeing
the signs of the times.

Past in this sense, at any rate,
is no clue to the future.

30 *If the Other Man Does Not Respond*

I am a businessman –
I am also a human being.

If people are not responsive,
I start wondering:
Why should I go about this way any more?
I am not in the charity or sentiment business.
I want a happy response
and promptly.

I have asked myself this question
and here are some reactions.
Probably you have something better
arising out of your experience.

I am in a position to lead –
I can take the initiative.
I see its significance much more clearly –
I will like to take the lead.
I also see the implications of not taking the lead –

the consequences can be worse –
and I *should* take the lead.

What of the response?

My experience is that people respond –
but people differ in their response;
some respond better and quicker than others.

This response partly
depends on their past,
personal, historical and social.

It is possible, for example,
that it is a case of
'once bitten twice shy'.
It may also be due
to the prevailing attitude
of the average businessman.

The business community, unfortunately,
has come to be associated with the behavior
"me and my money at any cost",
"all is fair in love and war
and business is war".

Though only a small percentage,
there are enough black sheep
in the business community
that make their painful presence felt;

they do not care for the good life of the society –
they do not hesitate to mix salt with fertilizer,
and white stone with rice.
So long as such people – a small percentage maybe –
are allowed to exist and revel,
the people will be suspicious of our moves,
however sincere and graceful.

There is this silver lining though.

**In our country,
the large majority respond,
well and promptly,
to graceful behavior.
This may be due to tradition,
culture or man's basic goodness.
The large majority are not calculative;
they are pleased
even with gestures and tokens.
They concede
we can change for the better;
and they do forgive;
they are easy to please.**

But this picture is fast changing
and hence the urgency.

Unless we in business gear ourselves

for this change,
we may be caught napping;
and it may be then too late to make amends.
That is why I am talking
about this tomorrow
so often.

Section II

A FURTHER PROBE INTO RELATIONSHIPS -

the inner man

31 *Why a Further Probe?*

Being in a leadership position
we are able to *initiate* action.

The action we have considered so far
relates in good part to the outer man.

Important as this external part is,
we know it is hardly enough;
at least in our country.

This has to be backed by something
more substantial, more basic;
this is particularly true in such relations
as are of a continuing nature.

In such relationships
the inner man plays a decisive part.
Inadequate external behaviour is at times forgiven,
if the internal substance is recognizable.

In the next few pages, therefore,
the probe goes a little deeper.

I agree there is another side.

I agree we too are human.

I agree that we cannot do without
favorable response from the other party.

I further agree there is a section of people
who do not respond,

who mistake gentleness for weakness

and who take undue advantage
of our pleasant purposefulness.

I concede that the smaller should not be permitted
to endanger the larger.

To this minority

we *should* give attention.

Before we do so,

let us give the majority the attention it deserves,

let us play *our* role in this relationship

and let us play it fully and well.

The further probe in relationships

may, in places,

sound a little metaphysical;

but the purpose continues

to be practical.

If the core, the so called 'metaphysical',
is not given due attention,
we may not get the best from the other man.
Our basic premise is that we want
the other man to give the best he is capable of
gladly, gracefully, freely, voluntarily.
We should make this great giving possible on his part.
It is this objective that warrants this further probe.

32 *One Way That Works*

One thing we *can* do
to bring about a better response
to what we do
I have tried,
and it works.

People do what I **do**.

People watch.
If they find
that I am as good as my word
they respond better.

When I do a thing
and with conviction,
I need not even ask them.
They want to follow me.

There is truth in the Sanskrit saying:

*yata raja tata praja**

In a sense I am a raja –
in the sense I am in a leadership position.
Maybe in a small sphere,
if only in my home, say.

I know it is easier
to tell people what to do
than to do what I want my people to do –
but I have to pay the price of leadership.
Telling works only with a small section.
People find following easy;
and I should do the leading –
in action, not words.
I know I am saying the obvious.

I also know we are *not doing* the obvious –
at any rate I was not doing the obvious
until I got this awareness.

Again we go back to the saying:
People respond to
how you are rather than to who you are.

*Literally, as the King, so the subjects. In substance, as
the leader, so the follower.

If we want response
we should not merely concern ourselves
to the how of our behavior to others
but to the how of behavior generally.

PERSONAL MANGEMENT should **precede**
personnel management.

33 *One Way That May*

At least in more intimate circles,
another approach may be tried.

I have tried with some success
and that is why I speak about it.

Where I find the response
is unhelpfully slow,
where I find pushing the person will not help,
I pray to God.

I pray:
"Help him to turn to you for Light
and give him the guts to abide by it".

I do not pray:
"This is the right thing.
Bring him around to that view".

My reasoning is this:
There is a common light
and let us both turn to that source.
That way, a meeting of the minds is more possible.

This 'both turning to the same source'
makes me pray for Light for myself;
this further tells me that
I should be amenable to change myself.

The art of prayer is not difficult perhaps;
but to us, the educated, it is not easy.
We have limited ourselves to the mental level –
we are unable to even concede other levels.

I do not wish to generalize –
I have too few instances
to make a generalization on –
but I will mention this
as a distinct possibility.
In a person to person relationship,
prayer seems to have good possibilities.

34 *I Give Myself A Chance*

As a businessman,
I do not wish to lose a customer.

I do lose a customer
because of acts of commission or omission.

I also lose a customer for no fault of my own –
because of certain facts of life.

People generalize in our country
not only on the basis of a single experience
but on the basis of an odd hearsay.

Painful as it is to observe,
there is a fair bit of character assassination
going on all the time.
Either because it gives them a morbid delight
or because they are bent on injuring another,
people do use the opportunities
of power and proximity
in this direction.

I wish people in position
would make some effort to verify,
but most do not verify hearsays;
they react impulsively, irretrievably.

I wish they would at least tell me
and give me a chance to explain –
though I know they have made up their mind,
and I am meeting a hostile audience.
Even this concession I do not get.

In other words,
for no fault of my own,
I am damned,
and people keep back from me;
they will not volunteer an opportunity for me
to look at the cause of quarrel
and make amends.

I want to win my customer back.

Crying over the existing phenomenon
will not get me back the customer
or the business relationship.

I find one approach helps
not invariably perhaps but often.

This is how I go about generally.
Though he has cut off the relationship,

I do not cut him off mentally.
I try to meet him,
apologize to him for the mental agony,
and seek his forgiveness
for harboring bitter feelings against him.
I do not ask him to renew the business with me.
I tell him I am anxious
to put the relationship straight.

This perhaps is not quite realistic;
This certainly is not pleasant.
It calls for guts, patience and sincerity
but it often *works*.

35 *The Difficult Customer*

What of the difficult customer?

I have come across difficult customers.
Let me describe some of them.

Some want something for nothing.
Some would not give,
they would not let others give.
Some have an unfair sense of fairness.
Some say that business is a one way street.
Some tend to behave like rotten apples.

At one time I used to describe the following too
as 'difficult characters':
Those that do not obey me implicitly;
those that do not react to my behavior stoically;
those that do not bundle off their worries
before they reach my gate;
those that talk back to me;
those who do not smilingly respond to my whims;

those that are not docile;
those that tend to work for the common interests
as against my personal interests;
those who do not take it all lying down;
those who openly react to how I am.

My classification may be all wrong –
but I saw the need to redescribe
my difficult characters
in terms of my business,
good business and growing business,
business for today and tomorrow.

Happily, the difficult characters
are a small number.
As a percentage of population,
they are very small indeed.
This realization has helped me much.
When I looked at it in absolute terms
I used to react in a panicky fashion.

Though it is relatively smaller,
I agree,
this section can have undue
implications on the larger.

In the given situation,
I am responsible for the larger.
If the smaller is likely to defeat
the purpose of the larger,

it becomes a matter of choice for me:
Larger or the smaller?

In the first place,
I should not have permitted such 'smaller'
into my business public.
Secondly, I should have spotted it
early in the day,
and, in the larger interests,
promptly terminated the association.

Another possibility cannot be ruled out.

The person concerned might have been
a useful team member.
Some event in which he was involved
might have changed his outlook.
Probably I did not notice
and help him to adjust
or correct the situation.

In any case,
if because of ineptitude, poor judgement,
sentiments or whatever reasons,
the elements have stayed on
and they are playing the rotten apple,
surgery is what is indicated.

Even then the individual is **sacred**.
That he does not fit is often not his fault.

That I permitted him to come to the wrong place
or turn negative
is my fault too.
I should help him out.

This painless surgery is a deft art.

I do not want him to lose face –
I do not expect him to disappear from earth –
I still hope he may find his niche elsewhere.

I do not want to teach him a lesson –
he can *learn* a lesson;
but I cannot *teach* him a lesson.
If I try to, he may return the compliment!
Teaching me a lesson can be his full time job –
I have other jobs to do.

I want to help him out of a situation –
a situation that does him no good;
a situation that his continued presence
is likely to worsen.

I have found that
a legal contract is the least part of business,
positively speaking or negatively speaking.

Legally, I can 'protect' myself
with formalities and words –
but that is sham protection.

It is true he cannot haul me in the court –
he may not have the means nor the cleverness.
For that very reason he may
charge the atmosphere with his hatred.

AND THEN HE CAN VOTE.

Punishing him is hardly the answer.
If he deserves punishment,
so do I – for my poor judgement,
for my poor vigilance.
Let me not make him a scapegoat.

Probably,
a little understanding
and investigation
will help me
to help him adjust himself.
The approach
'what is wrong'
may provide a clue to an answer.

If establishing who is wrong
is the only way
to effect the separation,
by all means let us resort to it;
but let it be the last step
and not the first one.

What is involved is not only an individual;
it is the institution of business
that is symbolic of free life.
It is the requisite relationship.
If we in business
alienate sufficiently large sections of people –
and we are well on the way, I fear –
our children and children's children
will have no sympathy for us.
For want of a fairly simple skill,
let us not be damned by posterity.

All this requires that
I take a person-to-person approach,
I take a continuing interest
in the relationship with the business public,
I am prepared to make the necessary adjustments
and I am prepared to help others
make the needed adjustments.

36 *An Axiom With a Potential*

Even though
it looks fairly convincing,
when I try to look at things
through the other man's eyes,
the doing part I find difficult.

Though I do things
primarily for a business purpose,
I get the funny feeling
that I am doing too much for the other man,
that I will desist from it
but for the situational compulsion,
that in itself it is not worthwhile.
This feeling inhibits enthusiastic action.

Perhaps an ounce of cosmic sense
has made it easier for me
to take some of the core approaches
outlined elsewhere in these Reflections.
It rests on an axiom.

The axiom has been differently
but deftly expressed:

We are all one in Christ. (Bible)

We are all limbs of the same body. (Koran)

I am Thee. (Sufi)

You are not different from me.

We are sparks of the same Divinity. (Vedas)

According to this axiom,
when I do things special for you,
I don't do you a favor,
I do a favor to myself.

I know prosperous businessmen
and informed intellectuals like myself
cannot promptly stomach a statement like this.

That is why I call it an axiom and
"axioms cannot be proved or disproved":
I have learned in my mathematics classes.

I for one cannot afford to wait for the proof;
my business exigencies do not permit.
Also I have learned this:
Just because I am ignorant of
or indifferent to facts or events,
consequences do not desist from affecting me.

I may also confess a concern of mine;
Time I should make my friend;
otherwise it may turn my enemy.

You will see now
why I commend this axiom to myself.

When I pause and think of it,
I do not find living this faith that difficult.
In a limited fashion,
I have been living this axiom all along;
all of us have been living it in fact.

We have been living the faith
that our family is an integral part of ourselves.
Only most of us have kept this concept of 'family' static;
we have severely limited its scope.

The present proposition to my mind
is just one of continuously and consciously extending
the scope and sphere of operation
of this human family concept.

37 *Some Guideposts to Reflective Action*

Stemming from what we have seen so far, a few guideposts for action emerge. If we reflect on each of these guidelines, we may come up with pointers for action for our individual situation.

- Who constitutes my business public?
May I list them out?
- Is any member of that public walking away?
And for an avoidable reason?
- Is any member of that public being driven away?
And quite avoidably?
- What am I consciously doing
to retain their physical presence?
- And their mental presence?

- Am I adequately aware of the respective pluses of my business public?
- Do I make it plain to them that I *am* aware of their pluses?
- Do I take steps that will make them give liberally and give their best?
- Do I take steps that will make them anxious to give me or give through me?
- What steps am I taking to understand the members of my business public to serve as the basis for personal relationships?
- What precautions am I observing to prevent possible spoiling of relationships?
- What positive steps am I taking to build healthy, cordial, robust relationships with the business public?
- What more can I be doing so that I can compete in giving?
- Do I care for people; do I share with people enough?

- What vigilance measures am I taking so that difficult characters do not form part of my business public?
- What thoughtful measures am I working out so that difficult characters are helped or helped out?
- What can I hope to do to repair spoiled relationship?
- What system have I devised for myself so that **personal** management will precede **personnel** management, managing myself will precede managing others?

Afterword

The minute Dr. Atthreya showed me his book
I knew it was quite special.
It has a different format than most books;
it looks more like a poem
than a treatise on effective business practices.
But this format has an important benefit –
it insures that you will read every word.

This book promotes a fundamental truth:
that good business relations
must be both born and borne
from within the individual,
not impressed from the outside.

Many books provide quick tricks and techniques
that appear to give an advantage
in relating with others.
Many of these tricks and techniques work for a time,
but they require constant intentional "thinking"
on your part to make them effective.
This is because these techniques are external to you
and your underlying character.

This book works from the inside out
rather than from the outside in.
To make changes in the external success
of your business and personal relationships,
you must first make the changes within yourself
that will make this success inevitable.
Once you have done this
you will not have to think consciously
about your business relationships,
they will flow naturally and effortlessly towards success.
Assisting in this process is
the greatest gift this book can give.

As I said, this is a special book.
Special books are written by special authors,
and Dr. Atthreya is very special indeed.
His international fame as a business consultant
would take many pages to describe,
so I will focus instead on my impressions of him
when we first had a chance to discuss his book.
When you are in his presence
there is a special calm in the room.
This calm energy quiets the room
and makes focussed discussion quite easy.
It is as though his intention and warm grace
clarifies the atmosphere
and makes almost any topic easy to discuss.

That Dr. Atthreya has allowed his book to be published
in the United States is an honor for us all.

That he has chosen
Starsong Publications as his publisher
is a distinct honor for me.

David Thornburg
September, 1987

\$9.95

About the book

Are you in search of excellence? Are you looking for ways to win and keep customers, ways to get increased productivity from your own people? Are you looking for ways to build a climate for creative contributions?

Are you looking for ways to have a pleasant and purposeful home life? Are you looking for ways to spread good feelings around you and to reap the fruits of such spreading?

Through this book, a thinker from the Orient shares some delightful insights and pointers, in almost poetic language.

About the author

Dr. Nagam Atthreya is a student who keeps learning about humans being human; humans becoming divine; a researcher who studies role excellence and human excellence; an educator who focuses on the joy of learning, the joy of growing through the development of the whole brain and an author who strives to make complex things simple.

ISBN 0-942207-05-X