

Teddy's Tips on Leadership

“Americans learn only from catastrophes and not from experience.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt included this sentence in his autobiography, which he penned in 1913, four years after leaving the Presidency.

It seems quite apparent that this statement still holds true today. Consider the catastrophes that have occurred in the infancy of the 21st century and how ill prepared the United States was to deal with these.

Among the catastrophes in this century so far we include:

- The attacks by foreign terrorists on September 11, 2001.
- The ongoing war in Iraq.
- The hurricanes of 2004 and 2005.
- The increasing cost of energy.

Even though they did not directly affect the United States, other catastrophes include the tsunami of late 2004, which affected several nations, and terrorist bombings in Bali, Madrid, and London.

Theodore Roosevelt preached readiness. He took many steps during his Presidency to prevent and/or mitigate future catastrophes.

He anticipated that Japan would build itself into a formidable military power during the 20th century. In an effort to protect the west coast of the United States, he authorized the purchase of the land and bay that would later be developed into the US Naval Base in Pearl Harbor.

In a twist of irony, and some thirty-five years later, Pearl Harbor became the scene of a major catastrophe on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese military launched a surprise attack on US forces.

Preparing a nation for unforeseen catastrophes must be a very formidable task. And preparing your business for future catastrophes can also seem like a huge job itself.

But if you aren't preparing your business for the future, what hope do you have for sustaining your business in the long run?

Here are some questions to consider in preparing your business for a catastrophe.

- Do you have disability insurance to provide income in the event that you are disabled and unable to work?
- Do you have a back-up strategy and follow that strategy for your computer and computer files?
- Do you have a diversified business plan? Or do you have “all your eggs in one basket?”
- Do you analyze your business on a regular basis – determining what's working well, and what isn't?
- Do you have an exit strategy for your business?
- Do you study your industry and your competitors to identify business trends?

These and other questions can help you learn from experience and build a stronger and more long lasting business.

David Markovitz Brings Teddy Roosevelt Back to Life for You. David conducts keynote presentations as Teddy and conducts breakout workshops as David. Learn more about his programs at www.TeddyLeads.com.