



# GROWING INTERNAL QUALITIES

BY MARTIE DU PLESSIS

*"Businessman extraordinaire and investing genius Warren Buffett wants kids to learn about business at a young age – not so they can start buying stocks with their lunch money, but so they can develop smart habits that will help them in business and throughout their future. Warren Buffet reckons that when a child between ages 8-10 learns the basics of how finance works and how to behave in a business relationship, he or she can apply those lessons throughout their lives, not just for business, but for a person's happiness and even how their families develop" (www.inc.com).*

The reason Buffet gives this advice is purely because it is relevant for our times. Furthermore, this kind of advice from wise and mature business people is also needed since not enough time is dedicated during a full school day to prepare young people for this economy. Specialists are not so much in need for this economy as is the person that is willing to do anything to put food on the table.

An unfulfilled person is more likely to take part in violent mass actions than the one who is keeping himself busy with a daily task, bringing in funds needed to help raise a family. It affects the morale of a nation if there is no hope to become effective in applying oneself in your giftedness. It is a gift of God to be healthy and we must aim to work with our hands and mind, applying ourselves to our affairs (1 Thessalonians 4:11).

During my frequent consultations I remind parents (and other adults responsible for education) that they are able to influence their children from young to have their own business, and also to have them practice different skills and components required in a business.

Critical to the success of any business are the 4 P's which make up the standard marketing mix: **Price, Product, Place and Promotion.** This simply means that no matter what product or business you have, it needs to be promoted so that people can buy into it. All 4 P's need to get equal attention for a business to work. Others must become aware of your product or have an interest in it or know what kind of services you are offering. "The marketing mix refers to the set of actions, or tactics, that a company uses to promote its brand or product in the market" (purelybranded.com/insights/the-four-ps-of-marketing).

Some people do not have the natural ability to promote either a business or themselves. They are either too introverted or nervous, and at times feel "too intelligent" to sell a product to others or to talk in front of others. A parent with this kind of hesitancy will find it harder to guide their child in this economy as they will only rely on the systems they knew in such as 12 years of school, a matric certificate, and then a degree. Also, this type of shy child would do well in academic subjects but when it comes to expressing themselves, he or she will find it hard to creatively express himself in person and on paper. This person would find it hard to sell or promote anything, even though they might have all the knowledge.

The current world economy requires people to be more risk taking, flexible and entrepreneurial. In some instances companies require prospective employees to prove to the company

directors why they must employ him or her. Failing to do so adequately may, in some instances, result in the candidate not getting the job, even if he or she is technically and academically qualified for the job.

As believers, we are children of God and with His Spirit in us are able to learn new skills, take steps into the unknown and go places that we never would otherwise dare to go, all for the sake of being relevant in the Kingdom.

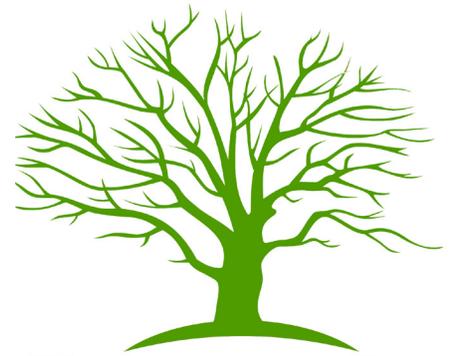
I urge parents and other educators to guide and groom children from a young age to excel in the skill of public speaking. Also to grow the willingness to promote a cause, product or value when needed. This promotion can be digital where, for instance, writing on a blog, advertising through web pages, answering product questions through email requires no public speaking. The more introverted child does not have to be an extrovert to have a successful business, but he must be willing to take his product to the market. Being aware of their introverted nature they can compensate by using digital tools to assist in tasks, or work interdependently with others to do the marketing.

It is clear that other kind of skills are needed for this economy and the typical "naughty, strong-willed child" might have exactly the skills needed to 'make it' in this world ([www.inc.com](http://www.inc.com)).

### Practical guidance to parents:

1. Communication is a very important skill, so parents must make sure their children can speak to others and get, or relay information adequately, whether verbally or digitally.
2. If a child has unwillingness in doing this, it needs to be exercised in a safe environment, namely the home or a small group. Talk to your children in the car, let them tell you what they have learnt during the day. Let them record themselves when they speak on your cell phone, which will be harder for the introvert.
3. Let your children start with their own businesses even if it is the wrong business and they might fail. It is what they learn in the process that is important – it is as important to learn what you don't want to do as it is to learn what you want to do as a venture.
4. The character development in the process of mentoring your children is much more important. It is not just about making money but about finding your unique place in this world and how we can make this world a better place by purposefully interacting with God's people and His gifts. It is about growing the internal qualities for this economy, which is, for example, perseverance, dedication, honesty, and integrity.

At the age of fifteen, Jesus became a full-time apprentice in Joseph's workshop. Apart from teaching his son the Law, it was a Jewish father's duty to teach his son a trade. He was a carpenter. A trade in Palestine was a family enterprise. "As there was no institution for vocational training, the son would learn the trade through being taught by either his father or another male relative on the basis of apprenticeship. The instruction method was essentially oral" (Gunter Krall, *Man: Mentoring for Mission*). For years I have advocated that education is simple and it is as a part of life as eating, drinking and sleeping. However, most families do not realise the full benefits of it as do not apply it enough in their daily lives. One reason is that fathers are not talking enough to their children. If parents teach their children everything they know, their children will know more than what they ever could learn in a school, but often parents fail to do that. My final advice is to invest in a large family table and use every opportunity to communicate, to interact and then duplicate through close association. ❏



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