

Each Life A Legacy!



By Bob 'Idea Man' Hooey

Our life is a portrait of who we are - autograph your life with style! The *tapestry of our lives* is inter-woven with the lives of those we connect with on a daily basis. Whether we realize it or not, our life leaves a legacy. People we know, work or live with will have a lasting impression based on their experience with us. Why is it, we wait until they are gone to acknowledge the important people in our life? Life is a choice...

I live part of the year in the country North-east of Edmonton, Alberta. It is a quieter, more rustic type of life. As I drive some of the rural highways, I see scenes like this one along the way. What used to be homes, inhabited by families with dreams of building a life together? Homes now left to fall apart, torn and worn by the winds and the rain. Homes left to the elements when the people who used to live there moved on. Houses that became interesting pictures of broken down buildings in a field. I wonder what happened? And yet, I see some older homes (like the one I purchased), lovingly cared for, passed on from father to son, family-to-family, still vibrant with life. What makes the difference, I wonder?

I see too, old, dilapidated, broken down, boarded up buildings that once housed thriving businesses that served their communities and customers. What happened? Did the business thrive and move to a better location? Did it miss the changes in customer needs and slowly die? What makes the difference, I wonder?

What legacy will you leave behind? When your time is done at your work, or here on earth, what legacy would you like to leave? What picture would you like your team, your co-leaders and the community to remember about your contributions and work here? What would be the ultimate comment or testimonial on your life and contributions in pioneering this living life as an adventure?

- **Why not leave a lasting legacy that has contributed in a positive way?**

Once we understand that we leave a legacy behind, we can make a conscious choice to ensure it is a positive one. We can choose to invest our time, resources and energies in those activities and those organizations that create lasting value and in the lives of those we love and respect. As leaders and pioneers, we have that opportunity to invest in the lives of those we lead. That can leave a lasting legacy in their lives and the lives of those they touch.

My parents passed away in 1999. Their death left a big hole in the lives of my sister, her husband, and myself. More importantly, they left a *legacy of love and commitment to community service* that has been ingrained in our lives. Their legacy lives on in our lives.

- **Acknowledging the accomplishments and contributions of those around us!**

Over the years I've learned that people all too often die unacknowledged and unappreciated. This is one of the biggest losses in our rich culture and legacy as a nation. This is the biggest loss in the changing tapestry of any living organization or group. We have people who have made an impact in our lives, who have made a *genuine* difference. ***They don't know – because we never told them!*** Resolve to tell people now. Tell them often how important they are in your lives and where they have made a difference! It can be the most valuable gift you can give them. This can be such a wonderful legacy as a leader – to tell people now how you appreciate them, and to share a positive encouragement as they seek to grow in their respective roles.

- **Investing in the lives of others can be our best legacy!**

I've often heard, "*you can't take it with you!*" Interesting thought! In one sense it is true. When we pass away we leave everything we once held important behind. I've yet to see a hearse pulling a u-haul trailer. If we take true leadership with our time and resources we can invest them in the people we want to help now, and in those who might be joining us one day. Think of all the people who have invested in your life and your success to date. Some have passed away, and some have moved on to different roles and careers. Their investment in you is still paying dividends, as you continue to grow and pass on what they taught you. You have been given that opportunity to pass it forward in your team members. The most important activity and time value is investing in our team for their success on the job. Your gift, as a trainer, is based on equipping them to win. As leaders, this is our gift!

- **Realize the impact you have, and choose to make it a dynamic one!**

We make an impact on the lives of others each day and in each encounter we have with them. We have an impact on strangers and on people who we may not even know. Like the ripples on a lake that bounce off each other, we do have an impact and we change the patterns of those we connect with, as do they who connect with us.

One of the most decisive and productive decisions I made was to undertake to make a difference in my life, to leave a *positive* legacy behind me. To leave a *legacy of empowered* and encouraged people, audiences, readers and family and friends who knew I loved and cared enough to give my very best. Who knew I believed in them and prayed for their success and success in life! To making sure my words, written and verbal were based in truth, delivered in love and focused on enhancing the positive opportunities in life.

Thank you for investing your time and allowing me to be a part of your on-going legacy. Thanks for investing the time in reading this article. **I'd like to thank you in advance for deciding to make your life, your work and your community involvement a living legacy.**

God willing, I have quite a few more productive years ahead of me. I have new articles and book ideas to birth, countries I want to visit, and friends around the world I have not met as yet. ☺

Regardless of the time remaining, I hope that when I go, I leave a legacy as rich and deep as those of my parents Ron and Marge Hooley. I would be blessed indeed, if I were able to leave that kind of legacy behind. My time with you is now a part of their legacy and yours.

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Bob 'Idea Man' Hooley is a sought after productivity strategist, creativity catalyst and idea farmer, who regularly writes for North American consumer, association and trade journals, on-line magazines and company intranets. He is the author of ten success books, a mini-book series, four success systems and an e-book series. Bob was the 48th person in the history of Toastmasters International to earn their coveted professional level Accredited Speaker designation. Bob is a motivational, business and association keynote conference speaker and executive leadership trainer and coach. He is a professional member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers and the International Federation for Professional Speakers. **Visit his website for additional leadership, business and career development articles like this one:** www.ebusinesssuccess.biz