



# weLEAD Online Magazine

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A Short Story of  
**Personal & Organizational  
emPOWERMENT**  
Creating Company Environments that **ROCK**

## *Part 1*

By Michael Shenker



Next to my family, business is my life. One of the things I learned a long time ago is that if you want to be successful in life you have to first be successful in business and to be successful in business you have to go after what you want and not quit until you get it. No one is going to do it for you and no one is going to help you along the way. Life is difficult, full of obstacles and only the strong survive. I am a survivor. I started my company ten years ago with no money and today I have over 200 employees and three regional offices around the country. The *American Dream* come true.

One of my secrets for success is I enjoy going to the book store near my office and browsing through their inventory of biographies and WW II books because the strategies of war apply very easily to the strategies of business. And let's face it, business *is* war. I also like to enjoy a cup of hot green tea while I sit and read.

My wife recently tried to get me to read one of those hot New Age best sellers that she gave me as a gift. After picking it up several times I finally had to admit that I wasn't enjoying it. Not so much because it wasn't well written but because the content was so contrary to my way of thinking. So I decided to exchange it for something more to my liking. When I went to the book store the clerk, a friendly young man in his late twenties with longish hair and wire rimmed glasses, looked at me like I was making the biggest mistake of my life. He asked me why I was so eager to exchange it and I explained that it just wasn't my cup of tea.

“Well, I guess you’re just not ready,” he said in a very matter-of-fact manner. “That’s too bad too, it really is an excellent book and not because of all the hype.” He started to reach for the book.

“What do you mean, I’m not ready?” *as I recoiled. Who does this young punk think he’s talking to? Does he supply more than 200 people a place to go to work each day? I don’t think so.* “Ready for what?” I asked inquisitively, wanting to know what he meant.

“Evolve. That’s what it’s about. As a species we’ve reached a place in our evolution where we have to either evolve or become extinct. It’s pretty heavy.” He began to write on a slip of paper.

“Really? I didn’t get that from what I read.” To be honest I didn’t read that much, maybe half a chapter. “Maybe I didn’t give it enough of a chance.”

He stopped writing and looked at me. “Look, there’s a guy that we sometimes refer people to when it comes to books like this. He’s somewhat of an authority and if he likes you he might offer to help translate the information so that it makes more sense.”

Intrigued by this criterion, yet not really sure why I had agreed, I took him up on his offer and he gave me a name and number and I immediately gave Myron Cain a call. When we spoke he sounded a little gruff, like I was interrupting something. I told him about the book my wife gave me and he agreed to meet me at his home the following Saturday morning. He made a big deal about my being there at precisely 8:00 AM. Not before, not after; or not to come at all. He said that punctuality was a sign of character and if I couldn’t control my time, he wanted nothing to do with me.

Saturday morning I was standing on his front porch wondering if I was doing the right thing. I knocked on his door at precisely 8:00 AM and was greeted by what appeared to be a little old man who stood about five feet tall with a full head of shiny white hair. After I introduced myself, he politely ushered me into his living room. Although the room was not spacious it had a comfortable feel to it, and a big overstuffed couch which seemed to envelope me as I sat down. Myron moved with the ease and manner of a person half his age as he quickly straightened up the room picking up piles of magazines and books that lay scattered about. “I wasn’t sure you were going to show,” he said and then followed it with what could only be described as a pirate’s laugh. He then disappeared into the adjoining kitchen.

Without asking, he brought out a pot of hot green tea which wound up being the only libation we would have throughout the time I would spend with him. Once he poured us each a cup, he said, “I have zero tolerance for anyone who refuses to have an open mind to new ideas. Would that describe you?” he accusingly asked.

“No, it does not,” I quipped, resenting the implication. “The fact that I am here with you today demonstrates my willingness to learn something new. However, I’ll admit that this has not always been the case. For a long time I guess I let my success in business substantiate my perspective of the world, but for some reason that doesn’t seem to work quite as well anymore.

“You know Robert, I have done some checking up on you and I know that you own a very successful software development company here in town. I also know that you are highly respected amongst your peers, which is why I’m taking the time to meet with you today. Now what seems to be the problem with understanding the book?”

“Yes, I’m very proud of what I’ve been able to accomplish with my company. But to answer your question, the words are plain enough, yet it seems like my perspective of reality is contrary to what the book is saying and I’m having trouble making sense of it all.”

Myron gazed into my eyes as if to see if I was on the level and I got a weird sensation in the pit of my stomach. What in the hell was I doing here? For all I knew this guy was a serial killer who spiked the tea and was going to chop me up into little pieces! Yet, at the same time, I somehow sensed that this little man possessed a great deal of wisdom and that I would be passing up a valuable opportunity if I didn’t give him a fair chance.

Myron drank his tea, sat back in his chair contentedly with his eyes closed as he seemed to relish the moment. No one spoke as the silence became heavy when he suddenly opened his eyes and quietly asked, “Robert, do you know anything about Universal Truths?”

Although I had a few good guesses based upon seeing all of the Star Wars movies at least twice, I decided to plead the fifth. “No, not really.”

“The Universe in which we live, works on an entirely different set of rules and principles than those practiced by most folks. That’s why the world is so screwed up, or what I call *unempowered*. In fact, most people live their lives in total ignorance of these laws and by doing so, lead very unfulfilling, frustrating lives. If you want to understand the book and the way life actually works, you’ve got to understand and live by the Universal Laws which will transform you into an *empowered* being.”

Even though I was considered highly successful in the eyes of society I had to admit that something was definitely missing in my life and Myron’s words resonated deeply within me.

I started to say, “Well if I may, let me play devil’s advocate...”

Myron bolted from his chair like a gazelle with its tail on fire and brought his face about one inch from mine, "If you want to play devil's advocate, you can march your ass right out of here and not waste my time." He straightened himself up and looked down at me, "But if you want to understand the book, you've got to listen with the mind of a student, like your life depended on it, OK?"

As someone who's used to giving orders, I found Myron's tone quite objectionable to say the least, even inappropriate. Who does he think he's talking to? Yet at the same time I was able to sense something beyond the attitude and actions and I heard myself saying, "OK I didn't mean to upset you." I cautiously took another sip of tea, sat back and listened.

"What I'm going to share with you Robert, are truths that have been handed down through the ages and are sacred. In order to grasp their meaning, you must open your mind, have no expectations, listen to what I'm going to tell you and follow directions. Like you, I ran a successful company back on the East Coast until we were bought out by a large conglomerate. Since we are both businessmen, I'm going to put the information I'm going to share with you in a business context. That way you will be able to relate to it in a very real world sense, OK?"

"I'd like that very much," I said as I was beginning to think that maybe he wasn't so crazy after all. He sat back in his chair and proceeded, "The business world you live in Robert is unfriendly and competitive, wouldn't you agree?"

"Yes! Every time I turn around I'm either fighting a new competitor, dealing with shrinking margins or having to pull a rabbit out of a hat in order to maintain my stock value. I'm constantly fighting to keep my head above water. So yes, it's pretty unfriendly out there."

"Well Robert, what if I were to tell you that your unfriendly, competitive universe is just an illusion? An illusion that results in the lowest form of existence because it feeds on itself and continues to produce more of what you don't want ...more competition, continued shrinking margins, lower stock valuation, etcetera." He takes another sip of tea and continues.

"The truth is that the world is a friendly place with an abundant supply of everything you want and need and it is not necessary to fight or compete in order to share in its abundance. As opposed to *competing for a limited supply*, you can choose to *create* from an *unlimited supply* and by doing so, cease to be a victim of your circumstances," he said while rising from the chair and walking across the room to the massive book shelf that lined his walls.

Myron removed a small, worn-looking, leather bound edition from the shelf, looked fondly at it and began flipping through the pages. "Many years ago, a man who had been an abject failure most of his life, developed an understanding of this perspective and wrote a wonderful little book. Up until it's

writing, Wallace Wattles had spent most of his years searching for the answers that would turn his life around. Finally, in 1903, Wallace “got it” and wrote the 1903 classic, *The Science of Getting Rich*, a brilliant treatise on manifesting wealth which served as the prime motivating force behind the powerfully enlightening movie, *The Secret*. In one of the chapters, Wattles discusses the distinction between competition and creativity:”

He read aloud from the book:

***“There is a thinking stuff (energy) from which all things are made, and which, in its original state, permeates, penetrates, and fills the inner spaces of the Universe.***

***A thought in this substance produces the thing that is imaged by the thought.***

***Man can form things in his thought, and by impressing his thought upon formless substance can cause the thing he thinks about to be created.***

***In order to do this, man must pass from the competitive to the creative mind; otherwise he cannot be in harmony with the Formless Intelligence, which is always creative and never competitive in spirit.”***

Closing the book he approached me and said, "Robert, I would like to loan you this book and between now and next Saturday I want you to read this passage over and over until you are crystal clear about its meaning.”

“Next Saturday? You want me to come back?”

“If you are really sincere about learning, then yes. What we’ve discussed today is just the tip of the iceberg; the beginning of what could become a whole new you. I’ll see you next Saturday at 8 o’clock.”

He then gave me the book, abruptly turned, walked towards the door, opened it and bid me goodbye. His brisk dismissal reminded me of my long-gone college days when one of my professors decided to end the class abruptly. I stood and replied to my surprise, "Thank you Myron, I'll see you promptly at 8:00 AM next Saturday.”

As I walked away I couldn’t help but feel like a wuss. Here I am, a successful businessman, and I’m taking orders from this odd little old man as if he were my boss.

For some strange reason, I didn't seem to mind.

***About the author:***

**Michael Shenker, Human Performance Technologies' founder and President, has been involved with the human potential movement for over twenty five years. He has been a business management consultant, an entrepreneur and has been involved in all phases of personal and organizational development. Michael's clientele ranges from individuals interested in personal growth to Fortune 500 companies like AT&T, Bell Labs, Intel, Planning Research Corp., Pitney Bowes and Coldwell Banker. In his career, Michael has consulted to over 150 companies on organizational development, marketing, sales and creating profitable work place environments. Michael, his wife Susan, of thirty years, son Troy and daughter Samantha reside in Portland, Oregon.**

**The concepts and ideas in emPOWERMENT, Creating Company Environments That ROCK, exemplify the services provided by Michael Shenker and his organization. He specializes in working with business leaders in developing company environments that dramatically increase the ROI of human capital - their employees. For a free consultation, Michael Shenker can be reached by e-mail at [mshenker@a-teams.us](mailto:mshenker@a-teams.us).**

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