



The Christmas Message

December 2006

Volume 5 Issue 11

What is relevant today of the message delivered by a story that began more than 2000 years ago? Does it go beyond Christianity?

While I am not a Christian, I find myself moved each year at this time by the willingness of people to slow down a bit, to enjoy each other at Christmas parties, Christmas celebrations, and to be generous on Christmas day itself with the exchange of gifts¹.

I like Christmas because many positive messages come out of this annual occasion, the most widely celebrated in the world, acknowledged by, and observed in some way by, not only Christians, but also Jews, Moslems, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists and many other cultures. Included in the messages of Christmas are:

- Slow down and enjoy your fellow humans – at least for a few days
- Respect and tolerance are preferable to disrespect and intolerance
- It is better to give than to receive
- Strive for peace not war
- Celebrate together
- Family is important
- It should not be an 'eye-for-an-eye' vengeance but a 'turn-the-other-cheek' approach
- Forgiveness is preferable to retribution.

How do these ideas relate to business? Let's step back a bit and look.

After 40 years in the engineering business world I applied my, clock-like engineering mind, naively attempting to create an engineer's methodical approach to business – a mathematical equation for enterprise development, as it were. Amazingly to myself, I was successful, as evidenced by the fact that every business I touched over a five-year span, applying these methods, improved dramatically. I was so pleased with the results I decided to share the information with the world by describing the 'how' in a 12-volume book series called *The Respect Revolution*. The point is not that I wrote this over-stretched 2,600-page treatise, but that a mathematical answer worked very well indeed, was repeatable and could be applied to any business and in fact

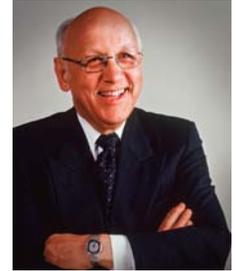
to any human endeavor: it is just as useful for non-profits and for government² as for business.

The premise on which the mathematical business solution development was written, recognized two initial facts and injected one initial imperative, as follows:

- Humans are responsible for success and they are responsible for failure
- Humans will not change, so there has to be an acceptance of human frailties and a way to work with them – not against them.
- If a formula could be developed for business success it would therefore ensure repeatability of that success. So the imperative was that the Holy Grail had to be some formula or some process for making business work with repeatability. A corollary is that a formula means that a system has to be put in place to make it work; good intentions are not enough.

It was only with these three premises in place that the project could be pursued. Fortunately, it resulted in a successful formula, as described herein.

While there is not space in a newsletter to quickly summarize the contents of 12 volumes, I find it quite remarkable that each of the Christmas messages above is embedded in *The Respect Revolution*. That fact alone is not in and of itself amazing but the interesting aspect is that these things MUST be in place to make the busi-



William E. Caswell

Bill Caswell is an experienced coach of CEOs and senior executives and the author of *The Respect Revolution*, a 12-book series written by a CEO for CEOs as a guide to getting companies to **Excellence**



The Respect Revolution

This 12-volume book series guides a business to **Excellence** and keeps it there.

Get your copy now, available at your local bookstore or at www.respectrevolution.com

Do you have topic ideas? Comments or questions?

Contact Upkar Bilkhu
CCCC

190 Bronson Ave. Suite 201
Ottawa, ON K1R 6H4
Tel: (613) 233-0700

Email:
ubilkhuc@caswellccc.com

www.caswellccc.com

¹ Of course, like anything driven to excess, the Christmas event can become a nuisance – but only if we allow it to. It is up to us to control our own Christmas experience.

² It has never been applied to government because government violates one of *The Respect Revolution's* basic premises, namely, that a superior must assign true authority down the line. What *The Respect Revolution* does is to illustrate this fundamental flaw in government. Until it is corrected, governments will remain dysfunctional and accountability will continue to elude them, regardless of the controls they try to inflict on their overstressed civil servants.



ness formulas work!!!! Without them the business formula and hence the business will fail. *The Respect Revolution* details why it will fail – why things work and why things don't work. The answers, taken from an engineer's analytical perspective, are logical and hence difficult to refute³. Better still, they are quite simple – as noted time and time again by CEO's who attend our information seminars. "This is straightforward; I know all that; I just couldn't put it all together the way you have."

Perhaps by extension we might find that without exercising these Christmas messages⁴ human society will fail. It certainly shows signs of failing now⁵. This is too monumental, daunting and philosophical a subject for a simple engineer's mind to wrap itself around presently. But, is it not food for thought?

What I can wrap my mind around, are the Christmas-derived points above that lie within *The Respect Revolution*. Addressing them one-by-one, they are:

Slow down and enjoy your fellow humans – at least for a few days

Volume I, *The Best Dam Business Book in the World*, begins by illustrating that people (disguised as beavers) can **enjoy** each other and have fun, that respect and discipline and results can accompany good times. This message is repeated in Volume II, *The Climb to Excellence*, where four types of personalities must come together to make things work and in Volume V, *Solving the Impossible Problem*, which illustrates that it takes a group to resolve problems, not an individual. However, this group shares camaraderie with each success.

Respect and tolerance are preferable to disrespect and intolerance

The name, *The Respect Revolution*, says it all. Volume II explains why **respect** is essential in the formula for success – dictated by simple mathematics, not a philosophy for life. And it gives 8 pieces of evidence of the dramatic business achievements when respect is applied using the leading companies in the world as examples of a quiet 50-year old respect revolution. Volume VIII, *Planning, Strategy and Structure*, shows how companies fail to manage acquisitions successfully if they do not **tolerate** the differences of the newly acquired firm.

It is better to give than to receive

Volume IX, *Feeding or Starving the Enterprise*, shows that if managers **give** employees control over their business lives, the positive results become multiplied. The book explains why it is so, and details the specifics of how to make sure you, as a manager, can make it happen.

Strive for peace not war

Volumes II, III (*The Evolution Pyramid*) and V deal with conflict stressing the need to defuse arguments to arrive at a **peaceful** settlements rather than escalating **wars** where the issue is long forgotten, displaced by personal animosities. Best of all, these

volumes show systems that will ensure defusing happens. Successful defusing does not rely on good will only, for good will is always short lived.

Celebrate together and Family is important

Volume XI, *Blasting into Business*, talks about uncooperative wolves being ostracized from the pack if they are not willing to **celebrate** and work together with the **family**. The result of that ostracizing often becomes fatal for the lone wolf who is unable to gather enough food without allies.

It should not be an 'eye-for-an-eye' vengeance but a 'turn-the-other-cheek' approach

The argument for 'defusing', mentioned earlier, and also from Volume VI, *The Pause before the Climb*, is that you have to view the other upset person as having a problem even if that individual's hostility is directed at you. If you make it your problem too by reacting angrily you will resolve nothing and fail to reach the objective you want. It is simple selfish interest that should have you **turn the other cheek**, for that will get the result you really want; the **vengeful** battle will get you nothing.

Forgiveness is preferable to retribution

A treatise on blame forms an key part to Volume II and later in Volume V, it is utilized by pointing out quite simply that if you blame, you will not arrive at a solution; if you remove blame, you will. After solving over 500 difficult problems this way, with a 100% success rate, I can say, with confidence that the evidence is in. Not only are the problems solved once and for all they are solved more quickly when blame and **retribution** are removed from the situation. Nobody likes to be blamed. Do you? Even if it were true, you do not like to hear it from others. If you are blamed you become defensive, uncooperative and moody. Often blaming is used as a means to avoid looking at your own culpability – and the odds are you did contribute something to the deteriorating situation. Worse, if you blame, you are guaranteed not to arrive at a permanent solution to the difficulty at hand. In order not to blame, you have to **forgive** the mistake and get on with building a better picture, engendering the cooperation of that person you would have so willingly blamed.

Here then, ends the lesson.

Have a merry Christmas and a happy holiday season.

Bill Caswell

³ After ten years espousing these tenets, no one has even come close to refuting them.

⁴ Remember this is a non-Christian writing here (although I do have a Christian heritage).

⁵ Iraq, Afghanistan, Darfur, Sri Lanka, Palestine, etc.