

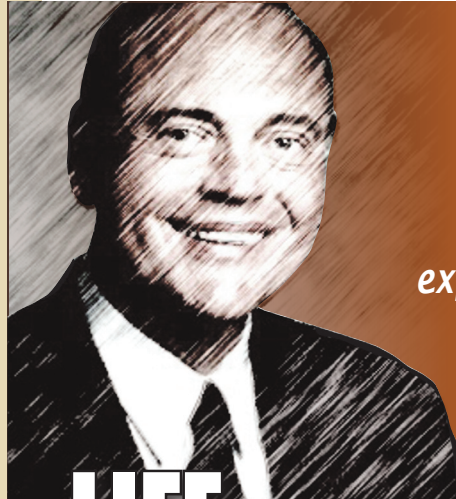
When I was a student, countless hours were spent each day poring over textbooks, manuals and case studies in order to learn the basics of my chosen profession. However, the reality is that the real insight and knowledge comes from daily, practical experiences gained from just living life and from conducting everyday business. I enjoyed school but I always felt that I was biding my time waiting for something big to happen. That something big was all about me moving forward with my life and becoming the captain of my own destiny.

I am certain that you have probably felt the same frustration.

All the knowledge gained in living your life will remain with you better and longer than anything studied from a book. These little bits of learning acquired through trial and tribulation wind up becoming a part of your soul to really make a difference in your life. They become the foundation for building your personal brand and helping to define who you are for those around you.

I would like to share with you 20 simple insights that I have found to be beneficial in my every day business; beliefs that have helped define my business career and many that have successfully carried over into my personal life as well. They are not complicated. Their simplicity keeps them top-of-mind and easy to remember.

1. I am always amazed at how many books are written each year about how to write a business plan. Most of these manuals encourage managers to create business plans that are novels instead of actionable guidelines. Keep your business plan to just one or two paragraphs and spend the rest of your time making your business happen.



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by Frank Brady

**LIFE** *the best teacher*

2. Bad people never stay. You just don't know the exact date they will leave but they will leave.

3. Never believe what others say about you. You are not the smartest, most brilliant, lifetime winner in the industry. You are normal and like most of us, quite ordinary. Through sticking to the basics and staying focused on doing business with determination and drive, you will be successful.

4. Put color in your life. Always invest in bright ties and scarves. It makes people remember you.

5. Bringing in a partner may not always be the best idea and should never be decided upon casually. I once knew a retailer who told me he brought in a partner so he would have someone with whom to share his losses. Partnerships are just like marriages but usually without the blessing of God. Tread carefully.

6. Invest every dollar you can in education throughout your life. This isn't limited to university courses but should include language programs, cooking schools, wine seminars and financial symposiums because all learning benefits the whole you and enhances your value in the marketplace. It also simply makes you happier and more fulfilled.

7. Be an example. People are always watching. The world is a crazy place chasing short-lived celebrities all over the Internet, in gossip magazines, and exposing bad behavior to all. Stand up for what is right and proper and stand out. It is OK to be different.

8. To create a business and establish it on a firm foundation usually takes at least five years. You can rush it but its foundation just might be built on sand and not able to survive the test of time.

9. The more dreams you have, the more dreams will come true. Dream every day.

10. Never do anything in life for money. Do everything in life to be the best.

11. Create hypothetical financial assumptions for your business. Next, never believe them or trust them. Recognize that no matter how great of a manager you are, you can't control all of the events or circumstances

that can impact your business. Have a strategy to deal with even the unimaginable.

12. Your travels and experiences serve to differentiate you from everyone else. Tell stories. It always brings people around.

13. No matter how much money you have, use what you own. Don't accumulate! Everything we have is only borrowed for a time.

14. All bullies you meet in life always become isolated and wind up playing in the sand box alone. It is a dead end.

15. The most valuable thing you can give someone is a great idea that they act on. Share!

16. Change, grow and evolve or risk becoming irrelevant.

17. Little touches of refinement and elegance can make you feel wonderful and very special. Have your orange juice at breakfast tomorrow in a Riedel glass and experience exactly what I mean.

18. Sometimes, the smartest things I have ever heard come from people under six years of age. Be open to what they are saying. The politics is always missing.

19. Be that light in every room you enter. People and opportunity will search you out.

20. Luck is very important to everyone. To turn up your luck, invest in building real relationships with a lot of people.

I am certain that most of you have written or recorded your own personal life lessons that you feel guide you in business, learned through making business happen, and growing your personal brand. If you would like to share them, we would love to read them.

Frank Brady has more than 30 years of experience in the gourmet housewares business as founder and CEO of Brady Marketing, a San Francisco-based sales and marketing company.