

Spirituality and Entrepreneurship

As a First Nations business executive with extensive experience serving clients from both aboriginal and mainstream organizations, I am personally committed to utilizing the profound spiritual wealth that characterizes indigenous cultures to promote new strategies for economic and social advancement. I am convinced that only by recognizing the unique worth of our various traditional values can aboriginal individuals and communities gain the confidence and motivation that lead to personal well-being and, consequently, to financial health. A respectful understanding of this heritage is also necessary for any non-indigenous organization anxious to serve the increasingly prosperous indigenous market or establish rewarding joint ventures.

The deep-rooted relationship between indigenous spiritual insight and sound economic development is a topic I have explored in other forums, and I believe it would be of genuine value to the community participants. In my work as a mediator, leadership consultant and motivational coach I have frequently witnessed the devastating effects that occur when decision-makers lose sight of the interpersonal, ethical aspects of their mandates. Divisiveness and lack of accountability frequently result from the absence of a shared vision. One of the most critical characteristics of leadership is the ability to transform the seeming failures of the past into a renewed determination to move forward. To have faith in the future requires focusing on "the big picture" and meeting internal, outward and historical challenges to corporate success. By revisiting traditional principles, aboriginal people can regain the wisdom to lead effectively, and this commitment to personal and professional excellence brings about a corresponding capacity for wealth creation.

Renewed motivation in turn allows cross-cultural partnerships to flourish Nationally and on an International level. Earlier this year I planned, developed and facilitated a workshop sponsored by First Nations communities and the Federal Government which focused on the need for partnerships in developing Northern Canada's rich resource base. This experience left me more committed than ever to the principle of mediating historical barriers to co-operation among entrepreneurs and indigenous communities so that genuinely productive resource management, the kind that respects the needs and interests of all stakeholders, can occur. My approach places emphasis on the ways in which reconnecting with one's spiritual heritage acts as a springboard to the formation of profitable partnerships.

I look forward to creating ongoing relationships and assisting in the development of " what it takes to be successful" in this extraordinary world of Entrepreneurship and Spirituality.

In Unity,
M.Thorpe & Associates Inc.