
The Entrepreneur

The Belden Center for Private Enterprise
Education

Winter 1-1-1980

The Entrepreneur (vol. 4, no. 2)

Don P. Diffine Ph.D.

Harding University, ddiffine@harding.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/belden-entrepreneur>

Recommended Citation

Diffine, D. P. (1980). The Entrepreneur (vol. 4, no. 2). Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/belden-entrepreneur/17>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Belden Center for Private Enterprise Education at Scholar Works at Harding. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Entrepreneur by an authorized administrator of Scholar Works at Harding. For more information, please contact scholarworks@harding.edu.





Vol. 4, No. 2

Winter, 1980

*A Newsletter of The Center for Private Enterprise Education
Harding University School of Business*

The Entrepreneur

This issue courtesy of Mr. Eugene Smith, President, G. T. Press, Dallas, Texas.

To The Graduating Class of Harding University

December, 1979

by

**D. R. Belden, President
Louver Manufacturing Company**

Lomanco's \$500,000 Gift Endows Clark David Belden Center for Private Enterprise Education

The Belden Center is dedicated to an extraordinary entrepreneur, Clark David Belden, founder of Louver Manufacturing Company, now located in Jacksonville, Arkansas. Mr. Belden had a firm belief in free enterprise and the basic principles that have made America a great nation.

Lomanco is currently owned and operated by his son, D. R. Belden, and third generation Beldens — all dedicated enterprisers in their own right.

We salute Lomanco and the Belden family for helping to keep free, private enterprise in business and for their generous contribution, in the memory of Clark David Belden, to assist Harding University in passing the word about the economic system that supports us so well.

Clark David Belden totally personified the *Entrepreneur's Credo*:

"I do not choose to be a common man. It is my right to be uncommon . . . if I can. I seek opportunity . . . not security. I do not wish to be a kept citizen, humbled and dulled by having the state look after me. I want to take the calculated risk; to dream and to build, to fail and to succeed.

I refuse to barter incentive for a dole; I prefer the challenges of life to the guaranteed existence; the thrill of fulfillment to the stale calm of Utopia. I will not trade freedom for beneficence nor my dignity for a handout. I will never cower before any master nor bend to any threat.

It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act for myself, to enjoy the benefit of my creations and to face the world boldly and say: This, with God's help, I have done. All this is what it means to be an Entrepreneur."

Dr. Ganus, members of the board, distinguished guests, grandparents, parents, students, and fellow classmates, today I speak to the graduating class on one of the most important days of your life — a day you have to be proud of. Enjoy it, for tomorrow, once again, you start at the bottom and begin working your way to the top.

I speak as both a parent and a fellow student. My inability to finish my courses and receive my degree does not make me jealous of you. It only makes me more aware of what you have accomplished and how very proud we are of all of you.

I have a son, Paul, who is graduating today, and I will tell you exactly what I would tell him if he came to me and said, "Dad, can we sit down and visit? It is getting close to graduation time, and I would like for you to tell me a little bit about your feelings on our government, the economy, business and your spiritual beliefs, before I enter the outside world." So, for the next few minutes, remember that I am talking to my son and the rest of the graduating class.

My year and a half as a student was one of the highlights of my life. I learned and enjoyed the teachers and my fellow students so very much. If any of you parents and grandparents in the audience have the time to take any of the courses offered at Harding, **do so!!!!** **You will find the experiences much more rewarding than learning material out of the textbook. I cannot recommend it enough.**

Let me start out by saying how very, very proud I am of you sons and daughters for having the ability and the staying power to remain with the education program

until you received your degree. Your determination shows the rest of the world that you are not someone who is going to come and go. It shows that if you take on a job, you are going to finish it.

This is important to the business people out here, and it should be important to you to know that when you entered college, four years seemed like a long time, but you have shown the rest of us that you care enough to finish what you start. And for that, we, as parents, and we, as business people, commend you. We are pleased that you have realized your need to take your place in the outside world and have prepared yourself to take that spot.

GOVERNMENT AND THE ECONOMY

Let's not talk about the government. Let's talk about **Us**. **We** are the government. Many of you will be voting in 1980 for the first time. Use that right, for it is because of this simple right that the government is **us**, not **them**.

Government is not too big, but I believe its bigness is at the wrong level. If an object is small at the bottom, and big at the top, it is more susceptible to falling over. The pyramids were built to last — large at the bottom and small at the top. This is the way I think our government should be.

I am not complaining about paying taxes, but I do question the way my tax dollar is spent. When I pay my income taxes, I would like to send ten percent to Washington, D.C. This ten percent is for the defense and foreign policies of our country. Twenty percent would be allotted to the state. This would be used for state schools, state roads, state police and other spending in which there was a savings in the purchasing of goods and services for the state.

The county that I live in would receive thirty percent for the betterment of that county and its residents. My last check, for forty percent of my tax dollar would be sent to the city Treasury to be used for the services of the community, the welfare programs, the work programs, the school programs, the police and fire departments, and to the many others in our community who serve us.

I believe that our local government can control and spend much more efficiently than Washington, D.C. For example, for every three dollars we send to Washington, D.C. for welfare, one dollar is given to the needy. I know we can improve on that.

What else would we accomplish? The money would be where we could control it. Let's hire the best possible people available to manage our community. If we have a city run by the mayor and city council, let's pay the mayor \$100,000 a year and the councilmen \$50,000.

Let's make it a job that will attract the most qualified people. Let's make it a job where no one can afford to play favorites to any single group. Put heavy fines and prison sentences on the abusers. Let's take an interest in the way our money is spent.

Let the people decide what they want and what they are willing to pay for. I believe that ninety percent of our problem comes through the fact that there are too many government agencies, too many local communities who are saying, "It's a freebie," or "If we can get it from the government, let's take it! Maybe we don't need it, but if we don't take it, somebody else will . . . Let's keep our hands out . . . Let's keep begging . . . Let's keep taking . . . Let's get everything before the other guy gets it."

Let's promote the free enterprise system by saying "Free Government." Bring the government to a level that we can understand and control. The politician today needs to start at the grassroots level, the local level, and learn that job first.

Regardless of the number of faults of our government, they are faults that we, ourselves, have created. The inflation and spending exists because we asked for it. Do not blame your politician; do not blame the President. Blame yourself; we are the ones that keep asking to spend, spend, spend. I know of no government agency that exists solely for the sake of writing checks; someone has asked for money, and this someone is "us", "We, the people".

So before government spending can cease within the budget, we must learn to take our own hands back first. Don't be so quick to say it's free money, or it comes from the government so it costs us nothing, because the government cannot give us anything that we don't give it first. So let's take our hands back and get into our own pockets, which we can better control.

INFLATION AND ENERGY

Two major problems our government is faced with today are inflation and energy. I don't know which is more important, but both are enemies and both are real. I believe one solution to the problem of inflation is less government spending; and there are a few things that we, as citizens, can do to stop inflation. We can quit excessive buying and borrowing and start saving more; then inflation will stop.

Inflation can be caused by the willingness of the American people to continue to pay the high spiraling prices for products that we do not necessarily need. Look at your next purchase very carefully. Do you really need it? Gas prices have gone up fifty to one hundred percent in the last six months.

How many of you have cut down your driving by that much? I know I have to some extent, but certainly not at the same percentage that gas has gone up. So pricing is not the problem, but the attitude that we take toward the pricing.

I must say to you, my children, in all honesty, this is the first time in the history of our government, that I can think of, that is economically sound for you to spend every dime that you have, plus every dime that you can borrow, and pay it back with the inflated dollar that is coming down the road.

It is wrong to have a country where there is no incentive to save, but only the incentive to be in debt. Excessive indebtedness takes all the initiative away from people. You cannot continually have the same drive, the same force behind you, if you are working to pay for something that you have already used, as you would for something that you want in the future. That is just good common sense; don't try to make it anything more.

The third thing that we must do to curb inflation, is to be more productive. We must take pride in what we manufacture, in what we produce and what we sell. We must give you a quality product that will last longer. We must try to figure out better ways to produce so that we can produce it cheaper.

The best way that we at Lomanco can fight inflation is not be accepting the thirteenn percent inflation rate, but by trying to produce more economically, and then only pass on the increases that we actually need.

If each one of us continually passes on the thirteen percent, there is no stopping inflation. Each person must produce a little bit more, or give a little bit more service than he has in the past. You cannot shrug off your duties, and do less than before, but get paid the same amount of money and expect inflation to stop. You must give more to receive more.

BUSINESS

Some, or most of you, will be entering the business world when you leave here. I start out by saying the university has taught you your ABC's, and in Harding's case, I think they added one more letter - D. But I say to you, come on out here, and we will teach you the rest of the alphabet.

It is not the dog-eat-dog world that some of you have been led to believe. It is a well run organization where only the good survive. We survive because we are constantly willing to change. School teaches you history; we teach you today, and you prepared for tomorrow. There is a lot yet to learn; and the older you get, the more you realize this. Some of the things I would suggest you consider before looking for a job would be these:

(1) What size company do you want to work for? Small - Medium - Large? And then, ask yourself, why?

(2) When being interviewed for a job, don't hesitate to ask about the company - the size, the sales volume, the profit and the growth potential. Or better yet, do your homework and find out who and what they are before the interview.

(3) Choose a company that makes a profit, or that will be making a profit very shortly. Remember, nothing falls off an empty wagon. If they don't make it, you can't.

(4) Don't ask about all the fringe benefits, vacations, hospitalization, retirement plans, etc. If they are good, he will tell you.

(5) Ask about opportunities. What the growth is expected to be in the next five years.

(6) After you receive the opportunity to be employed — and I say “opportunity” because you are not the answer to all of his problems — but he could be the answer to yours, remember that the chances of your making any money for your new company in the first six months are very slim. There is a 99 percent chance out of 100 percent that you will be a liability instead of an asset. But don't worry about this, your boss knows this, and he is investing in your future the same as you.

How can you become an asset instead of a liability? I would say by first learning everything you can about his company and how it operates. Secondly, don't offer changes and solutions until you know how he is presently doing it: the people and paperwork involved, etc. and then, and only then, make your suggestions known. Do your homework before you ask for time to make your suggestions.

(7) A company is made up of different departments. In our company, for instance, we have the sales department, accounting department, purchasing department, personnel department, engineering department, production department, credit department and financial department.

Each department must contribute to the overall profit. Don't limit your suggestions to only your department. The boss will be pleased that you are concerned about the company.

(8) Most of you have taken Dr. Burk's class on Christian business ethics. We appreciate your belief in God and our Savior Jesus Christ, and the honesty and concern for other human beings you will bring to our company.

(9) We look for people who are active in the community, who are willing to give of themselves without pay. No longer are we interested in the employee only from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We are interested in the whole person and what he or she is doing with their life. You cannot be one thing on the job and another person off the job.

The business world is ready for you — are you ready for us?

GOD AND MY FAITH

Kris Kristofferson recently wrote a song that tells it all for me in the first few lines. “Why me Lord? What have I ever done to deserve even one of the pleasures I've known?”

I am a born-again Christian. My birthday is October 27, 1965, just a little over fourteen years ago. That was the day I needed Him; that was the day I prayed to Him, and that was the day He came back into my life. I believed in God when I was young and He stayed with me

until the end of World War II. Someone once said, "There are no atheists in foxholes." I believe this.

After the war, I decided — remember I said I decided, not Jesus Christ — that God belonged to the young and the old — the young to protect and watch over them, and the old so that they would believe in the hereafter and not fear death. However, I did not want Him around to stop all my fun.

Well, He let me run my life without Him for nineteen years — nineteen long and miserable years. It has been fourteen short years since I have turned my will over to the care of God. Fourteen wonderful, fulfilling years. I no longer ask God to give me anything, for He knows what I need and when I should receive it. Now, when I talk to God, I talk about the needs of others.

You have all heard about the garden of Eden, but how many of you realize the garden of Eden you have within yourself. God has given you all the perfect plans for your own garden of Eden. He has given you honesty which represents the vegetables in your garden. Trust and faith are the fruit of your garden; and love represents the flowers in your garden.

But like any garden, it must be taken care of. The weeds in your garden represent dishonesty, jealousy and

mistrust — pull the weeds when they are small. Sow seeds of patience and water your garden with understanding.

Many miracles have happened to me, but I never recognized them at the time they were happening. I can say that the Lord has set me up for every major decision in my life. That is why I never ask Him, nor do I question what is happening to my life. He is at the wheel and he decides the direction in which I will go. The wonderful part of this is that it is so easy. Just let go and leave the direction to him.

God has been good to me. I am a rich man. Rich in material things, but richer in my garden. Dishonesty has been replaced by honesty — mistrust by trust — jealousy by respect — hate by love.

If you have heard anything I have said today, I hope it will be the part about love. Your lives will never be complete until you can say, "I hate no one." It is then that you will start to feel like a whole person.

Now I am starting to preach, and that was not what I wanted to do. I will close by saying congratulations to the graduating class; and I believe I speak for all parents when I say, Good Luck — We're proud of you, and we love you.



The
entrepreneur

*The Center for Private Enterprise Education
Harding University School of Business*

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage

PAID

PERMIT NO. 804
Dallas, Texas 75211

Winter, 1980