

FOREWORD

George M. Puccia, B. Comm. (U of T), C.A. (On), C.P.A. (II)
Sole Practitioner and Dale Carnegie Business Coach

“Working From Home & Making It Work®” could have easily been titled *“Walk A Mile In My Shoes”*. I have had the pleasure of getting to know and work with Sheri for more than twenty years. In my capacity as a Chartered Accountant, she was referred to me by a mutual friend and client when she started her first business.

I remember our initial meeting as if it had happened only yesterday. It was at her kitchen table, along with one of her most-trusted advisors, her husband. I had gone to meet with Sheri to interview her as a potential new client for my practice. It didn't take me long to realize that I was also being interviewed to potentially join her team of trusted advisors. We were able to connect immediately because Sheri was, *even then*, very adept at listening to understand and being able to discern if there would be a good fit between us. The rest, as they say, is history.

Therefore, when I was invited to prepare the foreword for Sheri's new book, I was more than pleased to do so; I was honoured. I knew the only difficulty I'd really have would be in finding the right words to adequately describe how Sheri has lived, learned from and developed these indispensable business and life skills to such a high level of success.

This book, as she writes, is the culmination of years of ongoing study, trial and error, as well as successes and failures. Sheri has had the benefit of countless experiences in her career. Some have been tremendously successful, *and a few less so*, but unlike many others, she saw them *all* as great learning opportunities which she now shares with us.

Hence, my alternate title *“Walk A Mile In My Shoes”*. Sheri has walked that mile, and then some, and is amply skilled to relay her knowledge and wisdom to us. As you read through, you may find yourself thinking on occasion, *“I have heard this before”*, and in fact you most likely have. There are plenty of *“motherhood”* statements which you might recall from your younger years, and they represent certain laws of nature that are critical to anyone's achievements.

One personal attribute that successful people must have is the ability to listen, and Sheri speaks to this principle with considerable insight. She emphasizes the importance of listening to CONNECT, UNDERSTAND and RELATE to others. The relevance of this essential concept is that in any business, the *answers* to most of the problems you encounter (or as I prefer to call them, challenges) come from listening. Your clients and colleagues will not only tell you what their concerns are, they will also give you the key ingredients to create optimum solutions together.

Sometimes it also means listening to yourself, by having some serious introspection or by giving yourself a pep talk to motivate and energize your efforts.

Your ability to listen is equally applicable to your business and personal life, and it will certainly determine the level of success you achieve in both.

The down-to-earth approach used to present this material makes it much simpler and easier to understand what it means to our business success, and how we can apply it effectively. Sheri's first-hand account of her own journey and growing pains reminds us how we too have had similar experiences. Most importantly, the

connection between *hearing* what we need to do to and *implementing* it is made much clearer and tangible for us. And by doing so, Sheri clearly demonstrates her own leadership ability.

Speaking of leadership, it's yet another example of a personal attribute exhibited by successful people. As Sheri points out, leadership is necessary in all aspects, whether you are operating a one-person show or a large corporation. It's clear that any quality which permeates all levels and sizes of an organization is core to its sustainability and growth. Personally, I can't think of anything written or taught on the subject of success that does not speak about leadership as a vital skill, and Sheri quite appropriately covers this on multiple levels.

More specifically, Sheri writes about leading yourself by being focused on who you are and who you are not and the importance of being OK with that definition. For me, this speaks to the fact that, in order to do well you must become confident. In order to be confident, you must be happy and comfortable with yourself. In other words, "Do you like the person that you see in the mirror?" Simply put, if you are not answering this in the affirmative, why would you (or anyone else for that matter) want to do business with you?

A phrase that comes to mind, which I have found to be absolutely true, is "WHAT YOU THINK, YOU CREATE!" Sheri clearly outlines the importance of having well-defined goals and objectives, so we know what we are trying to create. As well, she talks about the fundamental value of believing in those goals, and if you believe in yourself, others will also.

The other virtues of leadership include, but are not limited to, integrity and authenticity. Sheri underscores that leadership will neither be effective, nor long-standing, if there is no trace of these qualities as well.

I am confident as you read this book you will find many nuggets to assist you. You will recognize them because you'll constantly find yourself thinking "I can relate to that".

You will now also see how to effectively implement highly useful and positive changes to enrich and empower you in any situation. The unique difference here is that the message is being delivered by someone who has listened, lead and learned by "Walking A Mile In *Your* Shoes".

George M Puccia

Chartered Accountant, Kettleby, 2012