

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with The Family Business Institute.

Coming to the end of my business career, I did look back and I tried to identify the 10 most important things that I learned that helped me in my career, helped me help others as best I could, and maybe just got me to where I am today. So, very quickly, 10 things I learned.

Number one, be a learning machine. Read, study other leaders, know your industry. Just try to wake up a little bit smarter every day.

Number two, take care of your body. Find whatever physical pursuits, whether it be yoga, running. I play tennis, golf, and some other things, et cetera. Oh, and a hot tub is a great investment, recommend it highly for everybody.

Number three, tend to relationships. Dig deeper so you fully understand people. To deepen your relationships, you got to ask questions, you got to learn more about people, and you got to be open yourself and share of yourself too. That's how relationships deepen. Studies all show that relationships are the key to happiness and a long life. Family also is very important, and I couldn't agree more that it's the key to happiness.

Number four, be kind, be honest. Be generous with your time, with your spirit, with your money, if you have some that you can be generous with. Certainly, I found that goodness is its own reward. You feel like you've accomplished things that way, but I also feel like the rewards multiply for those who lead a good life.

Number five thing I've learned, be resilient. Life's going to throw you plenty of curveballs, plenty of slaps in the face, plenty of challenges. It's really how you respond I think that creates your success. You're not going to get through life without challenges. So, how you respond really is going to determine your success. There's a great joy of overcoming those things as well. By the way, in terms of being resilient, being mistake-free is not possible. What I found is if it were possible, it would be incredibly boring.

Number six, forgive and forget if necessary. Don't let petty squabbles or perceived slights create barriers particularly to relationships because those are so important. Don't let anger or failure define you. Learn the lesson, but then look forward, not back.

Number seven lesson, optimism is energizing, not just for yourself, for those around you. Look for the good in all aspects of life. Seek out the good and you'll find it, or it'll find you.

Number eight thing I learned, look in the mirror, not for vanity, but for reflection. Understanding yourself is just so important, so that you can become the best version of yourself. Don't look too long in the mirror though.

Number nine, when you get to a fork in the road, take it. I forget which famous actor made that statement a long time ago, but when you get to a fork in the road, take it. By that I don't mean that you should try everything good or bad, but don't let decisions bog you down. Each path is truly different and it's going to lead you to a different place in your life.

There's a lot of wonder in the unknown, I think, but as I look back at each path that I've chosen, I can see that they all led to the good in my life. My family, my career, my marriage, my children, the grandchildren, all the amazing experiences I've had, all of those came from the particular path that I happened upon and chose at some point for good or for bad. The other paths, well, I don't know, they're good to think about and dream about, but not to regret about.

Number 10 of the things I learned through my career and life, purpose and passion are the spices of life. I think if you pursue purpose and passion vigorously in your work, in your life, in your love, it's going to be great for you. So, those are the 10 things I learned.

Dennis Engelbrecht, Family Business Institute. Hoping you have a great life.