

# Humor Me

By Ronald P. Culberson

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## “Motivation in a Time of De-Motivation”

I’ve been called a motivational speaker. However, in my business, we don’t like that phrase. It implies that we jump around in front of audiences, spout inspirational clichés, pump everyone up, and then bound off the stage and not follow any of our own advice. That’s why, instead of motivational speaker, I prefer “life changing master of human potential.” Or not.

But now more than ever, our country needs a motivator. All we hear from the experts is that 2009 promises more doom and gloom. What we need is a good dose of positivity to change the course of this downward spiral. But our leaders are not always good at providing motivation to change. President Bush isn’t a good motivator because he can’t say nuclear. How can we be inspired by someone who can’t even change the way he pronounces a word? Barack Obama appears to be good at it. He got off to a good start with the phrase, “Change we can believe in.” By the way, I could definitely believe in some spare change from my investments this year.

It doesn’t really matter who motivates us as long as someone does. So, I thought I’d give it a shot. As we go into 2009, we need to focus on the positive and improve our outlook. We must pull ourselves up by the bootstraps and give ourselves a good kick in the pants (I suggest you stretch your hamstrings first). If success is going to be, it’s up to you and me. So, to inspire your journey through 2009, making it the best year ever, I offer these 10 time-tested motivational tips to jump start your attitudinator.

**When going gets tough, the tough get going.** This is one of the most misunderstood truths of all time. It means that if things are tough, get the hell out. There is no need to stick around and endure more hardship. Unless, of course, you’re into masochistic self-flagellation. Then, knock yourself out.

**If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.** We all know that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. I suggest that if you don’t succeed, give up before you get hurt. Remember, the second mouse got the cheese.

**The only difference between try and triumph is a little umph.** Ironically, “umph” is the sound my couch makes when I sit on it. So, it doesn’t matter whether you put your umph toward a noble goal or toward an episode of *24*, either way, it pays off big time.

**Failure is not an option.** While good in principle, I've disproved this theory time and time again. Of course, I did learn from my failures. For instance, even though you can only determine if the rewiring job was successful when the electricity is on, it's better to turn it off *while* you're working.

**Attitude is everything.** Well, almost. You can't buy a Lexus with an attitude. In fact, I've found that they won't even let you back on the lot.

**What your mind can conceive, it can achieve.** A truer statement has never been uttered. In fact, a regular guy like you and me, while daydreaming at work, conceived of Spider Solitaire, YouTube videos and internet porn. What a country.

**Just do it.** Nike should have been more specific. When it comes to plagiarism, armed robbery and donations to Nigeria, this principle has its pitfalls.

**When you shoot for the moon and come up short, you're still among the stars.** I experienced this principle first hand. As a teenager after giving into peer pressure, I mooned the patrons of a local Putt-Putt Golf Course. Indeed, I did see stars when my dad got home.

**Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country.** A framed copy of this wise statement now hangs on the walls of Fannie Mae, Freddy Mac, GM, Chrysler,.....

**You can either soar with the eagles or scratch with the chickens.** Or better yet, as my family physician once said, "It's never good to scratch a sore."

As you enter 2009 under the cloud of a failing economy, the disintegration of the automobile industry, an uncertain political future and the breakup of Madonna and Guy Ritchie, remember that every cloud has a silver lining. And due to the current value of silver, it's your job to coat your silver with imitation gold plating because it looks nicer and people will think it's worth more.

Happy New Year!

Until, next time, just humor me.

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