



WE LEARN AND GROW FROM ADVERSITY

What a challenging fall this has been, trying to get a wet, immature crop out of the field, dried and stored or sold.

If you are currently struggling with some sort of adversity, be it financial, family, business or personal, you're not alone. Some of the most successful people in business have overcome adversity and learned positive lessons that they, in a moment of candor, will admit have contributed to their success.

While meeting with a client recently I learned that he had lost over a half a million dollars when a supplier went bankrupt. He introduced me to J. Barry Griswell's and Bob Jennings' book, "The Adversity Paradox." It is a must read about many people who have overcome adversity and grown from the experience.

Over a decade ago I lost two jobs, then my wife Mardi and I lost our 20-year-old son in a car accident –

all within 14 months. That made me aware bad things can happen to anyone at any time. At the time it is difficult to visualize and capture the opportunity it presents, but there are always growth opportunities and learning experiences.

GRISWELL WRITES: "So often the most powerful catalyst for change lies in the place we'd least expect or want to find it – in adverse circumstances. Failure has a way of making us take stock of our careers and our lives, our progress toward dreams and goals, our strengths and weaknesses, our motivation and our daily work habits in a way that success does not. It can force us to take quick, decisive action without benefit of the usual safety nets, which can often reveal inner resources and abilities we wouldn't have otherwise known we possess."

When adversity hits, it's normal to think negative thoughts, be dis-

couraged and think of giving up. In his book, Griswell recommends the straight-A approach: Accept adversity, analyze it, approach it with the right attitude and tackle the entire process of self improvement with a healthy dose of "and then some" effort.

AN INVITATION

In January 2010, I again have the pleasure of being on the TEPAP faculty (The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers) directed by Danny Klinefelter of Texas A & M University. If you have not looked into this program, it's a great opportunity to meet some of the most successful farmers in the world. (See <http://tepap.tamu.edu>.)

My part of the program is "Public Relations Plan: What, Why and How" for agricultural producers. The most rewarding part of the program is learning about how participants have experienced difficult public relations challenges and managed them in such a way to have grown personally and professionally.

One way to prepare for adversity is to think through what you would do and how you would react if adversity happens. Hopefully, it never will. But in managing the large businesses you do, being prepared can often pay big dividends in financials as well as people. ◀◀

Moe Russell is president of Russell Consulting Group, Panora, IA. Russell provides risk management advice to clients in 34 states and Canada. For more risk management tips, check his Web site (www.russellconsultinggroup.net) or call toll-free 877-333-6135.



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