

# Downtime is the Opportune Time

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When the economy slows down, work slows down, or oil is down, some people feel pretty down. That is completely understandable given the circumstances, but never forget that within each crisis also rests an opportunity. I advise our clients and my friends that downtime is the opportune time to do what you didn't have time to do when everything was busy. It may not feel like it is, but this could be considered a gift if you have the right perspective.

How many of you have thought of taking a course or getting an advanced degree, but life was just too busy between work and home? How many of you have always wanted to start your own business, but with things so busy at work you just didn't have the time to spare for a new business venture? Perhaps you have your own business already, and you always wanted to expand it or diversify it, but when the economy was hot, you had only enough time to manage the clients, and no real time to focus on the next steps in your business. When times are good and business is booming, who has the time to spare?

We all have things we want to do, but when times are good we are often too busy to try them. We say to ourselves, "I will work on them when I have more time." But when times are slow and we have that extra time, we become paralyzed by fear and uncertainty, and tell ourselves we will spend the time and money when things pick up. It is a vicious circle we put ourselves in, and it leads to doing nothing new, ever. We know from experience that nothing lasts forever. Good times turn into slow times, and slow times turn back into good times.

Worrying and waiting has never turned bad situations into good ones. Only how you react to the bad times, your actions in the face of a challenge, can turn tough times into good times again. I know slowdowns are hard on many people. Trust me, I know. My advice, and my actions, are to face the challenge head on and find ways to turn downtime into something of which I can take advantage. We can all do that, whether you are a person, a business, a municipality or an organization. How are you going to use this downtime as the opportune time to be prepared for the next round of good times?

Success is most often a factor of attitude. People and businesses create their own luck, and they most often do so by taking advantage of the downtimes. Anyone can be successful when times are good, but it takes motivation and the right attitude to take advantage of these types of opportunities. As Warren Buffet famously said, "When everyone is afraid, be bold, and when everyone is bold, be afraid." What does you being bold look like in this time when everyone around you is scared?

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