

The year that was a “challenge”.



“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

It did not escape me that the one word that was repeated over and over again in holiday greetings this year was “challenging”. Ah yes, while other “pet terms” clamored for attention including demanding, testing, taxing, exacting, onerous, arduous, and grueling: the word “challenging” won hands down. So allow me to ask those that are still standing after the last 12 months in the small cap markets, especially in the resource sector, to take a mighty bow. As you know, there are many whose professional knee caps were bludgeoned along the 2015 pathway and many that only by the grace of God are still in business.

Perhaps, I am taking this too literally, but I lost at least one friend to suicide this year – as did many others. Many seemingly experienced tragic losses as news crossed the wire earlier this month with headlines like Alberta suicide rate leaps 30% in wake of mass oilpatch layoffs – there were numerous victims from the resource market “challenge”.

Now I know that if anyone’s friends reached out to any of us depressed about their financial status, we would all move a mountain or two to try and help them see that their lives are worth more than their portfolios. But easier said than done as we reinvent ourselves to increase our resiliency to what is perhaps a symptom of the global economy? But for those that have lost so much – and to whom their identity was their

wealth, this was a nasty “challenge” to whom few escaped.

So what can we do towards turning this “2015 challenge” into lessons learned for actionable and measurable rewards in 2016? Here are some notes from my plan-of-action towards manifesting wealth in 2016.

- 1. Think and Grow Rich:** I am currently reading a book titled “Think and Grow Rich” by Napoleon Hill that many of you have undoubtedly read, which offers the secret to wealth building in the title alone. Handed off to me by one of my favorite brokers, and then reinforced when a client to whom I respect said that it changed his life; my point in this is that simply said – *the Universe wants us to be prosperous*. And the mega-millionaires/billionaires all say the same thing and that’s you are what you think. It just ain’t that easy to plant wealth seeds in the sub-conscious when life stresses are on every corner...
- 2. Mastermind Formula:** The concept of the mastermind formula is simple, hang out with people smarter than you and you can sort out anything that faces you. This is one of the many things I love about InvestorIntel, we have brilliant writers and it really is the magic of our site. As Dr. Luc Duchesne told me on the phone earlier this year: “InvestorIntel can discriminate between exceptional content and crap.” And heck, if you are what you think, then you want to have high caliber content to read. Not to mention, an online community for debate and dialogue towards higher thinking, and voila, you’re tapping into the benefits of the mastermind formula.
- 3. Out-of-the-Box Thinking:** **“All fixed set patterns are incapable of adaptability or pliability. The truth is outside of all fixed patterns.” – Bruce Lee**
One of the perceived challenges of 2015 was the amount of change that the markets placed on all of us. Do we hold the line and hope that things will turn around? One

of our editors said “either the resource sector will be dead in 2016 or it will recover, there is no longer a middle ground.” I know I stayed on several paths way too long due to my commitment to my own model that in retrospect would have benefited from a more innovative response. Watched a film called “The Experimenter” on Christmas Day. Based on Dr. Milgram or the Milgram Experiment, he basically made the point that 80% of the time we hold an obedience to authority figures. Now how does knowing this help us in business? Well understanding that sometimes we are too busy following what we perceive to be societal norms we forget to question everything, clearly thinking out-of-the-box as often as we can is the only remedy. Consider? Did you buy stock because your favorite broker told you to? I did. The bottom-line is that embracing change is hard for all of us, as we prefer to be obedient to societal norms, and if we can challenge our thinking process, it often yields great results.

4. **Positive Energy:** I lost track of how much complaining I listened to last year. After all, I had a “challenge” or two and it wore me down hearing one issue after another that I could not solve. Bottom-line negative energy seemingly takes more time to recover from than positive energy. For instance, finding out your son has run your cell bill into the several thousand dollars plus range as one of my friends experienced over the holiday or finding out that you won several thousand dollars on a lottery ticket? Clearly the latter provides you with the added bonus of an extra skip in your step. In making our respective fortunes, understanding that we need more positives to secure more energy will help us make decisions that are right for us.
5. **Discipline:** How many glasses of wine helped nurse you through 2015 or am I simply projecting here? Perhaps an extra hour in the gym would have benefited me and my business more...*probably*. Let me add, don't be like me

and have the all or nothing approach. My life coach pointed out that my nutritional plan was so extreme that failure was imminent, and recommended that I deploy the plan 80% of the time. So I call it the 80% rule, and I like it so much, have made it my own.

So this next several weeks, expect public company stories highlighting those that defied gravity in 2015, and the ones we learned from. After all, with every challenge there is always a reward. For instance our writing and production talent has never been greater and this clearly will provide more competitive advantages for InvestorIntel as we prepare to rally into 2016.