

## **Work and Trade**

"Luck" is what they call it when hard work and open eyes finally pay off.

Almost every person owns at least one thing that he values less than you would value it. Almost every person values at least one thing that you own more than you would value it. Trade benefits everyone.

All work is trade. A fisherman trades his time and energy for fish. A farmer trades use of land, water, fertilizer and labor for a harvest.

Every trade or contract is between two equal and free partners. When there is coercion or force there is no trade or contract, but only theft.

When deciding whether or not to make an exchange, consider the cost to you. The cost to you is more than what is exchanged up front, but also includes trouble and energy of acquisition and maintenance.

Imagine yourself as your customer.

Have the best product or the lowest price, or content yourself with mediocrity. If mediocrity is all you have to offer you might as well offer it.

## **Innovation**

There are certain rules of thumb that always apply. Except for when they don't.

There are three means by which you may survive. The first is to cut your costs. The second is to make a higher quality product. The third is to create something unique.

Even if you're in the habit of seriously considering a thousand ideas every day, it will take about three years for you to have that one-in-a-million brilliant idea.

If you don't make any mistakes, you're not trying very hard.

You're only as valuable as your next idea.

## **Employment**

An employer who believes that the salaries he pays are worth more than the labor of the employees, or that the employees are worth less than he or she is personally, misunderstands and thus will fail at business.

Employer, employee and customer are free and equal agents. Employers are partners -- able to trade their currency elsewhere. Employees are partners -- able to trade their labor elsewhere. Customers are partners -- able to take their purchasing power elsewhere.

Hire people who love their work.

If you can avoid doing so, don't hire friends. Hire only people who you can respect, and who you can imagine as your friends. Having hired people, be friendly towards them.

## **Savings and Property**

Plant today, harvest tomorrow.

Liquid capital is useful because it is flexible. Capital property is valuable because it is either needed or wanted, and may be useful to create more items that are needed or wanted.

If you can use it, use it. If you can't use it, sell it to someone who can.

Once a debt is uncollectible, it ceases to be an asset and becomes an expense.

You're not using it and not going to use it; get it to someone who can.

Money is horseshit. Not tasty, not pretty, not good-smelling, and certainly not something you want to stuff under your mattress. But if you spread it out, you may get some return on your investment.

## **Government**

The role of government is to make trade between individuals or groups easier. Government does this by enforcing contracts, by printing a stable currency, by enforcing a criminal code that frees people in the marketplace from fear, and by maintaining soldiers and constabulary to free people in the marketplace from fear.

If a black market exists for a product, and an equivalent product can be purchased legally, then the government must be guilty of over-regulating or of playing favorites in industry.

An economy is a living, breathing thing. Exhaling is just as important as inhaling. A recession is just as necessary to an economy as exhaling is to a person.

An increase in the money supply reduces the power of each coin. If the money supply increases faster than the overall production strength of the economy (including the number of people working, and the efficiency at which they can work) then the average person is hurt in order to provide wealth to the entity printing more money. A decrease in the money supply makes it harder to pay off debts. This is because debts are owed on the past, lower, value of a coin, but must be paid in a like number of newer, more valuable, coins.

There's no such thing as a fair tax rate; by some measure or another, at least one person will always be hurt more than someone else under any tax regime.

There is not any absolute way to determine the best system of taxation; it depends on the culture, it's priorities, what people are used to, and what burdens people are expecting to be under. The best rule of thumb is that the tax system already in place is the best one, if only because it is the one to which people are already accustomed and for which they are already prepared.

## **Value**

Scarcity acts as a multiplier for value.

You always want just a little more than you have. This isn't greed so much as it is the case that friends, responsibilities and opportunities increase as capital increases.

You can seek security or you can seek your fortune.

One man's trash is another's treasure. The job of the middle-man is to convert trash into treasure.

Wealth comes in many forms.

## **Charity**

Life is not just or fair; each person has burdens, and only that person can know how heavy those burdens are. When people try to make amends for fate -- to attain cosmic justice in an unjust world -- they are dealing with the unknown, and at best are only shifting the burdens from one set of shoulders, to another set which carries its burdens more quietly and with more dignity. Responsibility is finding the strength to carry your burdens.

Every act of charity is selfish. The giver hopes to be treated as morally, materially or otherwise superior to

the recipient of the charity. The egalitarian, responsible and selfless person wishes to find other persons to partner and trade with.

A loan is not charity. It is an act between two free and equal parties. One trades liquid capital, and the other trades the promise of future capital. Because the money supply usually increases, and because the promise of money has little liquidity, the amount paid in the future is expected to be larger in order for the trade to be equitable.

There is a difference between a gift and charity. If I give you something, and believe that we are both made wealthier by you having it, it is a gift. If I give you something that benefits us both by you having it, it is an act of respect. So go ahead and buy your wife a beautiful dress, a nice dinner, and theater tickets; as you both will gain by this gift. Go ahead and give your friend advice and information, as you both will gain by this gift. Feed, clothe and love your children, as their well-being is your well-being. But do not perform the disrespectful act of charity -- of making your self-importance trump another's independence, of trying to buy another's soul.

No good deed goes unpunished.