

CONSEQUENCES

All entrepreneurs must face consequences for their decisions, right or wrong, every day of their lives. There are times when the decisions we make are considered in the gray area of truth and moral obligation. But what I have found in the business world is, compromise can be all too easy. It is imperative to seek out the path that will lead us to the better way of doing business. Taking the “high road” will free us from the burden of conscious and unconscious decisions that could lead us to pay for our indiscretions later on in life. The chosen path of an entrepreneur is treacherous, with daunting tasks and risks beyond pale. We expect rewards for our efforts as dictated by the risk reward factor.

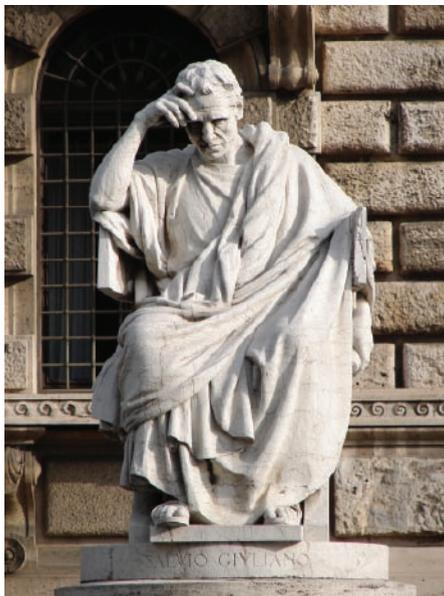
“Nothing is worth doing unless the consequences may be serious.”
George Bernard Shaw

I believe that we are solely responsible for our choices, and we have to accept the consequences of every deed, word, and thought throughout our lifetime. A man is responsible for his choices and must accept the consequences, whatever they may be. While we are free to choose our actions, we are not free to choose the consequences of our actions. For you can do whatever you want, but remember, it is also you who must face the consequences of what you have done. Men and women who are in earnest are not afraid of consequences for their actions.

“A man does what he must—in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures—and that is the basis of all human morality.”
Winston Churchill

Consequences are inevitable. A decision made today will have consequences that can last years or even a lifetime. Consequences can be both positive and negative, but each is equally long lasting. When faced with choices about what path to take in life, there are advantages and disadvantages to all choices. All options could have the potential for surprises, joys, and sorrows.

Nonetheless, we must choose only one. Once chosen, we often cannot go back and see what it would have been like to choose the other. Making choices is a hard process, but necessary to progress forward in life. There are choices we must make in an instant, and then there are the decisions that keep us up at night. Both are vital in life and can have eternal consequences.



The choices we make in life, large or small, are ultimately responsible for our future. We cannot predict the outcomes of all decisions we make; often we have to make these decisions based on what we believe may provide us with the most fulfillment. Above all, we reflect on the choices we have made, and we too discover that they have made all the difference.

“Wisdom consists of the anticipation of consequences.”
Norman Cousins

Some of us plan for the future while others react to the chaos of the moment. If we anticipate the consequences for the actions we are about to enact, and seek wisdom before making a rash decision, we will have a greater success ratio in business and in life.

“We have made mistakes. In our haste to do all things for all people, we did not foresee the full consequences of our actions. And when the people raised their voices, we didn’t hear. But our deafness was only a temporary condition, and not an irreversible condition.”

Barbara Jordan

Each mistake that we have made will lead us to a greater experience, and the knowledge of our errors and misgivings will provide us with wisdom to not repeat the mistakes again. The fool allows the pressures of life to force him into repeating his errors, causing his undoing and falling from grace. Yet, that is only if we have had the consequences brought before us. A life without consequences will only lead to later doom.

“Everybody, soon or later, sits down to a banquet of consequences.”
Robert Louis Stevenson

Immanuel Kant believed that we all have the power to control our actions and refrain from doing what we know to be wrong, no matter how strong the temptation may be. This power is “free will,” and Kant illustrates it with a thought experiment: Suppose you feel what seems to be an irresistible temptation to do something you believe to be wrong. The opportunity is there before you. But imagine that in front of the house where you have this opportunity a gallows stands on which you would be hanged immediately after satisfying your desire. No doubt you would be able to control yourself after all. Your moral obligation makes your freedom evident to you. You either choose to do the right thing, or you choose to go along with your desire to preserve your own life. Either way, it will be your own, free decision. Hopefully the consequences of our actions will lead to repentance, to turn from our mischievous ways. This is only evidenced by our desire to please God, our family, our clients, and employees.