



The Leader's Response to the Economy: Resilience *Today's Economy Calls for Resilience*

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...The state of our current economy requires action, bold and swift...

—Barack Obama

As a nation, we are a resilient people. We bounce back. We recover from shock and move on. We let the light of resilience shine through adversity, hope through darkness, courage through peril. We are a people of honor, subject to life's pitfalls, challenges and derailments, but willing to stand up again, shake off old norms and make way for what is greater. In fact, sometimes it's the extreme challenges that clear the path toward greatness.

The leaders I met, whatever walk of life they were from, whatever institutions they were presiding over, always referred back to the same failure—something that happened to them that was personally difficult, even traumatic, something that made them feel that desper-

ate sense of hitting bottom—as something they thought was almost a necessity. It's as if at that moment the icon entered their soul; that moment created the resilience that leaders need.

—Warren G Bennis

And here we are, being called on to pick ourselves up from an economic disaster, recover our wits and create a resourceful response to business, investment, and employment. We can count on change as our evolution continues at its ever-increasing pace. And we can look to resilience as our number one response strategy.

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

—Confucius

Resilience is a common thread in stories of triumph—the rising up of the human spirit to overcome hardship and odds that present only the tiniest glimmer of possibility. The intangible quality of

resilience drives action, bold and swift, when all the other oppressive options seem sure to prevail. So what is this resilience? What is this enduring spark of human spirit that leads us forward and clears the path? How can the energy of resilience be harnessed and cultivated by individuals, families, teams, communities, organizations, and nations?

Resilience goes beyond intellectual intelligence into the realms of emotional and spiritual intelligence. It has its roots in trust. Not only in trust as defined by confidence but in a deep self-trust and in the broader definition of trust that moves into the spiritual realm of faith, unity awareness and oneness.

People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

—Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Resilience implies letting go, embracing change rather than fighting it. It means getting back up after a fall, moving on after the wounds heal, looking forward rather than backward. It means saying “yes” when there are still questions about the how, where, when and even if. It means latching on to courage instead of wallowing in weakness. It means having the courageous conversation and thought, taking the courageous action, and cultivating the mindset of courage.

Resilience thrives on optimism—not the rose-colored glasses optimism that blinds us to reality, shortcomings, or obstacles. Rather, it is optimism that fosters trust, finds a way, one that embodies will, determination and persistence.

This resilience happens in the creative space of the spirit—ready to play, experiment, invent and dance with possibilities. Resilience creates fresh perspectives and new ways of thinking. It opens options not yet considered and designs strategies to overpower the barriers. It creates the “what if anything were possible?” attitude and the energy to manifest it.

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.

—Albert Einstein

Ultimately, resilience is about believing in potential more than in what interferes with potential. It is about the greatness in human beings and the power to choose what thought, what action will take us to that greatness. And it is about coming back to that over and over again, no matter what gets in the way.

Resilience is the hallmark of leadership and the fabric of any great story of human triumph. It’s what is called for now on so many levels as we move through these difficult times. It’s up to each one of us to respond, to call forth resilience and to cultivate it in ourselves and others for hope and sustainability. The economic stress is not greater than our resilience. Within resilience resides a sense of expanded possibility that yields more positive thoughts, deeds and experiences.

Problems are not stop signs, they’re guidelines.

—Robert H. Schuller

Let us respond with resilience. Let us trust in the potential of the human spirit to rise up out of this economic challenge with a new way forward. Leadership with resilience and hope are essential keys to our future.



About the Author



Since 1996, Margie has been contributing to major corporations and government agencies as an executive coach and coach mentor, assessments consultant, team development coach and group facilitator.

Margie works masterfully with an array of assessments to improve communications and relationships, match talent to job requirements and company culture, enhance performance management, and support succession planning. Margie combines coaching with assessments to optimize results and co-create positive change.

As a faculty member of Adler International Learning, she teaches coaching certification programs and coaching as a leadership competency to groups around the world. She has been instrumental in successfully planning and implementing cultures of positive change through coaching in several companies in partnership with colleagues and organization sponsors.

Margie’s Road to Resilience coaching model is among the top cutting-edge executive and team coaching programs with results that regularly exceed client goals and expectations.