

Why Settle for Lemonade?

by Bruce A. Love

*M*ost of us have heard the saying, "when life hands you a lemon, make lemonade." But what if everyone who has been handed one of life's lemons opens up a lemonade stand? There would be a glut of lemonade on the world market, falling prices, and worst of all, the smell of rotting lemons!

*F*ortunately, lemonade isn't the only thing that we can make with lemons. With the right ingredients and a good recipe book, I know I can make lemon bars or lemon bread. Someone with a more spirited approach might set out to make the best lemon daiquiri! The point is, as a chef, of sorts, you have many options available to you when life hands you a lemon. What you do with your lemon depends upon your skill, ingredients, and your desire to produce results! One very real option when you receive an occupational lemon (a get out of work free coupon) is to become your own boss!

*I*f your employer hands you a lemon in the form of a pink slip, the first thing you should do is examine the ingredients and cookbooks on the shelves of your metaphorical cupboard. A career Counselor would call this a personal assessment. The ingredients you find in your personal cupboards are the special skills you have that can be combined with your lemon to produce various results. These items may include the usual staple ingredients such as education and experience. Other ingredients may include many assets you have rarely, if ever, used in your careers. These unique ingredients can help you make that special dish that only you can create! Hidden in the back of many personal cupboards we frequently find hobbies, interests, and other skills that have existed only for their recreational

or social value. Is it a sin to turn the activities we love into our occupations? No! If you already love doing something, your passion for that activity could lead you to an enjoyable and successful career!

*T*here are two essential ingredients that I believe should be included in every new business recipe to guard against a flop - a dash perseverance and a pinch of persistence. Without these, you do not have a recipe for success. Perseverance is your ability to do something in spite of setbacks, which affect all business ventures. Persistence is your will, focus, and dedication to the chosen course.

*I*t is important for chefs to use cookbooks and recipes to organize their ingredients so that they are added in the right proportions at the right times and thereby ensure acceptable results. If you are not satisfied with the recipes you have, go to your local library or the Internet and research all the delectable possibilities. Frequently, we find that we are missing a key ingredient or two. You may need to purchase these. For some of us, bookkeeping is not a skill we possess. Not to worry, there are other chefs who specialize in this area and will be happy to supply those skills for a reasonable fee.

*B*y using your unique set of ingredients (skills, education, interests, and experience) along with a sprinkling of persistence and perseverance, and the talents of a line chef or two to handle business areas you would rather avoid, chances are you just might develop the ultimate desert from that lemon you were handed!

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