



*NEW YORK
TIMES
BESTSELLER*

**DONALD J.
TRUMP**
**THINK LIKE A
CHAMPION**

WITH MEREDITH MCIVER

Foreword By Robert Kiyosaki, Author of *Rich Dad Poor Dad*

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THINK LIKE A CHAMPION

*An Informal Education
In Business and Life*

DONALD J. TRUMP

with MEREDITH MCIVER



DA CAPO PRESS

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*To my parents,
Mary and Fred Trump*

FOREWORD

by Robert Kiyosaki

One of the benefits of working with Donald is observing him in action in real life. Over the years, I have gotten to know the real Donald, as well as the “celebrity Donald.” I have found he is the same person . . . In fact he is actually bigger in real life than his celebrity.

Working with him, I have observed him thinking, then listened to his thoughts become words and his thoughts and words become actions. In most instances, his thoughts, words, and actions are the same. Maybe this is why he is direct and blunt. He can be blunt because his thoughts, words, and actions are integrated, congruent, operating as one.

Many of us know people who are, actually, three people. They think one thing, say something else, and do not do what they say *or* think. I have observed these kinds of people, who are really three people, achieve limited success and live conflicted lives.

In early 1980, I lost my first major business. Losing everything was as horrible as you might expect. Losing everything gave power to the loser in me. Worst of all, I had lost confidence in myself. I knew what I had to do, but for some reason I simply did not do what I knew I had to do. My personal battle between 1980 and 1990 was to gain power over my own thoughts. To regain power over my thoughts, I began reading and listening to great thoughts from great people . . . and then made those thoughts mine. Slowly but surely, my business life began to turn and I began to win again.

In 1987, just after the stock market crashed, I came across Donald’s book *The Art of the Deal*. My wife Kim and I put aside everything we were doing and read that book. As the world was crashing down, we had the

opportunity and benefit—through Donald’s thoughts, words, and actions—to see the world of business. By 1994, Kim and I were financially free. In our quiet moments, Kim and I often discuss how Donald’s book inspired us to go on, even though the world was crashing down around us.

In 1997, reading his book *The Art of the Comeback* verified for us that we were following the thoughts of a great man. Very few people will talk publicly, much less write, about their mistakes, their lessons, and their comeback.

In 2004, Kim and I met Donald for the first time. Obviously he did not know who we were, yet he was extremely gracious and we thanked him for sharing his thoughts through his books.

In late 2006, Donald and I published our book, *Why We Want You To Be Rich: Two Men, One Message*. Fueled by our shared concern for people and our desire to teach, Donald and I collaborated on this book, predicting much of the financial chaos 2008 would bring.

It is an honor to write this Foreword for his book, *Think Like a Champion*, because teaching me to think like a champion is the gift Donald has given my wife and me . . . a gift he shares with the world . . . a gift more valuable than money.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, I have watched many people aspire to success. I am one of them, and while I haven't peaked yet, I've had a good share of success already. So I'm often asked what my "secrets" to success are. I don't think they're secrets, but every one of us needs to have a formula that works for him or her personally.

This collection of writing is an indication of the thought process that I believe can lead people to success. It has worked for me. It's another side to my personality—the more reflective side that reveals my sources and how I apply them to the big picture that is life. The persona you so often see via the world media is someone who is outgoing, confident, sometimes brash—but honest. One reason people like me is because I'm blunt. One reason people don't like me is because I'm blunt. But one reason I'm successful is that I can cut through nonsense quickly and get to the core of things.

Think Like a Champion is an example of that approach to life and business. I take a topic, think about it, dissect it, and put it back into a formula that becomes what I believe is solid advice. I have always relished putting time and energy into digging below the surface of a problem and coming up with a unique and effective answer.

While I was in school, my father, Fred C. Trump, would send inspirational quotes to me every week. Many of them were about leadership, how to be a champion in life. I learned a lot from them and I still refer to them, so they are included here for you.

I was fortunate to have a mentor in my life like my father, and I hope these writings will prove to be helpful to you. I would like to dedicate this book to the memory of my father and all that he taught me. I would hope that sharing these thoughts with you will provide you with guidance as well as inspiration.

—Donald J. Trump

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

—ELEANOR ROOSEVELT



Barack Obama Election Ushers in a Different World

After the election in November of 2008, I was interviewed by Dominic Carter of New York 1 (who has recently, as of late 2009, gone through a great deal with spousal abuse) on his program called “Inside City Hall.” New York 1 is an all-news program that is popular in New York City, and Dominic has a dynamic television presence. He describes me as “a man not known for keeping his opinions to himself,” and we covered some interesting topics.

Dominic asked about the election and I was honest about it. McCain was in an almost impossible situation. Bush had been so incompetent that any Republican would have a hard time unless they could bring back Eisenhower. Bush was a disaster for the country as well as for the Republican Party.

Then he asked me about Barack Obama. I told him that Barack will need to be a great president because we’re in serious trouble as a country. It hasn’t been this way since 1929. So he doesn’t have much choice—he will simply *have* to be great, which he has a very good chance of being.

What he has done is amazing. The fact that he accomplished what he has—in one year and against great odds—is truly phenomenal. If someone had asked me if a black man or woman could become president, I would have said yes, but not yet. Barack Obama proved that determination combined

with opportunity and intelligence can make things happen—and in an exceptional way.

He is not walking into an easy or enviable situation. As of October of 2008, the U.S. government reported a \$237 billion deficit. The good news is that Obama seems to be well aware of the situation. His comments have led me to believe that he understands how the economy works on a comprehensive level. He has also surrounded himself with very competent people, and that's the mark of a strong leader. I have confidence he will do his best, and we have someone who is serious about resolving the problems we have and will be facing in the future. To me that is very good news.

After 9/11, this country received a lot of compassion from countries and people around the world. Within a short amount of time, however, we were hated. How did that happen? We had no dialogue with other countries because they just plain hated us. What's different today is that we have a new chance, a new beginning. The world is excited about Barack Obama and the new United States. Let's keep it that way.

*Whatever games are played with us, we must play
no games with ourselves.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON



Essays, Assets, and Stephen King

In the *New York Times Book Review* of September 30, 2007, is an essay by Stephen King on the short story. As you most likely know, Stephen King is the prolific and very successful author of sixty books and nearly 400 short stories. One of his short stories won the O. Henry Prize in 1996. His point in his essay is that in reviewing the state of the short story today, he notes that they seem to “feel show-offy, and written for editors and teachers, rather than for readers.” This is an insightful comment and it got me to thinking about why we write and who we think our audience might be.

I like essays and so I can relate to the short story, although the short story is a fictional prose tale. The short story is not an easy medium, as any writer will tell you, because you must be concise. Essays are a bit the same, because they are succinct and specific. If you read Stephen King’s essay, you will see that he gets his point across beautifully in the span of one page.

I may not be Stephen King, but I can appreciate what he does. You may not be a mogul yet, but I think you can appreciate the complexities of what I have to deal with daily. Stephen King is pointing out that the market for short stories is limited these days, so the writers of short stories seem more determined than ever to make their mark—but on the editors who might be able to get their story into print, not the reader, who might be expecting to be entertained. A valid consideration, I will say. We all have target markets and the demographics are important, no matter what your industry may be.

In short, Stephen King is astutely acknowledging that the short story writers of today are protecting their assets by targeting their writing to the people who will most likely be able to get it into print. Their second consideration is the reader because, unless they consider the editor first, their reader will have no chance of ever seeing the short story, no matter how wonderful or how mediocre it might be. It's an intelligent approach, but I can understand the point Mr. King is making when he laments the fact that the stories seem prefabricated to appeal to a certain audience—editors and teachers, in this case.

When I build a residential building, for example, I will first consider who will be living there. I study the demographics, as does any business person, whether you're in advertising or residential property management. To get the message out, I will also have to appeal to the people who will choose—or not choose—to promote the building. By now, my name is big enough and equated with the gold standard to the extent that I don't have to say too much about it. The name Trump is a guarantee of a certain level of quality. Stephen King mentions that short stories seem to be delegated to the bottom shelf at the bookstores. He says the American short story is alive but not well these days. The main reason seems to be that the target market is simply dwindling.

I think that he does a spot-on analysis of the situation when he notices that the stories seem to be written for publication purposes, not for the edification of the reader. I know that if I did something that was intended to impress the so-called critics that I would be selling not only myself short, but other people as well. That's one reason I'm liked as well as disliked. In fact, one critic from the *New York Times*, Herbert Muschamp, mentioned that I do better when I choose to ignore my critics than when I pay attention to them. I have to agree, and Stephen King might agree to that as well when it comes to the fate of the short story.

Being true to yourself and your work is an asset. Remember that assets are worth protecting. No one will ever tell you it will be easy to stick to your own convictions, but I believe it is necessary. Otherwise, what are you doing and who are you doing it for? Keep it straight and simple. You will be richer—in more ways than one—in the long run.

There is one thing stronger than all the armies of the world, and that is an idea whose time has come.

—VICTOR HUGO



Innovation

People often talk about something new being “innovative.” Most of the time, it’s simply putting together existing elements to create what appears to be new. I was touted as being innovative when I came up with the mixed-use condominium and hotel tower, which I did with the Trump International Hotel & Tower in New York City. Since then, the concept has been copied (by myself and others) and it has proven to be tremendously successful, nationally and internationally.

To me, the idea was common sense, and I didn’t think I was being particularly creative. When I look back, maybe I was. But when I read subsequent articles about innovation and certain inventors, it got me thinking about how one might become an innovator, which is something I think is important for students to think about.

I remember reading about a composer named Steve Reich who came up with a new idea called phasing, which is like windshield wipers going in and out of synch. Apparently he was caught in a traffic jam one rainy day and the rhythm of the windshield wipers caught his attention and he applied what he heard to his musical compositions. He has had a significant influence on contemporary music, and I think he’s a great example as an innovator. Sometimes new ideas can come from something as mundane and functional as your windshield wipers. The key is to pay attention and keep your brain and senses open to new stimuli.

It also helps to be thinking of two things at once—multilevel focusing is what I call it. The intersecting of ideas is when innovation will follow—thinking in musical terms while listening to your windshield wipers, or thinking of a hotel tower and condominiums at one time, or maybe watching a stone roll and imagining a wheel. Who knows what will result? Sometimes it will be fantastic and other times it won't, but it gets the mind working in new dimensions that can sometimes prove fruitful.

This can also happen without deliberately attempting to be innovative, so the other technique to employ—consciously and unconsciously—is to keep an open mind. That's very important in business as well as in the creative arts. Don't limit yourself to staid thinking because you want to excel in business. My first book was called *The Art of the Deal* because I view business deals as being an art form. Maybe that's why I've been a successful dealmaker. I employ both sides of my brain when I'm thinking and working.

You may be aware of the number phi (pronounced "fee"), which has an astonishing history. It's been employed by people from Pythagoras to da Vinci, and most likely the builders of the pyramids used it as well. It's been around for a long time and the number itself is 1.6180339887. It's called the golden ratio, and if you want to know more specifics, you can read *The Golden Ratio* by Mario Livio, who goes into great detail about it. My point is that it appears that some people use the number deliberately, and other people know it subconsciously and it can appear in their work with or without intention. But it can be used intentionally, and very often is. It's very mysterious, as this ratio appears in unrelated works and natural phenomena, from the chambered nautilus to galaxies to artwork and architecture. It can make your innovative attempts a little easier when you make an effort to understand that there are mysteries in life and to be open to them.

I'm not advising you to dwell on the mysterious—a successful life requires common sense and hard work—but to be aware of things that are sometimes inexplicable because they can be a big step toward innovation. We don't really create, but we assemble what has been created for us. Be a great assembler—no matter what your interests may be—and you'll be on

your way to inventiveness. A big mind requires a variety of thoughts and impulses to keep it well occupied, so make sure you keep your mind engaged in the best ways possible. It could very well be your calling card for success.