

SAGE Manual

of Business Ideas and Best Practices

“A global community of teenage entrepreneurs
sharing a common purpose: to make the world a
better place”

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Introduction

The Big Picture

Welcome. Perhaps the most profound adventure of your young life is about to begin. You will have the opportunity to do what few people have done, namely, to be part of a team which runs an extraordinary business, through which you help your community and make money at the same time.

This manual, a companion to the SAGE adviser's handbook and the SAGE high-school team member's handbook, contains winning business ideas, as well as yet-to-be-tested ideas which pass the tests of "ethical" and "legal," but which improve on "traditional" and "business as usual." With any one of these ideas, your business becomes an *extraordinary* business, a cut above other businesses and worthy of loyal, long-term patronage by your community.

The most important lesson from this manual is about *self-reliance*, that is, learning how to take care of yourself, which is needed as much as a college degree these days. Self-reliance is best achieved through an extraordinary business as described in this manual and as run by you and teammates.

We believe that, through an extraordinary business, you and your teammates would be increasing your chance for success in life, as well as making a profound impact in your community and beyond, so much so that you would be leaving a proud legacy and making praiseworthy history.

"Let history not say about our age that we were those who were rich in means but poor in will."
--Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General

"Most of the things worth doing in the world had been declared impossible before they were done." --Louis D. Brandeis, activist, lawyer, U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Examples of Winning Businesses

Here is a summary of examples of businesses which have won in SAGE competition. In Appendix 1, “Tips About Scoring Points in Competition,” there are examples of uncommon and yet-to-be-tried business ideas which might make your business both *extraordinary* and *winning*. We look forward to learning about your business, so that we consider it for inclusion in coming editions of this manual. (See page twelve about inclusion.)

From the Ukraine, World Cup winner, 2005:

Our team issued its own printed publication, a magazine entitled “Business Class 117”. This business is a model of real business. We attended to all stages of production: management, marketing, distribution of duties. We selected topics, prepared articles, and saw to publication. We talked about our SAGE activities, provided economic news, and did analyses in this twenty-four page publication.

Our team had a publication for children three to six years of age: a collection of economic fairy tales. In this way, we explained economic concepts in an interesting and comprehensible form. The first edition of the publication contained four fairy tales, which we conceived ourselves. We gave away ten copies to kindergarten children in Odessa. The remainder we sold, as parents became interested and wanted their children to have personal copies. Now these children would learn economic principles as they listened to entertaining fairy tales.

From China, World Cup second place, 2005:

Our team had a business called “Seed da Seed”, through which we sold flower seeds in communities and schools, as well as online. We did seed art and sold them at auction. Our product was profitable. Not only did our team take part, but, also, there were Chinese and foreign students, as well as teachers and residents.

We plan to continue with Seed da Seed. We plan to add science and technology into our business, to seek new uses for seeds so as to expand our business, and to set up a system to manage our company more efficiently.

We had other sales activities: book, gifts on Valentine’s Day, dumplings during the Lantern Festival. Each activity was profitable. We set up a charity fund.

From South Africa, World Cup third place, 2005:

Our first business began because somebody identified a need for candles at school and community functions. One student began to buy candles and stands, eventually employing four family members. The business is now at the point where the making of candles has become the next logical step, as growth is inevitable. The financial rewards to the student and her family are extremely encouraging for our community. We are hereby bringing hope back into these impoverished communities by showcasing our business.

Our second business was in partnership with the Geography Department, with sponsorship from Soil for Life. Land was allocated during May, 2005, and the ground was tested and prepared during June, 2005. Our focus is the acquiring of valuable skills and poverty alleviation, food security, and job creation.

Most of our students are from impoverished areas. The food garden's produce is sold to our community and all unsold produce is donated to needy organizations in our area. People suffering from tuberculosis and other dreadful diseases are benefiting from this business by receiving nourishing food. Healthful eating, in conjunction with the prescribed medication, is assisting in significantly improving the health of these patients.

Our third business was a partnership through which we trained the local unemployed community in rock art. The community taught us about the rich cultural history of their area and we taught them rock art. We assisted them in raising funds and setting up the business. The rocks are sold to tourists and can be made to desired specifications.

Digression. The following statement was on the front cover of the South Africans' annual report submitted for the 2005 World Cup competition. We print the statement here because it resonates so well with the mission of SAGE and this manual:

The primary goal of our school is to develop self-reliant, self-disciplined, confident and critical thinkers who are guided by sound norms and values. ...Pupils and learners are encouraged to discover themselves and to realize their potential while our school will provide the opportunities for them to do so.

What Makes a Business Extraordinary?

An *extraordinary* business is a *successful* business and *more*.

Success these days is customarily measured by (a) the amount of profit and (b) the longevity of the business. But an extraordinary business looks to success in a somewhat different way: (c) the amount of benefit conferred and (d) the longevity of the business.

As for benefit, that refers to what the business gives the business team (you get a good idea from the survey results in appendix 1) *and* what the business gives the community where the business operates. Note in contrast that, while an extraordinary business might have a group of shareholders looking to maximize their investment, the majority of these shareholders typically are *not* from the community where the business operates; thus, benefit to shareholders is *not* within the definition of an extraordinary business in this manual.

Apart from success, there is more to an extraordinary business. “More” refers to four features, taken from the judging criteria used in SAGE competition:

- community service,
- civic engagement,
- global activity or awareness,
- environmental stewardship.

In other words, an extraordinary business combines one or more of these features into its operations. Is that possible? Yes, and *not* just by making donations from your business income to support these features. For more information, go to “Examples of Winning Businesses” and “Tips to Score Points and Help Your Team Win”.

Even if your business did not enter into SAGE competition, would it make sense to combine the features above into your business? By way of example:

“A Millennium Goal to halve poverty rates over the next 10 years will be impossible to attain unless more attention is focused on the environment, a United Nations-endorsed World Resources 2005 document says. Because 75% of the world's poor depend on nature for their income, WRI President Jonathan Lash says a linkage must be acknowledged between poverty and the environment.” UN Wire, September 2, 2005.

You see from the preceding page that the more extraordinary your business, the more value it brings to your community, the more of an *asset* it is to your community. Said another way, your business will make your community stronger, healthier, and, importantly, self-sustaining, that is, self-reliant on a large scale. If you want to make a mark for which your family, friends, and neighbors will be proud and thankful, then we encourage you and your team to consider how to make your business extraordinary.

It is important to keep in mind that running an extraordinary business is a *team* effort, in the best case augmented by college mentors and a business advisory board. Your team helps you as you help it to run the business successfully. (Note: in SAGE, your business may have from five to fifty teammates.)

How Your Business Might Succeed and Win in Competition

What Do Successful, Winning Businesses Have?

Here we come to an explanation of best practices. Best practices will help your business to succeed and to compete.

Best practices help make your business extraordinary. In previous years, in SAGE competitions, teams have won because their businesses have been extraordinary. *Best practices >> Extraordinary Business >> Success.*

So, what are “best practices”? Said simply, “best practices” means doing the most good for the most people, including yourself, because of the beliefs which guide your business. Best practices are not customary, but the more they are incorporated into your business, the more extraordinary your business becomes, the more success you have, and the more value the business gives to your community.

Defining “Best Practices”

You will come across different definitions of “best practices”. The SAGE definition of doing the most good for the most people might be unique. We believe that the SAGE definition is the best definition because of our intent to create a better future for everyone.

There are twelve best practices which your business could incorporate. The first five concern the operation of your business.

- ✓ *self-sufficiency*; by this we mean that your business would provide a service or product for which the public, a government agency, a nonprofit organization, a public institution or another business would pay willingly; this means that, whether you begin your business with your own money, a loan, an investment or a grant; you continue your business because somebody *wants* your service or product and will pay for it;
- ✓ *inclusion*; this refers to involving as many people as possible in your business; this does not mean that the whole community would run your business, but, rather, that people would know of your plans and

operations, would have a chance to comment on plans and operations, and, as a result, would become loyal supporters of your business;

additionally, *inclusion* refers to ongoing feedback from the community, as through a transparent online forum (the community suggests and criticizes, you reply with compliance and counter-arguments); not only is this good for teaching your friends and neighbors to be active in the welfare of the community, but, also, this is good for your business, by strengthening support for your business.

- ✓ *openness and transparency*; your team's minutes, income, and expenses are posted on the Internet for all to see, as are corporate documents and contracts with others;

but, of course, some things are not put on the Internet, like reprimands of team members or negotiations to reach a compromise, although the terms of a compromise should be displayed;

- ✓ *the "90% quorum" rule*; you might have a profound impact on democracy by using this rule and incorporating it into your business; too often, government agencies and nonprofit organizations content themselves with a mere majority to conduct business; you will be "raising the bar", that is, setting a high standard;

the rule means that 90% of the people entitled to vote must vote for a decision to be made; this does not mean that 90% must vote in favor, only that 90% must participate; imagine what this could do to increase voter participation if this were incorporated into official elections;

- ✓ *the "tithing" rule*; "tithing" is giving 10% to charity; in some religious traditions, "tithing" is fundamental; a best practice in SAGE is to tithe 10% of gross income [as long as your business not go into debt doing so], but, also, to go two steps farther: (a) to choose charities which would make the most of a tithe [most "bang for the buck", most community good], (b) to require accountability [like the best practice of openness and transparency].

There are six other best practices, adopted from the program of the Josephson Institute of Ethics: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. These six practices are for each member of your team personally. Since your business is setting an example, these best

practices become an example for youth and adults in your community. A definition of each practice can be found at:

<http://www.josephsoninstitute.org/MED/MED-2sixpillars.htm>.

That leaves one more best practice. We leave that to you and your team. What would you add as a best practice which would promote the most good for the most people? If you come up with a very valuable best practice and you mention it in SAGE competition, you might score higher.

Your Extraordinary Business

All these best practices are too much to handle? Not to worry. They are *goals* to which your business, teammates, and you would strive. Ultimately, they point to an important lesson: profit is necessary for a business, but cannot be the sole or primary goal of a business. (See the Hawken quote in the handbooks for advisers and for high-school team members.) The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are replete with painful examples, some of which led to violence and war, of what happens when profit is the sole or primary goal.

Are we too far ahead of everyone else with these best practices? No, not according to this excerpt from a study in 2005:

The Changing Landscape of Liability: A Director's Guide to Trends in Corporate Environmental, Social and Economic Liability

"...Significant among its recommendations is a call for companies to shift from passive to active corporate responsibility as the best way to mitigate risk to shareholder value from society's increasing expectations of social, environmental and economic responsibility. ..."

With these best practices, you and your teammates will achieve self-reliance and encourage others to do the same. You will be seen as leaders in your community, and this will translate into extraordinary college, scholarship, and job applications (but why try for a job if your business is successful?). In the next section we discuss why self-reliance is so important. Later, we will give business ideas meant to incorporate best practices and lead to self-reliance.

Tools for Your Extraordinary Business

What will help in the development, debut, and growth of your business?

Funding

- ✓ Certainly, your team writes a business plan. A plan helps in bringing startup funding to your business.
- ✓ What if your business does not have a ready source of startup funding?
 - Your business advisory board might be of help.
 - You might do a fund-raiser. There are ideas in this manual.
 - Your team might be large enough so that the labor of your teammates becomes a substitute for startup funding.
 - You may contact SAGE to see whether startup funding be available.
 - Try what many entrepreneurs do: ask relatives for a loan.
- ✓ Consider starting a local currency, an extraordinary, but little known, tool, to make startup funding available for your business and other extraordinary businesses. (Yes, your community may print its own money!) Go to www.localcurrency.org for general information and to www.ithacahours.com for information on a local currency which has been benefiting Ithaca, New York, since 1991.

Business Fundamentals

The best situation is if a nonprofit organization which teaches business education were permitted to teach you and your team during class time, for which you would receive course credit or extra credit. It would be up to you and your team (and parents' support would help) to petition your teacher or a school administrator to permit business education for which you would receive credit. If this were not possible, then non-credit business education for which school facilities could be used and the school would pay the organization. If this were not possible, then the use of school facilities with any costs covered by a service organization like Rotary, Lions or Kiwanis. (Read appendix 4, "The Right Stuff". Do not give up. Be creative by coming up with options. And if you succeed in receiving credit, do mention that during SAGE competition.)

Through business education, you and your team might learn how to write a business plan. If not, then your college mentors or business advisory board could advise.

Organizations which provide business education are

- JA Worldwide (Junior Achievement), www.ja.org;
- National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, www.nfte.com.

Saving Money, Making Money

Saving money. Turning your business into a corporation protects you from unforeseen, unwanted consequences. But setting up a corporation costs money. A good alternative is to operate under an existing corporation. Your business advisory board might help. SAGE, too, might help.

Making money. SAGE has set up a marketplace for you to sell, buy, and trade: www.csuchico.edu/sage, then click on the “Gisa-Bay” image. Do not shy from using “Gisa-Bay”. So that your transactions are secure and satisfying, talk to SAGE about setting up an intermediary between sellers, buyers, and traders.

A Checklist to Help Identify an *Extraordinary* Business

You and your team might have several business ideas from which to choose. How will you decide which is the most extraordinary? The checklist below, based on the judging criteria in the SAGE adviser’s handbook and the best practices enumerated in this manual, will help.

With regard to the goal in the left column, the business idea before us is

| | Very Harmful or Not at All Useful (-2) | Harmful or Not Useful (-1) | Neutral or Do Not Know (0) | Useful or Helpful (1) | Very Useful or Very Helpful (2) |
|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Year-round Profit | | | | | |
| Large Profit | | | | | |
| Can Be Duplicated or Franchised | | | | | |
| Year-Round Community Service or Public Benefit | | | | | |
| Civic Engagement | | | | | |
| Global Activity or Awareness | | | | | |
| Environmental Stewardship | | | | | |
| College Mentors | | | | | |
| Business Advisory Board | | | | | |
| Media | | | | | |
| Measuring Results | | | | | |
| Self-sufficiency | | | | | |
| Inclusion | | | | | |
| Openness, Transparency | | | | | |
| “90% Quorum” Rule | | | | | |
| “Tithing” Rule | | | | | |
| Trustworthiness | | | | | |
| Respect | | | | | |
| Responsibility | | | | | |
| Caring | | | | | |
| Fairness | | | | | |
| Citizenship | | | | | |
| Your Choice of a Best Practice | | | | | |
| Dependence on Startup Funding | | | | | |
| Safe for Team Health | | | | | |
| Not Demanding of Personal Time | | | | | |
| Learning Skills or Knowledge | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | |

We invite you to submit business ideas for this manual. We will use the checklist above to help us choose business ideas to include. If yours is included, you become a “contributing writer” to this manual.

Appendix 1. Tips about Scoring Points in Competition

The editor of this manual is interested in extraordinary businesses. You are *quite* welcome to e-mail at any time to ask about how you might make your business extraordinary and, thereby, score more points in SAGE competition: Van Ajemian, J.D., vanajemian@hotmail.com. By the way, Van becomes a member of your business advisory board if you and he exchange e-mail about your business.

Below are uncommon and yet-to-be-tried business ideas. (These are appropriate for the U.S. Ideas from other countries are requested.) Van would be happy to share details and options. Your team might score more points if it implemented one or more of these ideas. Note that some ideas on a small scale could act as fund-raisers for startup funding for your business.

1. Ask candidates for office to pay for services from your business. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, \$3.9 billion was spent in 2004 on Federal elections, Presidential and Congressional. And that did not include the amounts spent on state offices, like governor and state assembly, county offices, like supervisors and judges, and local offices, like school boards and city councils.

Where did that money go in 2004? To consultants, printers, mailing houses and television stations, for the most part. Did that money have to go there, by law? *No. And there is where opportunity lies.*

Imagine if your business said to candidates, “We will bring voting adults and nonvoting adults and youth (these latter can become campaign volunteers) to the school football bleachers to meet the candidates if you pay \$10 per voter and \$5 per nonvoter to our business for each person coming through the door. We have a petition from voters and nonvoters in our community saying that they *want* you to do this instead of spending money on mailers, lawn signs, and television advertisements.”

Figure, at best, \$10,000 income from each candidate per appearance, with one to two appearances per election cycle. And that is not the *only* way to make money while connecting candidates and constituents. Without being partisan, your business can offer services via e-mail, Web sites (working with the League of Women Voters might be possible), public-access television. Ask about details and options.

To score more points and do more good for more people, consider how you would spend the income after expenses: might it make sense to create a fund to help your classmates start their own *extraordinary* businesses, with the community—all residents, whatever their status--evaluating business plans and voting on which plans would be funded?

Also, do you see how your business could combine at least three of the five SAGE judging criteria: business, civic engagement, community service? And if you told your success story on the Internet, you might include “global activity”.

2. Your city and school district might welcome your business providing services under contract. According to a 3M press release from 2002, the annual cost of graffiti abatement programs in the U.S. was estimated at \$10 billion. Traffic violations? According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the economic cost of motor vehicle crashes in 2000 was \$230.6 billion. And litter? The consequences of drug abuse and intoxication? Recycling?

Can your business do better than government or adult businesses? It certainly is worth a try, more so if your business *saves* your community money as you and teammates’ business make money.

Take graffiti abatement. What if your business, with a peer-parent petition, went to your city council and school board and said, “We are ready to implement a peer program to reduce graffiti, using the average cost from the last three years as the baseline. For every dollar which we save you, evaluated monthly, we ask that you pay us fifty cents monthly.”

If you have an agreement, then the challenge to your business is to persuade a few vandals to cooperate with the majority who do not vandalize. Your business plan will have to be thorough: education against vandalism, apprehension, punishment or rehabilitation. Would the city council and school district cooperate with effective (which means drafted by youth, not adults) laws, regulations, and plans? Could your business persuade vandals to do their art on designated art boards? Could costs be further reduced through effective alternative punishment or rehabilitation? Should your community have a “cell phone” law which permitted people to take

photos of public places and of trespassers onto private property?
Would “positive peer pressure” work or might that get out of hand?

And what would you do with your business income after expenses? If peers and adults outside your business have helped, should they not share in the savings? Would your business set aside some or all of the income so that the community voted on what to do with the income?

And there are other aspects to this which your business plan would include. For example, how to daily, but unobtrusively, remind peers of what is at stake. Would it be appropriate, for example, to have a “silent radio” at school which would state the amount in the graffiti account for that month, with deductions made and displayed as soon as the city or school district spent money to cover over graffiti?

Is it apparent how different SAGE judging criteria could be combined into one business, saving you and teammates time, money, energy?

Traffic safety is an even bigger business challenge. And then there are litter, drugs, and other vices. Ask about options and details.

3. Each Member of Congress has a budget for staff and expenses of \$1.17 million per year, according to the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives.

What is the chance of setting up a community center at your high school, a “one-stop” center where (a) every elected official representing the community surrounding the high school would be represented, (b) every nonprofit which could provide a useful service would be represented, (c) your business would manage the center, arranging for legislative and nonprofit staff to train your peers in providing basic services to the community?

Where community service or service learning are required of high schoolers, your business could make it relatively easy for peers to fulfill requirements. (In some communities, it is difficult for peers to go into the community to do service, so school administrators would thank you for your innovation.) Would not legislators take interest if you set up an annex to their district offices, for which they would pay a fraction of what it would otherwise cost for an annex? Would nonprofits not be eager to train your peers to extend services to the community, more so when the nonprofits did not have the money to do so on their own? Ask about details and options.

Through the community center, your business might combine all *five* SAGE judging criteria.

4. Is it possible to provide a product or service for which the public would pay? Let us look at a couple of examples.

Lemon ice cubes. Southern California used to be, and might still be, the lemon capital of the world. Many people have lemon trees in their backyards. There is at least one person, this editor's mother, who squeezes lemons and makes lemon ice cubes. Not only are the cubes a source of vitamin C, but, also, they add flavor to water, juices, and soda.

Lemon ice cubes are not sold in stores in my community. Might there be a market for them, starting with harvesting them from backyard trees where the owners do not have the time or interest?

An interesting offshoot of such a business: your business implements the best practice of tithing by buying fruit trees for your community to plant and nurture, thereby creating a "harvest day", when neighbors would *festively* pick fruit for themselves and the less fortunate?

Yard sales. How much do neighbors accumulate—and cling to—over the years? Usually, we go to yard sales to pick up useful furniture, tools, books, games, and clothing for a bargain price. Our neighbors seem to put back in the garage in the evening ninety percent of what they put out on the lawn in the morning. But what if your business (a) went looking for items which were in such good condition that they could be auctioned later and (b) your business offered donation receipts just for taking reusable goods off the hands of the owners?

As for auctions, that could be done via eBay, but might be better in the school auditorium, thereby omitting shipping costs. As for donation receipts, would it not be wonderful if you could represent nonprofits in the community, collecting reusable goods which the nonprofits could use or sell or bring to your auctions?

Along this line, there are the reusable, repairable furniture and supplies which schools discard. Ask about details and options.

Remember: this is *not* an exhaustive list.

Sample Bylaws

Bylaws might help your team receive more points in competition. Below you get a general idea. Your business' bylaws quite probably would differ.

The name of this business is “Democracy in Action”. This business operates “a publicly-initiated, self-funding social venture which, at the same time, strengthens and expands the practice of democracy”. This business subscribes to, practices, and promotes all of the best practices enumerated by SAGE.

This business is operated by a team. The team members are Joan Adams, John Jefferson, Buford Monroe, Andrea Jackson, Frances Pierce, James Polk, Juana Juárez, Michel LaFayette, Wilhelm Brandt, and Gustav Mahler. A goal of this business is to become self-sufficient, that is, to receive pay, instead of donations and grants, to do services.

Any decision to approve or modify a business plan; approve any check, whatever the amount; approve any payout from petty cash over \$20; approve an amendment to a discretionary provision of these bylaws; approve an action which, according to at least one team member, might contradict a required provision of these bylaws or a provision in the business plan; or approve the removal or admission of a team member, leader or co-leader; requires a quorum of at least ninety percent of team members. A goal of this provision is for the team to become a model of inclusion and fairness for agencies, organizations, and institutions in the community.

Meetings of the team may be held by e-mail, telephone conference or gathering, provided that the “90% quorum” rule apply in all instances. In the case of e-mail, everyone need not be present at a computer at the same time, as long as at least ninety percent vote on a matter by reply re-mail.

Each team member shall work as an independent contractor, earning, minimally, the equivalent of an hourly living wage for every hour worked.

An adult on the business advisory board shall be designated the bookkeeper. Any disbursement by check shall require two signatures.

One member of the team shall be designated the Webmaster, whose job will be to post and update on the Internet at least (a) three means to contact the team, (b) the names of team members, (c) all income and expenses of this business, (d) the bylaws, (e) the business plan, (f) all the best practices, (g) feedback, and (h) minutes of meetings of the team which pertain to the business. A goal is for the team to become a model of openness and transparency for agencies, organizations, and institutions in the community.

Two team leaders shall be elected by the team members to serve for six months. The team leaders shall be like business managers.

The team shall choose a member who will work continually to involve more and more people from the community in business e, with the intent that the business and income grow the next twelve months.

The team will choose one member to look at times into the possibility of additional sources of income. Another member research into where best to tithe and shall report to the entire time, which then will vote to tithe.

This business shall be operated ethically and lawfully, and to the satisfaction of the community. Satisfaction surveys will be taken periodically. Resolution of a dispute between team members or between the team and either the community or a party with whom business is done shall be resolved through discussion and compromise and, failing that, through arbitration by [name], whereafter any party may avail him- or herself of traditional remedies.

With at least ninety percent participating, the team approved these bylaws on [date].

Signature [team secretary] Print [team secretary] Date _____

Business Contracts

Your business should have contracts. If you wish to *save time and money*, and if your business advisory board agrees, your bylaws and records of minutes could substitute as a contract among team members, while your bylaws and business plan could substitute as a contract between your business and those with whom you do business.

- If you choose to do these substitutions, each person on the team should receive a copy of the approved bylaws and records, signed by your team secretary; *note:* according to one of the SAGE best practices, the bylaws and records would be posted on the Internet for all to see;
- and each your team secretary and those with whom you do business should sign two copies of the business plan, with each of them retaining a copy; *note:* according to the same SAGE best practice, the business plan would be posted on the Internet for all to see.

Appendix 2. The Right Stuff: What Your Business Does for You Personally

College and Career

Relatively few people your age have been a *business partner* in an *extraordinary business* or have shown initiative and have signed a contract to provide products or services. Because of your extraordinary experience, your college, scholarship, and job applications will stand out.

Earning

Your earning from your business probably would be modest, as nobody would expect you to work in the business full-time. Also, funders and volume buyers might want to see how well your business did before a large commitment of funding were made or a large order were placed. Yet, depending on your personal plans and your business' performance, your part-time work could become full-time, with a concomitant increase in your earning.

Course Credit

Your participation in a business could give you opportunities to exercise skills or to fulfill requirements for which course credit might be possible: (a) writing a business plan, (b) presenting a business plan, (c) public speaking, (d) organizing, (e) managing a business, (f) bookkeeping, (g) sponsor relations, (h) community relations, (i) translating, (j) using a computer, etc.

There are other personal benefits. First, you meet people and leaders in the community. This probably would lead to a more effective business and better incorporation of the best practices, as well as prepare you, if you were interested, to become a leader in your community. Second, you receive satisfaction from participation in a pioneering business which enables you to leave a proud legacy and make praiseworthy history *at a young age*. Also, many people locally benefit from what your team and you do through the business; across America and abroad, many people look to your business as a model, as an inspiration.

Of course, you learn and practice self-reliance, the most important attribute for success in a competitive and uncertain world.

The Importance of Self-Reliance

Why is self-reliance at the heart of this manual and SAGE? Self-reliance is the best way for you and your teammates to succeed in school *and* in life. You learn *some* self-reliance by finishing high school and college, but there is much more to learn than what is learned in the classroom. Running an extraordinary business, as we have described in this manual, helps you learn self-reliance which you do not learn in a classroom:

- planning well,
- learning the strengths and weaknesses of your teammates so that the business benefit from the strengths and backup be provided where there are weaknesses,
- knowing when to trust and when to risk, being sensitive to the dreams and desires of the community,
- knowing how to present by yourself,
- identifying problems or inefficiencies and looking for solutions,
- showing initiative instead of waiting for somebody else to take action,
- setting such an example of integrity that others seek your advice and ask you to help maintain the welfare of the community.

On the following two pages are examples of why self-reliance is in your personal interest.

The first is an e-mail which was received in September, 2005, into a SAGE adviser's e-mail account. On the next page are the exact words of the e-mail.

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY

Congratulations!

You have received this Notice because the records of PayPal, Inc. indicate you are a current or former PayPal account holder who has been deemed eligible to receive a payment from the class action settlement in accordance with PayPal Litigation, Case No. 02 1227 JF PVT, pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California in San Jose.

In your specific case you have been found to be eligible for a payment of \$88.99 USD. Confirm Your Bank Account.

The aforementioned settlement funds may be transferred directly to your bank account providing you have a linked card. The funds may not be credited directly to your PayPal account as this would render PayPal to be accumulating interest and thus profiting on litigation settlement funds which contravenes Federal law.

Your bank account will be credited within 7 days upon submission of Account details.

To credit your bank account please click here.

Don't forget to check your bank account for the PayPal deposits and get Verified!

If you are seeking an alternate method of receiving your funds PayPal will be contacting those who do not submit their details by the 31th of March with instructions to receive a cheque in the mail. However this will incur a 7.5% processing fee deducted from the settlement amount and therefore PayPal only recommends this option to those users who do not currently have a bank account with linked Bank Card.

Please Note that under United States federal law credit cards are not a legally approved method of settlement for Class Action suits and cannot be processed for transferal of funds in this case.

This notice is a summary and does not describe all details of the settlement. For full details of the matters discussed in this notice, you may wish to review the Settlement Agreement dated January 11, 2005 and on file with the Court or visit <https://www.paypal.com/settlement/>. Complete copies of the Settlement Agreement and all other pleadings and papers filed in the lawsuit are also available for inspection and copying during regular business hours, at the Office of the Clerk of the Court, United States District Court for the Northern District of California, 280 South First Street, San Jose, California 95113. ...

PayPal Email ID PP4214

Does the e-mail look real? It is *not*! It is a very deceptive way to get private information from the SAGE adviser. If he had fallen for the deception, there would not be much which government could do to help.

Being self-reliant means that you are not tempted by such e-mail, that you are not looking for a “get rich quick” scheme. You are cautious; you do not say to yourself, “If something goes wrong, government or some miracle worker is going to get me out of the fix.” You have learned that profit is not the sole or primary goal. And you know to be smart and considerate enough *not* to impose on others to fix a problem which you easily could have avoided.

The second example comes from the historically devastating hurricane which struck Louisiana in late August, 2005. The lesson here is *not* to assume that others are well enough organized, equipped or skilled to attend immediately and adequately to your needs.

...From Beijing and Havana, as well as Paris and Berlin, there were offers of assistance to the most powerful nation on Earth as it struggled to cope in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Pledges of help came from more than 50 countries, including oil from Venezuela, generators from Japan and cash from Australia. Others offered boats, aircraft, medical supplies and blankets.

Even impoverished Sri Lanka made a \$25,000 donation, a gesture in recognition of Americans' response to last year's tsunami.

But the expressions of sympathy were mixed with a worldwide sense of amazement and disgust at the failure of American authorities to effectively deal with the crisis.

After describing the plight of two Brazilians caught up in the fetid drama at the Louisiana Superdome in an editorial titled "Collapse," the *Jornal do Brasil* in Rio de Janeiro said New Orleans had been reduced to a "tribal area."

"To see homeless dying of thirst and lack of medical care in the middle of the street escapes comprehension," the paper said. "The world asks how [the Americans] were able to take food and water so quickly to remote Indonesia and cannot save New Orleans." ...

Los Angeles Times, September 3, 2005.

When we speak of self-reliance in this manual, we mean *individual* self-reliance practiced within a *group*. We believe that humans function best in small groups, so self-reliance in small groups would be the best: each individual can stand on her own, but is backed up by every other individual in the group.

Note that many small, self-reliant groups in a community, if pledged to cooperation with one another, make that community self-sustaining, that is, self-reliant on a large scale. That is the *best* situation not only for success, but, also, to handle *any* adversity. We put ourselves and our community at risk when we become reliant on people far away whom we do not know, no matter how well meaning they might be.

More "Right Stuff"

Your business will need a team. You can consider teammates your *business partners*.

Do you believe that you and your teammates the right stuff? In other words, do you and they have what it takes for your business to succeed: vision, energy, perseverance, time, and creativity?

“*Vision*” refers to your ideals. Do you want to improve the quality of life for everyone? Do you believe that you could contribute mightily to fulfillment of that vision through an extraordinary business? Do you believe that your family, friends, and neighbors would follow the example which you set?

“*Energy*” refers to your enthusiasm. Do you *really* want to leave a proud legacy and make praiseworthy history—which means that your teammates and you become an inspiration for the generation after yours? Do you understand, deep down, that you have a rare opportunity, through your business, to make a long-term impact—an opportunity which few people, even civic activists, have had? Are you ready to roll up your sleeves and do what needs be done, even when a team member fail to meet a responsibility?

“*Perseverance*” refers to your toughness. Imagine a soldier going through the grueling final test before becoming a Navy Seal or a Green Beret. When somebody says “no” or “impossible”, do you give up or do you find another way? If, after deliberation, you and your team believe yourselves right, do you yield when others tell you not to change the status quo or do you proceed knowing that you are doing the right thing?

“*Time*” has become a scarce commodity these days. Time is tied to the strength of your vision and depth of your commitment. Is your business the next highest priority after your school and family? You must have enough time if your business is to succeed. If not, you must consider that many—if not most—people overestimate their available time and then end up doing a poor job because they lack the time, even if they mean well? (Note: having enough teammates to divide up business responsibilities helps you with regard to available time. Remember that in SAGE there may be from five to fifty teammates in a business.)

“*Creativity*” is a cousin to perseverance. You will be presented with challenges which others see as insurmountable, but which, frankly, through creativity (out-of-the-box thinking) could be met. Do you like to meet challenges with novel solutions? Are you willing to take the time to consult with others and come up with such solutions? Are you receptive to such solutions, remembering that SAGE is interested in business ideas which are ethical and legal, but which improve on tradition and business as usual?