

## **Is Business War?**

Hi, this is Elijah Lim. Today I would like to ask the question "Is Business War?" And most of us have heard of expressions like this: "Business is war", "Business in the trenches", "We have to outperform the competition", "We have to kill the competition", "We have to absorb them", "We have to grab our share of the market", because there is only so much pie to go around, and we want to get the lion's share of the pie.

Words have power. If we think of business as war - one of the expressions that is commonly used, that I have heard, and that I have seen written about, is "Business in the trenches". Now, that's a symbol for fortifications, which include trenches and pillboxes and things like that. Now if we say that our business is in the trenches, then we will have a trench mentality. And the first thing that comes to mind are the trenches of the First World War. And you know exactly where that led the Allies and the Germans - it's attrition warfare, it gets you nowhere. It only gets you somewhere if it's temporary, you're stopping there for a while, you're stopping to consolidate your position, so that you can do something else elsewhere, or even from the trenches. That's fine. Otherwise you go into things like price wars. You go into things like unscrupulous commoditization, which is not very good for ALL aspects of any business.

Now, it is also a mindset like this that spawns things like CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility. Nowadays people call it CR, Corporate Responsibility, as though by transacting our business - the business is somehow taking from the geographic location, taking from the society in which it runs. And therefore the business has got to "give back" to the society. And I submit to you that that's nonsense, because if the business that we are transacting isn't increasing value all round in the society in which we are placed, then we ought to ask ourselves "Should we be in business in the first place?" Perhaps we could change our words, change our thinking...instead of thinking of business as war, think of business as opening up farms. You know, farms are always associated with plenty, with producing something, with abundance. And I think that's the key difference - having an abundance mindset versus having a scarcity mindset. After all, why do people go to war? It's a scarcity mindset! You want to get more land, you want to get more resources, you have a growing population, you want to cater for their needs, you want to become richer, and you don't want other people to have what you have. That's a scarcity mindset. But an abundance mindset says there is always enough for everybody, if we would all chip in, if I could teach you how to grow your own stuff, you know, you could be as good as I am, and then I move on, I become better, and so on.

So I do encourage you to think about farms...think about your business, rather, as farming, rather than as war. And see if that changes things for you. I know that if you're in a large corporation, then this is pretty much entrenched in the minds of big corporations, but if you're a medium-sized, small business owner, think of your business as farming. And perhaps see a change in the way it turns out. Well, this is Elijah Lim, talking about "Is Business War?" Thanks for watching, and have a good day, have a fruitful business. Thank you!