

FORBES MEXICO

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How do you face difficult times? Is it the moment to take advantage of opportunities?

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In both peaceful and turbulent times, it is always good to pay attention to what is most important. I do not have specific formulas to explain how to deal with adverse situations, but I do know the basic principles that should always be applied. The life of a company and of entrepreneurs is exciting, but it is anything but placid. It is full of difficulties, challenges and threats. There are no tranquil times, only changes in the intensity of the difficulties we face; therefore, we must accept and attend to them with serenity.

Throughout my life, I have seen almost everything: booms and depressions, political and economic crises and conflicts. When confronting these challenges, I think we must always keep a far-reaching view of the country. If you trust in your country – as I do, because I believe that Mexico is a nation with a potential for greatness – you should not lose your way or waver when facing the rhythm that marks our expectations for the country. All setbacks, difficulties and disappointments make us better and encourage us to make transcendent decisions, sharpen our ingenuity and steady our pulse.

Prudence is an indispensable virtue to achieve lasting success. For example, indebtedness should never jeopardize the financial health of a company and should be established in the anticipation of the immanence of economic cycles. In moments of boom, we must be calm to avoid becoming enraptured with the effervescence of prosperity, and in moments of declines, we must be patient in order to persevere while overcoming the greatest obstacles.

All investment implies risks and without them there is no future prosperity. A careful and objective evaluation of investment projects is an indispensable resource to increase shareholders' assets in a lasting way.

Commitment to efficiency and cost control must be maintained and be applied both in times of abundance and scarcity. Waste and carelessness weaken organizations because they not only reduce shareholders' assets, but they diminish the strength and resources to invest, and weaken the morale of the employees. We must also prevent routine and complacency – which on many occasions are generated from success – from distancing us from innovation. There is always a way to improve the products and services we offer; we can always perfect the processes. The progress of the company requires that one does not give up in the determination to innovate in each and every one of the activities.

Recognizing that the employees are the company's vital force of performance and innovation is equally important. Constant attention to all aspects related to them should be a priority. At the same time, care for the culture of the organization cannot be ignored. Honesty, adherence to rules, respect for others, loyalty and responsibility are indispensable guidelines to achieve efficiency and social and economic sustainability of the company. On the other hand, the leadership model of the organization is essential for the company, and it should have the ability to attract rather than impose. The company must be a good corporate citizen, starting at home. Finally, the good performance of companies requires passion and enjoyment of business activity. Discouragement extinguishes passion, the spark of action and innovation. I recommend encouragement and passion to overcome difficult times.