

Mr. Albert Zehnder  
Chairman and C.E.O. of Zehnder's of Frankenmuth

## Northwood University Commencement Remarks December 8, 2007

Thank Northwood for the tremendous honor:

- Recognize Staff
- Recognize Graduates
- Recognize Parents

I understand that what stands between you and being with your family are my remarks. My goal is to make them brief and useful.

You are on the verge of embarking on an adventure unlike any other, equipped with the best tools for success.

Dr. Pretty asked me to spend a little time today speaking about what I have learned in life and what I can share with you. Kind of your final lesson at Northwood.

I can tell you life is short. I have lived about 648 months and have about 360 left. Some of us have less, some have more. So, in the time that we have left, how do we live a complete life, what does it take to become a whole person.

My remarks today will center around becoming a **“Whole Person.”**

Life and success is about balance. About balancing your Professional, Personal and Spiritual lives. Once you've achieved that balance you become a Whole Person.

### **A. Professional Life**

**Believe that you deserve to be successful –**

Start today by saying with me five words, **“I deserve to be successful!”**

- 1. Find Passion in Your Profession – You will not be as successful as you deserve to be if you are not passionate about what you do.**

Align yourself with a company that shares your values, convictions and beliefs. Love what you do. Do what you love! The money will follow your passion.

- 2. Conspire to be number one. Zehnder's Vision**

**John F. Kennedy said, “Once you settle for second, that's what happens.”**

### **3. Show up everyday with an Infectious Positive Attitude.**

**Lunch with Dick Huvaere, who goes to work every day with a very positive attitude and is the best in his business.** Your attitude can be a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

**Learn from the successes of successful people around you and emulate that behavior.**

Become a Whole Person by rewarding yourself, and those around you, with a rewarding profession.

**If you are not fulfilled by your career, you will not be as successful personally and professionally as you deserve to be.** You will not become a Whole Person.

## **B. Personal Life**

Say these 11 words, **“I deserve to be happy and will bring joy to others.”**

Develop yourself as a person that your friends, family and acquaintances find joy in being around. Happy fulfilled individuals draw happy fulfilled individuals to them.

**Work against the stereotypes that accompany your position. And you know the stereotypes: Engineers are anal, bankers are bean counters, technology geeks are nerds and educators make great lovers...**

### **Develop A Multi-Dimensional Personality**

Develop interests. Have a hobby. Become an expert, at least very interested, in an area outside of your profession.

Take a class. Learn how to cook. Learn how to garden. Learn how to dance. Take your kids fishing. Read a book. Learn how to dance. Volunteer. Teach a class. Give back.

My wife wanted to provide some guidance and insight to all you guys out there, in no particular order of importance: Learn how to dance, Learn how to cook, Learn how to dance, learn how to cook, . . . . and for heaven's sake learn how to pick up after yourself!

Spend quality time with the individuals in your life that give meaning to you. Your spouse, your kids, your friends, your family... Make their priorities your priorities.

Understand that if you have a tumultuous personal life, you will not be as successful professionally as you deserve to be.

Become a Whole Person by developing your Personality.

### **C. Spiritual Life**

**Say after me these six words, “I will develop my Spiritual Self.”**

Re-awaken, rekindle, re-new, re-discover your spiritual self. Gandhi said, “I consider myself a Hindu, Christian, Moslem, Jew, Buddhist and Confucian.” Wow, he had all the bases covered.

Develop a relationship with God.

I am a Christian. That is my orientation. That is the filter through which everything in my life eventually passes. It is the foundational philosophy of who I am, what I do and how I act.

David L. Sterward the African-American Chairman of the Board of the \$1.8 billion dollar techno giant, World Wide Technology, said “Spiritual principles, whether used in business or personal relationships, lead to a fulfilled life, a fulfilled business, a fulfilled passion and a fulfilled perspective.” He went on to say, “We talk about business principles but, life is the business, it is God’s business.” There really is no separation.

In their book *The Servant Leader*, Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges say that “The journey of life is to move from a self-serving heart to a serving heart. **You finally become an adult when you realize that life is about what you give, rather than what you get.**”

How many adults do we have out there!?!

You will not be as successful professionally and personally if you have not developed your Spiritual Self. Become a Whole Person by becoming a Spiritual Person.

**In the end, and the end will come, remember. When you are lying there, and you have moments left on this earth. It’s not the big salary, the big house, the new car, the promotion, or how well you dance, how well you cook or whether you picked up after yourself that day.**

**It’s who you’ve loved, who’s loved you and your relationship with God.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, God gave us this sumptuous buffet we call life. Enjoy every course and savor every moment. You deserve it.**

**Congratulations to all of you and good luck with your future!**