

Ethical Biography of Zig Ziglar

"You can have everything in life that you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want." - Hilary Hinton Ziglar

How Zig Ziglar Influences My Thinking About Ethical Decision-Making In My Career

I have chosen to write about the Ethical leadership practiced and spoken about by Zig Ziglar. As one of his biggest fans, I feel that it is very accurate to say that I highly believe this is an ethical individual. Ziglar is one of the world's most well-known motivational speakers. He is an author of many books like, "*See you at the Top*" and "*Better Than Good: Creating a Life You Can't Wait to Live*." He represents ethics in leadership and spreads his messages through organizations and foundations such as, "Zig Ziglar's Center for Ethical Leadership" at SNU and through "Get Motivated Seminars" presented by Peter Lowe. From massive motivational seminars to one-on-one corporate training sessions, Ziglar has helped people change their lives! Through all this, he still continues to uphold the value of his family, his religion and his purpose, without once disrespecting or harming anyone around him.

Background

Hilary Hinton Ziglar, today recognized as Zig Ziglar, was born November 6, 1926 in Alabama.

In 1931, Ziglar's father accepted a job in Yazoo City, Mississippi so his family moved there. A year later, his father and one of his sisters passed away. This left a widowed mother and twelve siblings to bring up by herself. As one can imagine, his life growing up was not very easy. Ziglar tells his story and describes to his audience, "...And so it was a pretty tough childhood. I watched – I watched my mother's incredible faith" ([Zig Ziglar life story, 1](#)).

Ziglar was the first of all of his twelve siblings to graduate from High School. As a teen, Ziglar served in the Naval Air Corps during World War II (1943 – 1945). During his time serving, he also attended the University of Southern Carolina. After the war was over, his service was no longer needed so he was discharged. This was the beginning of his career in sales. He worked for many companies where his sales skills continually improved and excelled. Additionally, during this time he really developed a passion for motivational speaking.

In 1944 Ziglar met his wife, Jeane. Two years later, in 1946, she accepted his proposal and they have been happily married for 63 years! Until this day he calls her his "Sugar Baby" and "Redhead."

Jeane and Zig have three children whom are all married and successful adults. Their names' are Cindy Ziglar Oate, Tom Ziglar, and Julie Ziglar Norman.

Ziglar's career as a Motivational Speaker developed and he established his own company in Texas called the Zig Ziglar Corporation. This company offered public seminars which were fully customized programs to help education and motivate others. He used many techniques, such as

workshops and key note speakers which all focused on personal and professional development (Hutchings, 2009).

He currently lives in Dallas, Texas and displays a lot of pride for his hometown. In addition to his inspirational speaking, Ziglar has written many self help books.

Recently, just before I saw him speak live at the Get Motivated Seminar, in 2008, he took a fall down a flight of stairs that has affected his short term memory. Regardless of this complication, Ziglar has continued to travel and speak at seminars, inspiring people worldwide.

Career Summary

The first real opportunity that made a big difference in Ziglar's career was his first training job in 1968. He was hired on by Mary Kay Ash to train her cosmetic sales managers. Also in 1968, Ziglar became the Vice President and training director for an automotive company in Dallas, Texas. Ever since 1968, Ziglar has called Dallas his home.

In 1970, he took on his career as a full-time motivational speaker. Up until this time Ziglar went by his real name, Hilary. But as he continued on as a motivational speaker, his friends and colleagues began to call him Zig and the nickname has remained the same for many years.

Ziglar began publishing books as early as 1974 with his first title, "See you at the Top." Overall, he has published over twenty-five books that focus on areas of Christianity, family, love, success, leadership, personal growth, sales, individual, small business, Fortune 500 companies, churches and non-profit organizations. The following nine are some of the most popular and bestsellers ("[Zig Ziglar business](#)," n.d.).

- Better Than Good: Creating a Life You Can't Wait to Live (2006)
- Confessions of a Grieving Christian (2004)
- Selling 101: What Every Successful Sales Professional Needs to Know (2003)
- Success for Dummies (1998)
- Over The Top (1997)
- *Top Performance: How to Develop Excellence in Yourself and Others.* (1987)
- Raising Positive Kids in a Negative World
- Courtship after Marriage
- Secrets of Closing the Sale

Ziglar has published voice and video recordings of many of his lectures and motivational speeches.

Outstanding Achievements

Zig Ziglar is best known for his active involvement in the Peter Lowe Get Motivated Seminars. These seminars are held multiple times a year and are held in different venues across

the U.S. The seminars feature some of the most interesting individuals, including Ziglar, Amanda and Peter Lowe, General Colin Powell, Krish Dhanam, Joe Montana and other well known motivational speakers. The Get Motivated Seminars have been motivating people and uplifting spirits for over 25 years. As described on the official Get Motivated Seminar website, these speakers provide cutting-edge business skills, expert sales training, and even incorporate a Christian faith to the audience ([Get motivated, n.d.](#)).

One of the most recent outstanding achievements dedicated to Ziglar is the Center for Ethical Leadership at Southern Nazarene University. The mission of the center is to “serve as an academic center of excellence for the study and practice of ethical leadership” ([Zig Ziglar center, 2009](#)). Fall, 2009 was the first semester in which eleven undergraduate students were accepted into the program. This was developed as a transformational leadership development program for undergraduate students who excel in academics and display exceptional leadership potential, according to a press release by the Zig Ziglar Center for Ethical Leadership. The program will have a different theme each year. This year, the focus taught to the students is about “The Right Thing: Restoring Institutional Integrity and Regaining Public Trust.”

As a professional salesman, Ziglar has his own company which focuses on conducting more focused corporate training and personal growth seminars. The company’s website allows organizations, or individuals looking for help to select a specific program that will fulfill their needs. Ziglar’s team works on-site with management and staff to consult them to develop skills needed to be successful. The company works on addressing personal needs and then expanding to meet the organization, or companies needs on a larger scale. (["Ziglar inspiring true," n.d.](#)).

Examples of Ethical Decisions and Behaviors That Make Zig Ziglar an Outstanding Ethical Model

Erin Casey, author of Success Magazine writes, “From Zig Ziglar’s perspective, success is only real when it encompasses every area of life. Physical, mental, spiritual, relationships and, oh yes, career and finances. True success requires balance, an ingredient missing in many people’s busy lives” ([Casey, 2008](#)). The lessons that Ziglar speaks about are not focused on one independent idea. Instead his lessons include a culmination of things we can do to better ourselves. Ziglar learned early in life that helping others is the best way to succeed for yourself. Additionally, he teaches people that keeping a strong faith and religious identity builds on ethical and moral character. As a husband and father, Ziglar has many stories to tell his listeners that help them make better decisions in their lives both personal and professional. Also, he talks about his “redhead” who he loves so much and how 63 years later he still courts her like when they were young. This sends an endearing message to younger couples and how they should be treating each other, until death do them part.

Ethical Controversies Surrounding Zig Ziglar (Elaborate in these)

I think the only controversy that surrounds Ziglar is his high value and teachings about his Christian faith. Many people do not practice religion and do not uphold a religious identity. Additionally, in America, many people do not like hearing about religion, especially when religion is mixed with politics. The controversy comes into play when Ziglar talks about religion and how it works hand in hand with being an ethical individual. Although this may be an issue for many people, there has never been an incident, court case, or public outcry to put a stop to Ziglar's ethical and religious teachings.

Sources

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