

The Ultimate Business: Interview with Michael Ray, Ph.D: Professor of Creativity and Innovation, Stanford University, by Raz Ingrassci



Michael Ray, Ph.D.

A Professor of Creativity and Innovation, Stanford University Graduate School of Business, Dr. Ray took the Hoffman Quadrinity Process 20 years ago and in that time has personally referred hundreds of people to the Process.

Professor Ray is the first John G. McCoy-Banc One Corporation Professor of Creative and Innovation at Stanford University. He is the co-author of such books as *Creativity in Business*, *The Path of the Everyday Hero*, and *The Creative Spirit*. Widely known for his research on creative thinking, he has appeared on several national television programs, including "20/20" and the PBS series "The Creative Spirit." His courses at Stanford for business students, executives, and professionals have been featured in such publications as *Time*, *Fortune*, and the *New York Times*. Currently, Dr. Ray's company "Inside Out Collaborations" provides multi-media assisted courses for business corporations and is a member of the Hoffman Advisory Board.

Raz: What effect has the Hoffman Process had on your professional life?

Michael: The fundamental purpose of Feldenkrais' method is to provide an opportunity for people to continue their growth process and to become as fully human as possible. The core purpose is to facilitate people to be able to act effectively and according to their true desire in their lives.

Raz: What is required of business executives today?

Michael: Executives run organizations. In business, we need executives who have clarity, people who are in touch with themselves. Then, in leadership and management positions, they can be good role models and leaders. The people I know who have really moved their organizations are scrupulous role models. They are so clear about honesty, integrity, openness, mutual self-respect, dignity for the individual, and creativity, that they don't deviate from these principles at all in their behavior. And by doing that they generate the same kind of behavior in their organization. In that way, organizations are just like families. If you don't show complete respect or openness, it causes the same kind of Negative Love reactions in people in business as occurs in families.

Raz: So, to be a good business executive or manager, one must be a leader?

Michael: Yes. The way the world is evolving today, you really must be a leader. You must not only know what you are doing, but also be very clear with yourself; free of the obstacles that come up from early childhood experiences. Without that freedom, you can't truly succeed as a leader...you can't consistently make appropriate decisions...you can't manage the high level of stress. Once you get clear of unseen childhood obstacles, you can experience the joy, intuition, confidence, self-esteem, and compassion needed in business today. I don't know of any method other than the Hoffman Process that is so dramatic and so effective in terms of getting people clear of the negative effects of their early childhood conditioning.

Raz: What is the importance of empowerment and enlightenment in business?

Michael: One of the overarching objectives of the new paradigm in business is the empowerment or enlightenment of everybody in the organization. You have to have everybody in the organization moving in that direction. I see the Hoffman Process as one way to empower people and move them toward enlightenment, to get them to see the positive spirit in each person, to see the tremendous value of each individual. From my own experience of the Process, it is the technique that people in business need for true empowerment of self and others.

Raz: There is much talk about the importance of changing "corporate culture." Doesn't this start by changing one's personal culture?

Michael: There's no question about that. Unfortunately, early family life predisposes us to get hooked into the prevailing old-school paradigm in business. It's so all-encompassing — like the air we breathe - that people don't even know they're being controlled by it. I think it takes something like the Hoffman Process to allow people to begin to make the necessary changes.

People in business today are going to need to make those personal changes in order to keep up with the transitions in the business world. The good news is that people in the business world are so practical and they are willing to do whatever is necessary to get the job done. What the Hoffman Process represents is what's necessary to get the job done.

Raz: It seems that executives today must be skillful across a wide spectrum of relationships.

Michael: Absolutely. And, of course, our first relationships are with our parents. Those relationships don't just color, but really directly effect the way we relate to other people today. Until you see that and get some control over it, particularly the negative aspects, then it's very difficult to relate to other people in a really productive way. You need to understand what those relationships in early life mean in terms of your present behavior, and then get clear of it. Once you've done that, you gain tremendous confidence. You see who you are and you are able to see others for who they really are. You then relate to other people more in terms of their essential selves. When you act this way people are freed up to take personal responsibility, and do wondrous things.

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