

# What's his motivation?

Peter Legge finds inspiration and opportunities just about everywhere

He's best known as a motivational speaker and writer whose subject is success.

And there's no doubting his own. Peter Legge's climb to the top started at, well, the bottom. Fired from his job 30 years ago, he and his young family were living on food hampers when he jumped into a new venture called TV Week.

He transformed the bankrupt little rag into Canada Wide Magazines and Communications Ltd., Western Canada's largest privately owned publishing company. Now he's a father of "three spectacular daughters," married for 36 years (anachronistically, to the same woman). His multi-million-dollar company has 115 people in Burnaby producing 33 different magazines.

He serves on many, many volunteer groups, has written six Canadian bestsellers, has a seventh book just published and travels the world as a public speaker.

So what accounts for his own success — hard work? That's part of it, but there's something else that he expresses through frequent maxims, sayings of his own or of others. He's gleaned these nuggets from his parents, other motivational speakers and



Three of Legge's bestsellers plus his newest release, *The Runway of Life*.

their parents, and also sources as varied as his pastor, his personal trainer, Isaiah, Burke (Edmund more than Brian), Abraham Lincoln, Rocket Richard, Hellen Keller and Hurricane Carter, not to mention the Williams Lake Cattlemen's Association.

His message, he says, "is both inspirational and very practical. There are universal principles that simply work in our lives. It makes no difference whether we believe them or not, they simply work."

They certainly work for him. Partly as a result, he's picked up a lengthy list of honours — so lengthy that he seems to have been recognized by every organization but Underachievers Anonymous.

SFU, for example, awarded him an honorary doctorate for raising \$20 million for charities. That doesn't even include his work hosting the Variety Club telethon. The telethon, meanwhile, goes back to what at first seems like a separate chapter in his life — Peter Legge, standup comedian.

As a performer he spent about five years travelling North America and Europe. He had his own TV show in Britain. While appearing at Vancouver's legendary Cave nightclub, he and the Mills Brothers were asked to take part in the telethon. Dubious at first, he became hooked. "Now I'm working on my 27th hosting experience and it's a marvellous thing to have the opportunity to do. All the money that we raise at the telethon, over \$100 million, is spent for less advantaged kids in the province of British Columbia."

Interestingly, his life as a touring comic led to his work as a motivational speaker. "That was what I was really training myself for but I didn't know it at the time."

From inception his publishing empire has been stationed in Burnaby, which Legge calls "a marvellous community, a thriving community, although it could be more so."

"If we continue to have a free-enterprise



Peter Legge

government in British Columbia and maybe if we had a free-enterprise municipal government then we could attract more businesses to Burnaby. Clearly Vancouver has or will run out of space and the next, best municipality is Burnaby for new businesses, particularly high-tech."

As a fundraiser, writer, speaker, entrepreneur and family man, you might think he'd earned a degree of complacency. But far from slowing down, Legge might even be considering new directions.

"I did a speech earlier today and I asked, 'When was the last time you did something for the first time? Why are you putting off these opportunities if they're appealing to you? A door opens, why not walk through?' So I think there's still a lot to do, not only for me and my company but for the community and to help raise money for much-needed charities. There's always more to do."

*profile*