

In Memory of Hilary Hinton 'Zig' Ziglar CPAE*

by Rob Salisbury CSP



Flashback Spring 1980: I was completing my third year of formal studies at my California University when one of my academic fraternity brothers asked me what I was doing during the summer school break.

Brent told me he was returning for a second time to work in a summer internship program with a company that was a leader in the education industry. He got my attention when he said it started in 1861, the same year 16th US President Abraham Lincoln had been elected to office.

Within days, I was researching my friend's summer internship program. By late May, I was travelling across America with my Delta Sigma Pi brothers and other University friends to work with The Southwestern Company based in Tennessee.

Day one of my week at their Nashville student induction training, I was introduced to the magnificence of **Mr Zig Ziglar**. I learnt his 1975 book '**See You at the Top**' was a massive US best seller and Southwestern a raving fan of his philosophy, attitude and sales methods to help rookies and veteran student sales managers.

For the next 14 weeks, Zig's book and audio tapes were my new mental diet I read at breakfast and listened to at night before sleeping. Zig's words in print and spirit on tape helped motivate me to work the required 14 hour days, six days a week as I presented and sold the educational books of the Division I represented.

With Zig's help, I completed my first summer of selling books and ranked in the top 2% of over 5500 US College and University students that summer. More importantly, I hit my target to save enough money to study full time, serve as Vice President of my national fraternity and graduate with a University business degree.

Flash forward - late July 2000: I last saw Zig when he was booked to speak at a National Sales Conference organised by our Australian seminar company. Zig flew out from Texas for a week of engagements and to speak on the same tour with his long time industry friends and fellow sales legends / authors, **Jim Rohn CPAE** and **Tom Hopkins CPAE**. When Zig arrived for the Australian events, he looked just like his photo above.

Their tour was branded '**Gold Medal Selling**' and showcased two months prior to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Thousands and thousands of people attended to hear these three masters of sales and motivation speak at venues in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. As National Tour Sales Manager, it was the last time I witnessed Zig, Jim and Tom speak together to Australian audiences and the tour was Zig's farewell to Aussies.

I recall at the Melbourne event, Zig pulling out his famous ole' water pump onto the stage table as he spoke about building momentum, inertia and how to keep yourself motivated. The more he pumped the handle of that ole' pump and talked, the more the 1500 Aussie audience got excited. Zig easily earned a two minute standing ovation in appreciation for the magic he shared with us on that Melbourne Town Hall day.

The world has lost yet another great teacher and human spirit ambassador with his passing 28th November 2012 - Zig was 86 years young. I have no doubt he is enjoying a wonderful chat with his master and lord.



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*CPAE: The **C**ouncil of **P**eers **A**ward for **E**xcellence is the highest peer award given by industry peers from within the National Speakers Association.