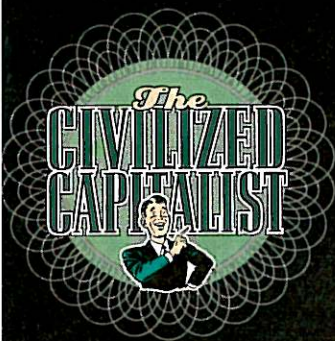


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REAL LIFE AFTER REALITY TV

*A Q&A With
Apprentice Winner
Kelly Perdue*

In the past year since winning *The Apprentice 2*, entrepreneur Kelly Perdew is keeping himself quite busy. He is launching a new business with Donald Trump called Trump Exclusives to debut in March 2006 in New York City and roll out across the U.S. throughout the year. He will also be hosting a new show on the Military Channel called *G.I. Factory*, which will premiere on March 24, 2006.

DECA recently caught up with Kelly, who is currently promoting his new book—*Take Command: 10 Leadership Principles I Learned in the Military and Put to Work for Donald Trump*—to learn more about what makes this successful entrepreneur tick.

What were your interests in high school?

KELLY: In high school I was a bit of a jock, four-sport letterman and captain of the basketball team. We won state in basketball my sophomore and junior years. I also was active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, French Club, and was even the president of the Safety Club!

You attended West Point and served as a military intelligence officer. Do you think that helped prepare you for the business world?

KELLY: My military background was the best preparation I could ever imagine for the business world. My book, *Take Command: 10 Leadership Principles I Learned in the Military and Put to Work for Donald Trump*, explains exactly how and which leadership principles I learned in the military and applied to business.

You've started and run several companies, what was your first?

KELLY: The first start-up company I was involved with was called ImageTel. We built high-end video-conferencing systems for Fortune 500 clients. I was the VP of business development and CFO for ImageTel. Ultimately the company failed, but it was a great learning experience for me.

What advice and tips would you give to those looking to start their own company?

KELLY: Passion, perseverance and planning. There are three critical leadership principles for entrepreneurs and business success. You must

be passionate about what you do, and stick with it. But nothing can happen without careful foresight. You can view my thoughts in detail and ask questions about them in my online forums at www.kellyperdewforums.com.

What regular challenges do you face as a business owner?

KELLY: There are innumerable challenges you face as a business owner, which is part of the fun. Making sure your product or service stays cutting edge, communicating with your customers so you know before they do what they need, and attracting and retaining the best people are some of the most important.

Obviously drive and ambition are key requirements for succeeding in business; what other qualities do you feel are key?

KELLY: As I mentioned before—passion, perseverance and planning. However, in the long term the most important quality is integrity. Integrity really embodies who you are and defines your reputation; therefore, never compromise it.

Presentation is a term often discussed by business luminaries, but really how important is a clean suit and good diction?

KELLY: You only ever have one chance to make a first impression. Why would you want it to be anything but your best? Always assume that decision-makers and influencers will see every single thing you do. Give your best on everything you're involved with and no one can ever ask anything more from you.

When running a business, how important is it to give back?

KELLY: Selfless service is a leadership principle I see in all great leaders. Think about who has helped you get to where you are and do the same thing for somebody else. No matter what level you are, it is never too early to get involved and give back. Both as an individual or a business owner, giving back is always crucial.

I've been able to give back and become a spokesperson for Big Brothers Big Sisters and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. I'm also donating a percentage of my book proceeds to the USO.

You've recently launched a direct marketing business with Donald Trump. What did you think sold Donald on the idea?

KELLY: One thing I've learned from Donald Trump over this last year is to think big! That's what attracted him to the idea of our new business—Trump Direct Media. We plan to reach out to over two-thirds of the households in the U.S. with incomes over \$100,000. That will make us the largest, celebrity-endorsed, direct marketing channel for premium brands.

How important has Donald been as a mentor to you? Was *The Apprentice* a useful experience for you?

KELLY: Donald has been amazing. I've had access to him for the entire year, and I've learned as much about marketing and branding as I have about real estate. I'm incredibly thankful for the opportunities that *The Apprentice* afforded me. ❖