



**T**he E-Myth Revisited is a book I read nearly 15 years ago and yet I still can recall most of the principles shared by Michael Gerber and the folksy way in which he communicates them. (The E stands for Entrepreneur.) Gerber opens the book by describing his experience at a small Inn where he stays during his business travels. His first experience with the Inn was one of the most enjoyable of his entire business career. Any business traveler can relate to the idea of a small inn providing a warm fire and a fresh breakfast Danish served with the aroma of coffee permeating the air when you arise in the morning.

Gerber describes this idyllic experience and then recounts a second visit he made to the same inn during which the experience was dramatically diminished. He was not greeted as the welcome guest he was made to feel like on his first visit. The fire wasn't lit in his room and he recalled other, less pleasing, facets of his second experience. What Gerber teaches the reader is that we set expectations for our customers. We teach them what we will offer and set the bar by which they will measure our service in the future. Thus, this is a book about consistency of meeting customer expectations.

It is also a book about consistency of performance. He describes the consultation he offers a young woman who has launched a bakery. She is struggling and has discovered that she is merely an employee in the business she owns. She is forced to do many of the tasks she would prefer to delegate so that she can build her business and achieve her dream of financial success.

Gerber offers a wonderful insight into standardizing procedures and setting clear expectations for employees about what they should do on the job. He includes ideas for continual enhancement of procedures by offering a variance on the popular Japanese Kaizen method of constant improvement. His terminology includes the three steps of Innovation, Measurement and Orchestration. In other words, once you have stabilized your business, introduce a new technique or procedure; then measure the results; if the results are better, then keep on doing it!

This is a method that I believe can work for individuals as well as businesses. From his opening story through his calm consultation with the young woman baking apple pies, this book provides insights whether you are launching a small business or trying to take a large organization to a higher level. It is a particularly important book for salespeople striving to build a set of skills that can be consistently applied and it is a great book for any person who wishes to become a more valuable commodity in the labor market...like you!