

EKTIMIS.com Quote of the Month

Date February, 2010

“It is easier to surround yourself with fools who act like wise men than it is to surround yourself with wise men who occasionally act foolish.”

This month's (February) quotation is rooted in the fifth law of *The Top Ten Laws of Respect – A Personal Guide*. This law deals with our associations—the people that we surround ourselves with. The human race is a social race. As humans we depend upon and thrive on companionships, relationships and other social interactions. This tendency, while a necessity, operates as a two edge sword.

In my new book, *The Top Ten Laws of Respect – A Personal Guide*, I discuss and illustrate the relationship between respect and one's associations—the company one keeps. It is amazing to observe the process by which we make friends and establish our hierarchy of friendships. Ultimately a few friends emerge as close allies and trusted parties. For some people, these allies and trusted parties initially appear (or come across) as “wise persons,” but soon turn out to be fools—individuals who lack the ability to exercise sound and proper judgment. For others, their allies and trusted parties emerge as “wise persons” and prove to be the case—individuals who are learned, who continuously strive to exercise good judgment, and who extend this benefit to others.

The process of establishing your circle of friends that will result in mutually respectful and enriching friendships is similar to the process of buying a home—a major investment. You look first at the exterior and, if it meets your basic requirements, then you look closely at the interior to assess the feel and the character of a potential home. You ultimately make the purchase if and when you feel comfortable with every aspect of your decision.

And so, while it is easy to surround yourself with fools who act like wise men, it is much more prudent to surround yourself with wise men who occasionally act foolish.

About the Author



Niyi Taiwo is the founder of EKTIMIS and the lead editor for the EKTIMIS eLibrary articles. He is the author of several books, including the EKTIMIS Top Ten Laws series. He is a continuous improvement expert with over 21 years of industry experience – operational, management and consulting. He has been studying the topic of respect since 2004. He holds an undergraduate degree from WPI and a master's degree from RPI. He is a certified Lean Expert and an ASQ-certified Six Sigma Black Belt.