

"If it is to be, it is up to me!"

A set of ten two-letter words to help from a new you

Have you heard of the rather unique funeral held in an office in New York some years ago? As employees of the firm came in to work one Monday morning, they were greeted by a solemn notice at the entrance: "The person responsible for inhibiting your growth died yesterday. The body has been placed in the cafeteria, till 2 pm today."

Sad to think a colleague had passed away, and curious who the person might be, the employees trooped into the cafeteria to pay their last respects. A crowd of company staff had gathered inside. 'Who is this chap who has been hindering our growth?' each wondered, as they walked up to the coffin to take a dekko. One by one, as each person took a look inside the coffin, there was shocked silence - and a look of disbelief.

Inside the coffin was a mirror. And below it was a placard on which was written: "There's only one person who can set limits to your growth. And that's YOU." Now that's a message we would all do well to remember.

When we find ourselves falling short of the success we think we deserve, we often blame our bosses, our employers, the industry, or the current favourite - the recession! Everyone and everything, in fact, except ourselves. For things to change in your life, you don't need to change your job, or your company or your town. You only need to change yourself. Start now. Adopt a new philosophy for your life. Tell yourself the magic phrase: "If it is to be, it is up to me!" It's not often that you can get a set of ten two-letter words to form one whole sentence. And no ordinary sentence but one, which has the power to become a life-changing philosophy for you, for me and for all of us: "If it is to be, it is up to me!" Just say it to yourself, believe in it, and see the difference.

The power to change our lives and chart our future lies within each of us. Resist the temptation to blame others for your plight. When you blame other people, you take away your inherent power to change. You weaken yourself. But by taking responsibility, you empower yourself to change your fortunes. And that one act - taking responsibility for yourself - is really what separates winners from losers.

Have you ever seen sailing boats wander into the sea? They all take off from one place, around the same time, and yet reach different shores. Why is that? The winds are the same. The water currents too are the same for all the boats. Yet, they reach different destinations, because, where the boat will reach is determined not by the direction of the wind, but by the set of the sails.

Our lives are like that too. So stop blaming the winds of your company policy or the currents of the economy. Stop worrying that you did not go to a premier B-School, or that you grew up in a non-English-speaking home. Take charge of your life. Change your mindset and get your thinking right. To reach your goals, it's important to set your sails properly. For things to get better, you need to get better. Need new skills? Invest in training yourself don't wait for your employer to do it. I find it puzzling that while young people spend money on trendy new clothes, and on new cellphones and on the monthly visit to the beauty salon, they want the company to spend money on training them, on making them better employees, smarter people. 'Training myself is not my responsibility' seems to be the general dictum!

For things to change, we must change our beliefs, and our mindsets. Do yourself a favour. Stick this ten-word aphorism on your bathroom mirror: "If it is to be, it is up to me!" And wake up to a new you.