

improved their family's life but also created something that is bigger than themselves. They are creating a successful company that will, in the long term, help them to achieve personal and financial goals. This approach has been proven in many countries. In the United States for the last 25 years, in Britain over the last 10 years, and in countries such as Germany, Spain, France, and developing countries, companies are starting to look at implementing ESOPs as a means of increasing the wealth of their people.

Not all private or public companies are suitable for ESOPs. Research in the United States indicates that approximately 25 per cent of companies appear to have the suitable cultural and structural supports to implement an ESOP. However, given that figure, very few companies have actually developed an ESOP plan to both help their employees and the company grow. I believe that Canadian companies must utilize some type of ESOP program if we are to remain competitive on the world stage.

This book was written for those owners and employees who realize that there is no limit to what can be achieved by a team of dedicated individuals. These are the people that can utilize and benefit substantially from an ESOP within their corporation.

To achieve a successful ESOP, it is important to have access to knowledgeable professionals in the area. An ESOP entails many different aspects such as design, communication, law, tax, and valuation, and one consultant alone cannot serve them all. In appendix 9 you will find a list of professional firms and associations. While this is by no means an all-inclusive or exhaustive list, it may help the reader to at least begin their search.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book has been written for readers who are interested in learning about the design and implementation of employee share ownership plans. It addresses three types of readers. The first are business owners of privately held companies who wish to sell or transfer equity to employees. The second type is the stakeholders of publicly held companies, both senior executives and their employees. The third type are professional advisors such as accountants, lawyers, tax advisors, and financial planners who want to help clients in implementing and designing employee share ownership plans.