



BlackEconomics.org

“Black American Success Achieved in Stages”

Gods, wizards, witches, and magicians have their special place in our religions and cultures because they effect change immediately. They simply say “be” and it is. We are delighted, yet mystified, by the prospect of immediate realization and gratification. We operationalize this phenomenon in our lives when we walk into a retail establishment, see a desired item, then pull out the cash or a credit card to make it our own.

But most of life’s developments follow a different, more elongated process. Like it or not, most developments don’t occur magically—within the twinkling of an eye.

According to religious and scientific literature, the creation—our world—has evolved over time and in stages, and it continues to do so today.

Our physical bodies grow and develop in stages.

Our educational attainment occurs through years of study—by degrees and in stages.

Our families begin with two. Small additions come forth, which grow to maturity, and then go on to create their own families. The generations come in stages.

Our business enterprises evolve from ideas, to plans, to financing, to operationalization, to mass marketing, to realizing profits, to franchising, etc.—through stages.

Nations often begin with a small *body politique*, which convinces a larger group that it is in the latter’s best interest to come into a new governmental arrangement. That governmental arrangement then attempts to build broader political and economic systems that create an improved quality of life for all of its members. The nation is realized in stages.

There is no question about it: The Black American experience has evolved in stages. Slavery, abolitionism, emancipation, reconstruction, Jim Crow, desegregation/integration, and *The New Jim Crow* were the stages that brought us to 2013.

In each case, we found ourselves in a predicament, decided that we wanted change, and then took the necessary action to effect the desired change. There was no “overnight change.” It took deliberate, purposeful effort to move us through these stages.

Today, we are in limbo. Some Black Americans have achieved the broadly sketched MLK dream: They have a modicum of financial and economic resources with certain accompanying powers.

Unfortunately, too many Black Americans are not enjoying the MLK or the American dream. These Black Americans are in a predicament, but they have not identified clearly the desired state. They have not determined how to effect the necessary change, or they may not be in a position to effect the change that will move them to the next stage. They are in an unfavorable stage, trying to reach a favorable one.

The latter realization is critical. There is the old adage: “If you don’t know where you are going, then any road will take you there.”

In other words, Black Americans must employ individual and group leadership to identify a favorable next stage. Having done this, the path and method of action required to reach the next stage will become transparent.

There are two important caveats concerning reaching the next stage. The first is that, as in all other movements to new stages, a great deal of effort (read WORK) will be required. The second caveat is that movement to the new stage will not occur over night—it will come in stages.

We have been successful in the past, and we will be successful again in realizing a new stage.

Let’s continue to think, plan, and dialogue about the next stage for Black Americans, and then take action to achieve it.

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