



TOWN OF PARADISE VALLEY

# INDEPENDENT

## T.W. Lewis founder shares book about success



SUBMITTED PHOTO/TOM LEWIS

**Tom Lewis is the founder and CEO of T.W. Lewis, recognized as the first inductee into the National Housing Quality Hall of Fame.**

Posted Tuesday, May 14, 2024 1:03 pm



**By MacKenzie Brower**  
**Mail (<mailto:mbrower@iniusa.org>)**

As the founder of the T.W. Lewis Company and Foundation and the Lewis Honors College at the University of Kentucky, Paradise Valley resident Tom Lewis has shared his experience and expertise for young professionals through his first book, *Solid Ground*.

T.W. Lewis is considered a No. 1 luxury home builder in the United States. Lewis started the company in 1991 and has lived in the Phoenix Valley for 45 years and in Paradise Valley for 15 years.

Lewis self-published *Solid Ground: A Foundation for Winning in Work and in Life* in March 2020, just before the COVID-19 pandemic. He wrote 20 chapters over the course of four years with a pencil and legal pad.

“I have always wanted to write a book about life lessons and what I’ve learned along the way and what I can pass on to younger people, particularly college students embarking on their careers,” Lewis said.

He has been a student of success his whole life, which he says is the “progressive realization of a worthy ideal.” Success does not have a number.

Lewis’ worthy ideal was to become the best home building organization in America, as measured by product quality, customer service and profitability. To accomplish that 15 years later is success for him.

In the first five chapters, Lewis tells his life story and his start in business. He reflects on the qualities and habits he utilized that led to success both in business and in life.

“That’s really a very positive thing to do, so I encourage people to think about their own personal journeys,” Lewis said.

When Lewis started his business, it was an instant success, he said. So, many people wonder how he did it.

“The short answer to that is, it took me 18 years and four different jobs and six different companies and eight different bosses to really learn how to be a real estate executive,” he said. “At age 41, I was ready to start my own business. But there was nothing instant about my preparation.”

He thinks that gaining experience the old-fashioned way, working for good people and good companies, is the key to long-term success compared to starting a business right out of college. It took a lot of time for him to be financially able and knowledgeable enough to do it.

“That’s why the name of the book is Solid Ground,” Lewis said. “As a home builder, you have to build on solid ground. You also have to build your life and your career on solid ground. I’m talking about experience, knowledge, relationships, all the things that it takes to have a career. You have to have all those things in place or you’re building something on quicksand.”

Lewis goes on in the book to talk about values that are the foundation of success: personal character, hard work, goal setting, self-awareness, and goodness of helping others.

Through hard work and failure, an individual’s resilience and self-esteem improves, he said.

The last five chapters in Solid Ground, Lewis calls “life’s greatest achievements” that people strive for: success, purpose, meaning, wisdom and happiness.

“There’s so much good information here for any stage of life that anyone is in to get some inspiration, some good ideas,” Lewis said. “It’s not all my original thinking. You know, I’ve been a reader my whole life, so I pulled together a lot of (what) I’ve read, but I’ve packaged it in a way that it’s like a highlight reel of all the best stuff that’s ever been written.”

Solid Ground is available for purchase on Amazon as a hardback, e-book, audio book, and soon paperback. Over 16,000 copies have been published and most of those sold or distributed, according to Lewis. It’s sometimes sent to private schools or small colleges as a self-improvement, career-management book.

*We invite our readers to submit their civil comments, pro or con, on this issue. Email [AZOpinions@iniusa.org](mailto:AZOpinions@iniusa.org). MacKenzie Brower can be reached at [mbrower@iniusa.org](mailto:mbrower@iniusa.org).*