

# Corporate success may hide in eastern religion

By DICK KIMMINS

It takes a powerful force to make someone quit a high-profile job that pays \$50,000 a year plus 3 percent of gross sales and options on 30,000 common shares.

The force is called Zen Buddhism and next month Zen Master August Turak, former vice president of sales and marketing for Applied Control Systems Inc., will tell Columbus business men and women about the eastern religious philosophy that continues to change his life.

Zen, according to Turak, can help change other lives, too. The ancient religion helps an individual answer questions such as "Why am I here?" and "What's it all about, anyway?"

Once an individual begins to ponder those mysteries, the quest toward Zen can help a manager be a better manager, a sales representative be a better sales representative and a boss a better boss, Turak maintains.

He says business people can use Zen to focus their attention and be a better judge of their colleagues and competitors.

"I became a dynamic individual," says the self-assured Turak. "The biggest deficit that business people have is they don't know themselves.

"Ask any executive and they will say their biggest problem is people-problems—hiring, promotions, communication, etc. So if you understand what motivates you, you can understand what motivates others and you will be a better manager.

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"Zen builds character, focuses your attention, conserves energy and helps you deter gratification," he said.

About 100 people are expected to gather at the Upper Arlington Municipal Center at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 15 for Turak's message. His visit is sponsored by an informal, 10-year-old organization here, the "Self-Knowledge Network."

The group has hosted public meetings since 1984 and is composed of a wide variety of business people in Columbus, according to Paul Mahler, a vice president of the local office of Shearson/Lehman Hutton Co. Inc.

Zen is an ancient religion with its roots in India and China. It is widely practiced in Japan today. There is no central deity, unless the practitioner concludes individually that one exists.

Zen is a way to deal with life, a way to strip away the clutter and focus on the center, according to Turak. It can be used, Turak says, as preparation for a simple, single telephone call or as a guide to life itself.

Turak was introduced to the philosophy while an undergraduate at the University of Pittsburgh in the summer of 1972. At the time, he admits he was a confused 19-year-old, searching for some way "not to waste my life. I decided I wanted to plan my life around some meaningful goal. I decided there was no permanency in life anyway since death is the final arbiter."

He attended a lecture on the Pitt campus by Richard Rose of Benwood, W.Va. Rose, also a Zen Master, found in Turak a disciple and invited him to Rose's



August Turak... teaching Zen and business

West Virginia farm. Turak stayed five years and eventually was designated a Zen Master himself by Rose.

After the experience with Rose, Turak returned to work. He laid carpet for awhile and, because of what he says was his ability to work well with other people, he moved into corporate America in a big way.

He helped establish MTV with Warner-Amex Satellite Communications Inc., helped create what is now known as the Arts and Entertainment Network for Adelphi Communications Corp. and established the marketing arm for Applied Control Systems in North Carolina.

With Applied, he helped develop the company's integrated software package for the motel and restaurant industries. He had a BMW, a house that was paid for, an expense account, a big salary, stock options and all the other perks business success can bring.

He quit last Oct. 15, realizing that the job of finding himself was far from over. The search for himself is made bearable by a savings account that yields enough to live on for the rest of his life.

There will be no charge for Turak's lecture.