We’re not as far along as we think we are...



Thu, 11/05/2009 - 00:11 — Derrick [1]

- Never be satisified with the status quo and don't sacrifice yourself along the way
- Get a fresh perspective (usually an outsider) to tell you what can be right in front of you
- Work ON your business or organization or group, and don't give up!

The Frog and the Dog

Sometimes I think I might be a geek. I’m not a computer geek, but an information geek of sorts. I like to study all kinds of science and listen to lectures I can barely understand. My wife has her opinions on this..... The other day I was reading about embryonic development and the latest information regarding what makes one embryo become a frog or a dog. Under the assumption that DNA was the only factor, I learned that what we’ve typically been taught as fact was in fact old hat, new evidence has thrown a wrench in the science of the embryonic machine and scientists now have to play a new game. For some this is just a headache, because it would be easier to believe what they already believed. To others its a flash of genus that will ignite research that will make huge improvements to the world. This is a great example of how we’re never really as far along as we think we are. There is almost always something, some information that will change your game plans.

I was thinking it might be handy to write a series of articles to shine a light on where we need to be and what we’ve not achieved, so we can implement strategy to improve.

The Forest for the Trees

In business we have so many things to do. I run across so many people who have already made their decisions on where they are in their development of their business and typically they are incorrect. Its hard to be objective about your own progress, which is why its important to have someone help keep you going in the right direction of improvement.

Let's consider a store I visited the other day. I was talking to the owner who was working alone, and late. We chatted about how business was going, and the growth of the business. The perception of the owner was that they were doing great and that they were successful because they “worked 7 days a week and 12 to 14 hours a day”. I was thinking just the opposite as my mind was comparing the traffic to the store to a similar store I’d been in at a local mall. The mall store had many people in it, and several employees working with customers, while the independent store had no one in it and no employees. Who was making more sales and revenue I wondered? Seemed pretty clear to me.

The perception of the owner was that they we doing it all and being successful. But at what expense to their well being and life? Had they started out wanting to work 7 days a week 14 hours a day, or did

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they just get used to it over time, slowing losing their identity as a person with hobbies and friends, becoming a shop keeper with a singular life activity? They thought they were very far down the road of success, and to them it may be true and quite fine because everyone defines their own life. But for me and what I would consider typical, is that most business owners would like to have their business operating in a way that they could delegate defined tasks to employees they trusted, so the work would get done and the owners could then manage from the top level with a focus on growth and revenue.

A Better Way

Consider the store owner in our story, suppose they decided they wanted a better way of working so they could have more revenue, to fund the use of quality employees, so the owner could have a life. Can that be done?

Looking at other businesses in that segment I’d say absolutely. But what is causing the roadblock, maybe loss of expectations, or just feeling resigned to doing what you’ve always done. Maybe they tried to improve and they just could not figure it out and make improvements work. I’ve met those people too, they just gave up. Maybe like some scientists, they have yet to find the new information that sparks the development of a new way of doing what you need to do.

If your a CEO, a manager or a business owner who has a inkling that there has to be a better way to do whatever you are doing, please don’t give up, because you're right, there is always a better way. There is always something new coming to light that changes the game completely. If you have a dream of what your job or business should be, you can obtain it one way or another. Just remember that most of the time, you have to make time to develop it, or to find someone to develop it for you.

- Quality Excellence [2]

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