

PIPELINE

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COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

SPRING 2013

New Year's Resolutions? Ha Ha!

We're about four months into the New Year, so we guess you can't call it a new year anymore. Have you looked at or thought about your resolutions? According

to a survey published in December by the University of Scranton, 46% of the respondents had maintained their resolve to follow their New Year's resolution for at least six months. The same survey states that the percentage of people over 50 who achieve their resolution each year is 14%—pretty dismal. Here are some of the ways I stick to my resolutions:

- 1) Write down your resolutions and set up a mechanism to review them on a set interval. The University of Scranton study found that "people who explicitly make resolutions are 10 times more likely to attain their goals than people who don't explicitly make resolutions." To help me with my resolutions, I use a handy software program called Evernote. The basic subscription is free and it allows the user to set up electronic notebooks. I have a notebook called "Goals" and I make it a point to look at the goals once every week. I began by writing my personal "mission statement." I then set my goals to meet that mission.
- 2) If a resolution doesn't fit, throw it away! As I look through my goals, if one no longer fits, I throw it away. There's no sense having a list of goals that either are not attainable or are



impossible to reach. For instance, in my wild optimism that the New Year brings, I set a goal to lose 50 pounds and I busted my butt to lose three pounds during the last 30 days. There's nothing to prevent me from revising the goal to 25 or 30 pounds.

3) Decide which resolutions to share and which ones to keep to yourself. Many people are of the opinion that one should share their resolution with other people to increase the likelihood of reaching them. I believe that you need not share. If you write them down and you review them on a consistent basis, that's enough to keep you going.

4) Resolutions make it easier to say no! If you are true to yourself and consistently review your goals, it makes things a lot easier to say

no to either a time-waster or anything else that is contrary to helping you achieve your resolution.

Intervals of time are God's way of allowing us to start over and over. Every new day can be the start of a new resolution. Take advantage of new days, weeks, months and years to make your life better. You are the one who decides exactly what it means to be successful in any area of your life. Setting goals will allow you to identify and celebrate each personal success along the way.

If you haven't made any New Year's resolutions this year, take the time to do it today.

—Pauline Lally

It's All About Service

Have you noticed that many companies staff their customer service department with people who don't understand how to provide true service? Why is it that when you meet someone who provides you with good personal service, you can't help but spread the word? Over time, we have made it a point to observe some outstanding service companies. It seems that the truly great customer service providers have developed some of the following skills:

- They listen to their customers and understand their needs.
- They address their customers' fears and anxieties and develop unique solutions.
- And most important, they always keep the lines of communications open. They never bury their head in sand when problems arise. Ostriches make poor service providers.

Service isn't just a part of our name; it is who we are. Our company has been developed with this basic principle in mind. We would welcome the opportunity to custom tailor a solution to your piping needs.



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Select The Right Workers For Your Team

As a manager, you can't do everything yourself, and you shouldn't try. Smart managers depend on their teams. That means they need the best people to work with. Look for these traits in the people you hire:



- **Reliability.** You want people who will always show up, and always do their best. Taking a chance on a superstar who may or may not be productive all the time is a big risk to take.
- **Communication skills.** Look for team members who aren't afraid to speak up, and who know how to express themselves clearly. You don't want to waste time figuring out what people really mean.
- **Active listening.** Communication is more than just talking. Every team needs members who are willing to wait their turn and listen to other points of view.
- **Cooperation.** On a team, members should

support each other. Emphasize that you need your employees to pitch in and help their teammates whenever necessary, not just do their own jobs and ignore the challenges around them.

- **Loyalty.** You don't want blind obedience, but you do need team members who believe in your organization's vision and the team's goals. Choose people whose values and career aspirations are aligned with what you want your team to accomplish.
- **Sense of humor.** Things can get tense. When your team is under pressure, the ability to put the situation into perspective with a joke or a smile can be invaluable. Look for this trait in the people you hire, and cultivate it yourself.

Take The Long View After A Setback

So you didn't get the promotion you wanted, or another co-worker got the prize project. Don't let disappointment get the better of you. Try these two tips:

- Ask for feedback—and learn from it. Find out why you weren't the best candidate for the job. Then use that information to address whatever reason you didn't make the cut.
- Request a performance review. Sometimes we're not aware of how the boss really perceives our abilities and career potential. Have regular performance reviews and discussions with the boss about your career development.

The Green Effect

It's not easy being green, as Kermit the Frog once sang, but it's apparently easier to be creative when you've got something green to look at.

In an experiment reported in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, psychologists challenged 69 men and women to generate as many different uses for a tin can as possible within two minutes. But right before getting started, half the participants were shown a picture of a white rectangle, and the rest were shown a green rectangle.

Those who saw the green box tended to produce more imaginative ideas, according to the researchers. The findings were replicated in exercises involving different colors versus green.

The psychologists, from Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, Germany, theorize that the color green triggers thoughts of growth that stimulate the brain to work harder. In any case, try "greening" your thoughts to prompt better ideas.

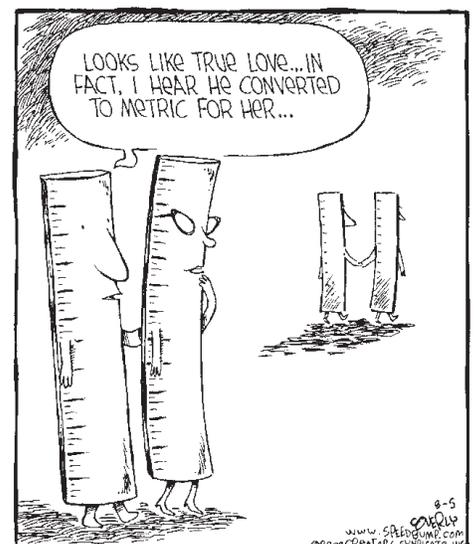
These Traits Will Help You Be A Better Leader

Every organization is different, and so is every employee. That means every manager has to find his or her own best style of leadership. Don't neglect these important traits of every successful leader:

- **Flexibility.** Learn what works in different situations, and don't stick to any strategy just because it's been useful once or twice in the past.
- **Emotional intelligence.** Understand what your people want from their jobs, and their lives. (It's more than a paycheck.) Manage them according to their needs, not just yours.
- **Honesty.** Tell the truth. If information is confidential, say so, but don't lie about it or evade the question, unless you want your employees to grow suspicious of your motives.
- **Accountability.** Let employees know what you expect, and hold them accountable for results. And hold yourself to the same standards.
- **Service.** Your employees work for your organization, not just you. Your role is to help them do their best work, not just to bark orders at them.
- **Focus on strengths.** Find out what your employees are best at, and what you're best at. Don't neglect gaps and weaknesses, but maximize strengths so everyone can work at the top of his or her game.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



Use A Dash Of Color To Set Yourself Apart From The Rest

Bringing color to the movies changed everything. Though black-and-white films can emphasize shadow and nuance, color opens up the world. When you want to catch people's attention and imagination, try adding some bold hues to these areas of your life:

- **Clothing.** You probably shouldn't dress as if you were in an explosion at a paint factory. But a bright necktie or a colorful scarf can highlight your appearance, make you more memorable, and mark you as a person who deserves attention.
- **Workspace.** Brighten up your office or cubicle with something more than drab beige and somber gray. A print of a famous painting or just a photograph of a gorgeous sunset can give you and your visitors something pleasant to look at, and may help spark your creativity.
- **Marketing materials.** Who says your business card has to be black print on white stock? Take a fresh look at everything you use to publicize your work and your organization. A splash of color in a brochure or on your website will catch the eyes and draw the interest of everyone who happens to see it. Again, don't go overboard, but dress up your materials so they express some originality.

When Galaxies Collide

Are you worried about asteroids hitting Earth? Get ready, because scientists are predicting an even bigger collision: The Andromeda galaxy and our own Milky Way galaxy are expected to run into each other at a speed of over 250,000 miles per hour.

But don't panic yet. This cosmic collision won't occur for more than 4 billion years. The two galaxies will ultimately merge into one massive elliptical shape, but because of the vast distances between objects in space, no worlds or stars are expected to be destroyed.

Still, our sun (and its orbiting planets) will probably drift toward the outer edge of the new galaxy. And who knows what that will do to real estate prices?

Travelers Favor Web Access Over Room Service

Travelers expect more than a clean bed and a wake-up call these days. A study of data from travelers and hospitality managers found that the most important lodging amenities to hotel/motel guests are...

- Wi-fi Internet access
- Breakfast included with the room
- Guest loyalty points
- Restaurant within the facility
- Shuttle services to airports and local attractions

What can guests do without? Take a look:

- Turndown service
- Pets allowed
- Spa
- Tours and other activities
- Room service

What did Woody Allen want to call *Annie Hall* before the studio asked him to change it?

Hooray For Hollywood!

- 1) In the movies, Indiana Jones has a well-documented fear of snakes, but his father, too, has a debilitating fear. What is it?
 - a) Heights
 - b) Spiders
 - c) Math
 - d) Rats
- 2) What did Woody Allen want to call *Annie Hall* before the studio asked him to change it?
 - a) *A Roller Coaster Named Desire*
 - b) *Me and My Guy*
 - c) *Anhedonia*
 - d) *It Had To Be Jew*
- 3) In the 1966 film *Batman*, the answer to one of the Riddler's absurd riddles is what?
 - a) A ballpoint banana
 - b) A bulletproof blueberry
 - c) A cardboard coconut
 - d) An automatic apple
- 4) In the *African Queen*, Hepburn dramatically dumps Bogey's booze overboard. What type of alcohol is it?
 - a) Vodka
 - b) Gin
 - c) Wine
 - d) Whiskey
- 5) In Disney's *Little Mermaid*, which item(s) does Ariel sing about having "galore"?
 - a) Thingamabobs
 - b) Whozits and whatzits
 - c) Gadgets and gizmos
 - d) Dinglehoppers

Answers: 1) d 2) c (Allen considered all of them but liked c best.) 3) a ("What has yellow skin and writes?") 4) b (The scene features Gordon's Gin, one of the earliest instances of product placement.) 5) b (The mermaid also has 20 thingamabobs, plus "gadgets and gizmos a-plenty.")

21 Suggestions for Success

1. Marry the right person. This one decision will determine 90% of your happiness or misery.
2. Work at something you enjoy and that's worthy of your time and talent.
3. Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully.
4. Become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know.
5. Be forgiving of yourself and others.
6. Be generous.
7. Have a grateful heart.
8. Persistence, persistence, persistence.
9. Discipline yourself to save money on even the most modest salary.
10. Treat everyone you meet like you want to be treated.
11. Commit yourself to constant improvement.
12. Commit yourself to quality
13. Understand that happiness is not based on possessions, power or prestige, but on relationships with people you love and respect.
14. Be loyal.
15. Be honest.
16. Be a self-starter.
17. Be decisive even if it means you'll sometimes be wrong.
18. Stop blaming others. Take responsibility for every area of your life.
19. Be bold and courageous. When you look back on your life, you'll regret the things you didn't do more than the ones you did.
20. Take good care of those you love.
21. Don't do anything that wouldn't make your Mom proud.

—by H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Who Packed Your Parachute?

Charles Plumb was a jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a missile. He parachuted into enemy hands and spent six years in a Viet Cong prison. He survived this ordeal and now lectures about his experiences as a POW and what he learned as a result.

One day, he and his wife were in a restaurant when a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam. You were shot down!" Plumb asked, "How in the world did you know that?" The man replied, "I packed your parachute."

He humbly thanked the man for indirectly saving his life. Even though he was filled with immense gratitude, this incident troubled Plumb for days afterward. He wondered how many times during his service career he had passed by this kind of man and not even said "hello" or "good morning." He knew what kind of care this man must have put into each parachute he packed, each time holding in his hands the life and fate of someone he didn't even know.

Both you and I have someone who provides what we need to make it through the day. These people are usually unrecognized or unappreciated. Who packed your parachute today?



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