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FALL 2018



You can depend on the PSI Team when trouble is on the horizon.

Who Do You Want To Be In Trouble With?

In the everyday business environment, I firmly believe that the best problem-solvers win. If we are of the mindset that growth is of vital importance to everything and everyone around us, then a realistic expectation is that problems will occur in every aspect of our lives and will continue. In other words, life can be a series of problems that need to be resolved.

Growth means newness, and when something is new we have the opportunity to learn about it, deal with it and make it work for us. Our own bodies are made of building blocks that are in a continuous cycle of growth, rejuvenation and death.

We learn by doing, failing, learning by our mistakes and finding a better way. This process in itself is growth; it can also be referred to as "continuous improvement."

And so it is with client relationships and the end goal of working together to minimize disruptions to operations, jobsites and schedules. There are myriad things that can go wrong on a construction project and most of it is out of our control; especially when we are a second-tier contractor. People are imperfect and they make mistakes. On commercial projects, we are often three or four steps removed from the end user. This usually means that the other trades

we work alongside with are in the same position as we are. It is in all our best interests to work together to ensure a timely and quality installation, because it reflects well on all of us all the way up through the ranks. So, it's vitally important that the job start off on the right foot with realistic expectations and a realistic, attainable goal.

Does this happen all the time? I guess you already know the answer is NO! So, that's where problem-solving comes into play. When things go bad and the unexpected happens, who do you want to be in trouble with?



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Domesticated Dog Remains Are Oldest in the Americas

Dogs may have been man's best friend for longer than we thought. The remains of three dogs uncovered at two sites in Illinois have recently been radiocarbon dated to show that they were buried 10,000 years ago, making them 1,500 years older than previously thought. That makes them older than dogs found at a Texas site, which had been killed and eaten 9,300 years ago, according to an article on the *Science News* website.

The findings at the Illinois sites suggest that the dogs were domesticated—there's no evidence of their having been killed, suggesting they died of natural causes and were buried after death.

They're believed to be the oldest known domesticated dogs in the Americas. (A dog buried at a German site 14,000 years ago was included in a grave with two people).

Scientists studying the remains found that the lower jaw and teeth of two of the dogs share similarities to modern-day wolves. Another dog showed traits found in present-day coyotes, suggesting some ancient interbreeding.



"Science is the great antidote to the poison of enthusiasm and superstition."

—Adam Smith

Take Charge of These Elements For Successful Change

Taking charge of change in the workplace means paying attention to the factors that support a new vision—or that, if ignored, can undercut and cripple it. Here are four major areas to address:



Tasks. Focus on the specific actions you plan to take and what effect you expect them to have. They should be visible and concrete so people know what's going on and what to plan for as the change continues.



Reasons. Explain why the change is necessary. Even if people are uncomfortable with what's going on, they'll usually accept it once they understand the reasons behind it. Enlist their help—ask for suggestions and support so they feel a sense of ownership and have the opportunity to shape the overall result.



Emotions. Pay attention to employees' feelings, whether they talk about their emotions or not. Listen to what they say and what they don't say, keeping in mind that nobody enjoys being pulled out of his or her comfort zone no matter how urgent the need is. Acknowledge their fears and their hopes. Don't make promises you can't keep; just be honest and open about what's happening and what's possible. and have the opportunity to shape the overall result.



Values. Change puts stress on ethical behavior up and down the org chart. When people are uncertain and frightened about the future, they're more likely to make poor decisions. Your job is to reemphasize the value your organization places on ethical behavior: Discuss issues surrounding the change with honesty and trust, and act as a role model for the behavior you want to see.

Avoid Common Troubles That Plague Teams

Selecting the right people for your task force or committee is important, but it's no guarantee of success. Be ready to deal with these issues that can smother the team's potential:

- **Going off on tangents.** Creative, intelligent people can sometimes get caught up in a new idea and lose track of the original goal. Redirect your team as needed, reminding them of what you want to accomplish. Talk privately to those who seem unable or unwilling to focus.
- **Complaining.** Obstacles and difficulties can cause anger and resentment. You can't eliminate them altogether, but take steps to shut down complaints and whining before they start sucking the energy from your team. When people complain, ask what they could do to improve the situation. They'll either find a solution or see the futility of dwelling on frustration.
- **Lack of communication.** Some team members hoard information by nature; others just get too busy to share what they're doing or consider how it affects everyone else. Remind your people that they have a responsibility to work together; show how their individual strengths contribute to overall success; hold team-building workshops that feature exercises teaching the importance of sharing information.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



Consumers Nervous About Online Data

If you're worried about how well businesses are protecting the data they collect from you, you're far from alone. A survey from IBM found that 77 percent of consumers say that an organization's ability to keep their personal data secure is a factor in their buying decisions—and only 20 percent say they "completely trust" businesses to ensure their privacy.

The survey also found that 75 percent of buyers refuse to purchase from companies they don't trust, regardless of the quality of their products. Another finding: Almost three-fourths of consumers believe that sellers are more concerned about profits than about privacy and data protection.

Reduce Anxiety Over Performance Reviews

It's almost a cliché to say that no one likes performance appraisals, but have you ever stopped to think about why managers and employees alike have negative feelings about them? Here's what people are afraid of—and some tips for making reviews more positive for both of you:

- **Bad experiences.** Chances are many of your employees have suffered through a botched appraisal or two during their careers, and you may have had your own disasters. Don't ignore the fear. Let your employees know you want the review process to be as painless and positive as possible.
- **Lack of benefit.** Some managers view appraisals as a chore with no payoff, and employees pick up on their bad attitude. Explain how evaluations can help your people do their jobs better and advance in their careers—and plan your discussions with an emphasis on improvement, not blame.
- **Poor management training.** The performance appraisal meeting, like a candidate interview, calls for specific skills. Get some training on how to deliver feedback appropriately so you don't send employees the wrong message.
- **Inadequate job descriptions.** If employees don't know what to do, how can they avoid doing it wrong? Go through job descriptions regularly to make sure they're up to date and reflect what the employee does. Use job descriptions as a guide when performing evaluations so your comments and feedback make sense.



Getting Unstuck

Three men were driving in the woods in a pickup truck when they became stuck in the mud.

The driver became angry and began to shout and curse. He pounded on the steering wheel and then sat fuming about their bad luck.

The second man climbed out of the truck and took refuge under the shade of a large tree. "I'm going to hang out here until someone comes along who can tow us out," he said.

The third man retrieved an ax and a saw and found a felled tree. He cut pieces to wedge under the tires so the truck could drive out of the mud.

We all get "stuck in the mud" at times while we are traveling down life's road. Will you melt down, walk away, and do nothing? Or will you embark on a course of action for getting unstuck?



Famous "Valleys"

- 1) Which of the following phrases appears in the Hidden Valley Ranch logo?
 - a) California, USA
 - b) The Original
 - c) Salad Dressing
 - d) With Buttermilk
- 2) What area of Los Angeles is mentioned in the lyrics of Frank and Moon Zappa's 1982 hit "Valley Girl"?
 - a) Bel-Air
 - b) Brentwood
 - c) Encino
 - d) Van Nuys
- 3) The *Sweet Valley High* young adult novel series focused on what twin sisters?
 - a) Serena and Blair
 - b) Elizabeth and Jessica
 - c) Kristy and Claudia
 - d) Georgia and Louise
- 4) What laundry additive was the long-time sponsor of the TV series *Death Valley Days*?
 - a) 20 Mule Team Borax
 - b) Purex
 - c) Downy
 - d) Mrs. Stewart's Liquid Bluing
- 5) What former Brat Pack-er portrayed Bill Gates in the 1999 TV movie *Pirates of Silicon Valley*?
 - a) Emilio Estevez
 - b) Andrew McCarthy
 - c) Judd Nelson
 - d) Anthony Michael Hall

—from *mentalfloss.com*

Answers: 1) b 2) c 3) b 4) a 5) d

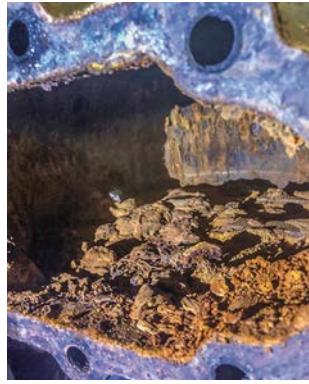
Things That Hide Behind Walls and Ceilings

When we look up at the ceiling, most of us see either a sheet-rocked ceiling or acoustical tiles. In industrial plants, there's a good chance there's a lot of exposed machinery, process piping and fire protection piping.

Just because I'm in the business, when I enter a public facility, I look up at the ceiling to verify that there's a sprinkler system in place. I suspect lots of you do that too. We see sprinkler heads peeking out through the ceiling tiles or some type of fire alarm.

What's inside that piping?

In most cases, water. And because the water is usually not treated, there's a lot of junk in there. Over many years of use, the water becomes



Scale and rust had built up so much that the clapper inside the valve could not close tightly.

corrosive and tends to wear down the mechanical parts. Pictured is a valve that we recently ran across. When I first saw the picture, it reminded me of a picture of the Grand Canyon!

We recently received a call from a new client saying that air was leaking out of a sprinkler valve. Our service manager, Greg Brewer, dispatched a crew and, upon reaching the client site, found that air was leaking out of a ball drip.

A ball drip is installed at the low point in the fire department connection piping of an automatic sprinkler system. When the pressure goes below a certain point, the ball drip automatically re-opens, permitting this piping to drain and thereby preventing freezing.

continued below...



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Things That Hide... *continued from above*

The techs notified the local fire department, and then proceeded to shut the system down. Once the system was deactivated, they removed the face plate on the valve and found that scale and rust had built up so much that the clapper inside the valve could not close tightly, thus allowing air to escape through the ball drip. This was causing the compressor to continuously run to maintain the system pressure.

Too much of a decrease in pressure would cause the system to flood with water; which, in this situation, would have been a bad thing.

Our techs cleaned the valve, replaced the gasket, charged the system with air; however, the system was still not holding pressure. We recommended that the client replace the valve; he agreed, and we returned to install a new valve. Hopefully the new valve will last as long as the old one we replaced.

Two National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, NFPA 13 and NFPA 25 provide recommendations for flushing requirements for above ground sprinkler system piping. NFPA 13 deals with new system installations, while NFPA 25 is the Standard on Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water Based Extinguishing Systems.

The NFPA is a global nonprofit organization, established in 1896, devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. Insurance company requirements and the Local Authority Having Jurisdiction (LAHJ) may differ and be more stringent than NFPA recommendations.

Have an additional question? Contact Greg Brewer, Service Manager by phone at 508.644.2221 ext 103 or e-mail Greg at: gb@PipingSystemsInc.com.



We're doing our part!

