

"It doesn't matter how smart you are unless you stop and think."

» **Thomas Sowell**



Winning Cultures

I suggested to friends during the lead up to the Super Bowl that if Tampa Bay won, Tom Brady deserved the MVP regardless of his stats.

I argued that he had single-handedly changed their culture.

Success is rarely an accident, and repeated success is NEVER an accident. People who lead by both word and action get the most out of their teams.

The same player...or employee...who may be a middle of the pack performer elsewhere, will often develop star-level skills after personally witnessing what it takes to achieve success.

It's one thing to observe a successful athlete, musician, businessperson, etc. from a distance. The tendency is to think that they simply must be more gifted than others.

That's rarely the case.

Professional sports are filled with supreme athletes.

There are millions of talented musicians across the land.

There are millions of folks with the innate abilities to manage a business or lead a team.



Always Dressed for Success

I recently needed to have my wife's watch repaired. It was a birthday gift (I likely overpaid for) a few years ago.

The most annoying thing about the situation was having to visit a jewelry store.

I've never been much of a jewelry person. Thankfully, neither is my wife.

But...I'm apparently as susceptible as the next person to the societal pressure of what kinds of things you buy for milestone birthdays and anniversaries.

Walking in that day in midweek, no-Zoom-videos-today, pandemic-chic attire, I suppose I looked more like someone there to hock a watch than to buy one.

As luck would have it, the store manager walked out of his office as I was the only person not being assisted.

He asked, "Are you next?" I chuckled and said, "Well, I suppose that's your call."

I told him that I was looking to have a watch repaired. His lack of interest was clear as he said "Oh," and walked to find someone to hand me off to.

I didn't hear what he told her, but she seemed to take on a DMV demeanor.

What tends to separate them are the work ethics they display, the time they put in, and their resilience after the inevitable setbacks on the road to success.

The impact that has on teams is evident. Confidence and competence are contagious.

In this case, consider that the four touchdowns scored by the Bucs came from players (Gronkowski and Brown) who weren't in the league last year, and (Fournette) who was cut by his former team.

Each were thought clearly past their primes. Brady personally recruited each of them to the team.

In a postgame interview, Fournette talked about the confidence Brady put in everyone.

He shared that Brady would text everyone on the team at 11 PM each night leading up to the Super Bowl with the simple message, "We will win."

Few outside the organization agreed.

The folks who mattered most, however, bought in.

Successful teams tend to have members who support one another both in good times and in difficult times.

Individuals know that they can't do everything, but when they do their jobs exceptionally well, they make it possible for others to do their jobs exceptionally well.

They win or lose as a team.

One committed leader can establish a culture that makes everyone better.

The best place to find that leader usually isn't on another team. With the right outlook, you might find him or her in the mirror each morning.

What culture will you create today?

She wasn't blatantly rude, just completely disinterested. I'm guessing filling out forms for a watch repair isn't a big commission generator.

She began to tell me about the process of sending a watch in for repair and said, "Where did you get the watch?"

I told her that I had purchased it from them, and she asked for my phone number.

I'm not sure what pulled up on their system. There is no chance that I'm on their list of top customers.

None.

That said, I've bought a few gifts there over the past few years. Apparently, the screen that popped up showed that I'm gullible enough to buy sparkly things from time to time.

The change in her demeanor was laughable.

She became chatty and suggested I look at items in a nearby display that would complement the watch and be "perfect" for Valentine's Day. I think I even detected a smile from behind her mask.

At that point, the odds of getting me to even consider buying anything were near zero.

Once a person feels disrespected, it tends to sting for a bit.

I always think back to the fact that the largest depositor at my first branch was someone who often looked like he had just climbed off a tractor.

And there was good reason for that.

He usually had.

It takes the same amount of time and just a bit more effort to instantly show each customer you interact with courtesy and respect.

Invest those few extra seconds in people today.

The ROI on courtesy and respect can be pretty remarkable.

"Most people who have an opinion about everything have actually just one opinion that applies to everything."

» **Robert Brault**



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*Dave Martin, author of *The In-Store Advantage*, has become one of the most prolific writers in the banking industry. His keynote presentations, seminars, and podcasts have an authenticity and humor that brings teams of all sizes and seniority levels together.*

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