

"Either you run the day or the day runs you."

»Jim Rohn

Throwing Shade on Our Plans



I made a recent discovery at my home that is annoying but funny as well.

I have kidded with friends that this state of affairs is another example of one of my mantras.

Many of the things that cause us the greatest stress or annoyance on a daily basis are associated with things we asked for and/or worked hard to get.

When we moved into our home years ago, we had to make decisions about which trees we would keep. A previous owner had gotten a little too excited about planting large oak trees in close proximity to palm trees.

I'm a Cajun. I kept the oaks.

For years, I have looked forward to a certain tree finally shading my entire driveway.

Whenever we have had the trees trimmed, I have made sure that the crews would leave the future driveway-shade

Are We in the Way?



A recent visit to an office supply store had me thinking about how some companies are dealing with the transformation of retailing.

I had plenty of time to reflect while I waited in line at their printing center.

It had been quite some time since I had stepped foot in this kind of store. I had forgotten that these places sold everything from paper clips to computers to office furniture.

I reflected on the fact that any number of online retailers could deliver just about anything I saw in that warehouse-sized store to my doorstep within a day or two.

The business side of me began thinking about the rent for that retail space, the salaries of the polo-shirt wearing crew, the utilities, the insurance costs, etc.

That said, I was there. And the place had a dozen or so shoppers in it.

branches alone.

This year, it finally happened. The spring growth spurt put branches right where I hoped they would reach.

The shade is just what I expected.

Additionally, the branches that I have long anticipated now generate something else. They now provide new places for a plethora of birds to hang around and generate “organic souvenirs” atop whatever I park in my driveway.

As I break out the garden hose more than I would care to these days, I chuckle and reflect on the symbolism of the situation.

Sometimes we get the very things we asked for...and they somehow get “souvenired on” by elements beyond our control.

For years, I’ve kidded with management groups that if they made a list of the biggest “headaches” or stress-inducers they are dealing with during any given week, the great likelihood is that most or all of them are associated with things they worked diligently to attain.

You asked for this!

You worked hard to become a manager! Congratulations!

You know what comes with that? Yup...managing!

“What’s with all these reports I have to read? How many calls am I on today?! I thought I’d miss less family events once I was promoted!”

I feel a little better about a business’s prospects when there are at least more customers than employees in a place at any given time.

As I waited in line at the printing center, I considered picking up a few items that I had not walked in thinking about.

However, as the minutes passed, so did my interest in spending any more money than necessary in that store.

The printing department appeared to be the one truly busy area in the place. I use the phrase busy only to describe the fact it had a line.

I cannot say that the one employee in the department looked especially busy, or happy, or particularly interested.

More perplexing was the “manager” who walked by several times as the body language of the folks in that line went from passive annoyance to “Are you kidding me?” status.

He never paused to acknowledge the line or to offer any assistance.

After 10 minutes or so, the employee picked up a walkie-talkie and asked for help (about 9 minutes or so later than she should have, by my estimation).

The manager who walked by us several times before came over and got behind the counter.

We things called customers were apparently getting in the way of his taking of inventory. I suspected most of us would not plan to get in the way in the future.

“And where did all these birds come from?” Wait, sorry...wrong story.

Learning to laugh at some of the absurdities our lives and careers throw at us is actually very healthy.

Furthermore, its beneficial to take a moment now and then to remind ourselves that the less-than-scintillating parts of our jobs are often what make the things we do enjoy possible.

I hope their online business is strong, as it seemed he would prefer an empty store.

Every person visiting your branch presents you with an opportunity to make him or her feel good about the decision to do business with you...or not.

How will your customers be made to feel this week?

"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else."

»Booker T. Washington

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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