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**"It's a funny thing about life. One you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack." » Germany Kent**



## Environmental Science

One of the pluses of being back on the road is the opportunity to interact with folks around the country.

I may have taken that for granted in years past. Some of the more informing chats of any given week happen standing in lines with strangers. And there seem to be more and more lines these days. It doesn't appear to be so much increased demand as it is decreased capacity.

I'm also a fan of throwing out the phrase, "That's a first-world problem," whenever I find myself complaining or commiserating with others about annoyances.

You know... real hardships like slow wi-fi or only decaf coffee packets in your hotel room. Oh, the humanity of it all!

On a recent morning, I found myself standing in a long line at a coffee bar. The woman near me checked her watch several times and said, "Can you believe how slow this is?" I smiled and nodded.

I then said, "You know, I guess waiting in a slow line for a latte is a pretty first-world problem, huh?" She laughed and agreed. (The inflated price was another conversation altogether.)



## Laughing at Rejection

It was only a few years ago that my sons would reference "on-line stars" whom I had never heard of.

How famous could these people be if they were only on YouTube, streaming services, or those things called podcasts?

(Okay, I missed on that one.)

I've realized over the past couple of years that I now spend more time watching online programs and listening to podcasts than any other form of entertainment or news shows.

After recently reading about being conscious of how you choose to spend the relatively few hours we have for discretionary education and diversion each week, I did a quick personal survey.

Evidently, I listen to comedians talking to other comedians more than anything else.

You might think that would be a rather small category. It's not.

Sure, I watch and read national and business news each day ...but apparently spend at least an equal amount of time listening to comedians.

Yes, they're funny. But I find most of their chats as motivational as they are funny.

We talked about why we should show patience and gratitude to the folks who actually show up for work these days.

She then made a telling observation, “You know, it does seem like the people who are showing up for work in most of these places are at least friendly. Even though they’re often overwhelmed, most seem to have good attitudes.”

I suggested that is likely not an accident. Whether it is something they have been trained or have learned intrinsically, most of these employees realize that customers and coworkers tend to mirror the manners and behaviors they observe.

Sure, there will always be folks whom it appears can never be made happy. And you have to wonder whether they ever wonder why they always seem to get “bad service” or have issues with their coworkers. (Then again, maybe they never wonder).

That said, smiles, manners, and good attitudes are more likely to be echoed by customers, coworkers, and yes...even supervisors.

In many ways, we create the work environments we spend our days in. While this has always been the case, it may be more appropriate than ever to remind our teams of that fact.

And the best way for leaders to communicate that fact is through their own personal example.

I enjoy listening to them talk about the business of comedy.

I’ve suggested to folks struggling to overcome the fear of rejection that they should listen to comedians talking about what it takes to succeed in their world.

Talent is great to have.

But talent without practice and resilience is useless in their world.

Many of the most successful comedians in the world have the best stories about “bombing” throughout their careers.

Tellingly, most of these popular comedians are still dropping into smaller venues knowing they are often going to be somewhat humbled before leaving.

The established names admit that crowds will give you a grace period for the first minute or so because they know you.

But if your material is weak, they soon sour and show disappointment.

Unlike musicians, comedians cannot rely on “greatest hits” to remain viable.

They are constantly evolving and working on new material, and it’s “customer feedback” – both positive and negative – that help them polish their work.

We may not stand in the same kind of spotlights while doing our jobs, but that dynamic is true for most of us.

Rejection and setbacks aren’t the enemies of your ultimate success.

They’re vital (and recurring) elements of the process.

That’s no joke.

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**"She had fouled off the curves life had thrown at her."**

» **W.P. Kinsella**

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