

"Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work."

»Stephen King

Changing Plans, Not Goals



I've joked with family that we may need to have one of those ancestry tests performed to see if we have any Spanish blood in us.

I do not believe that we do, but you would not know it from my older son's love of the athletes and sports teams of Spain.

Everything comes to a stop for him when an FC Barcelona soccer match is on. And Rafael Nadal has been his favorite tennis player for many years.

He and I plopped down in front of the TV to watch Nadal take on the likable Juan Martin del Potro in the semifinals of the US Open.

Del Potro is a great player who has won the Open before.

Nadal will likely go down as one of the 2 or 3 best players in the history of the game when he retires.

New, Improved, and Stressful



I had a more stressful than usual trip recently that eventually got me making fun of myself.

The things that stressed me were...well...kinda dumb.

On this particular trip I ended up using a new phone, traveling bag, and computer bag. I had not planned on all of those things being replaced, but, hey, lots of things don't go according to my plans.

My family decided my old, reliable, cracked-screen smartphone had to go. My well-used travel and computer bags apparently made my wife cringe, as well.

I suddenly found myself with "new and improved" versions of all of them.

Each of the new items is an improvement and upgrade of what they replaced. However, I found myself repeatedly

He's playing near the top of his game and was a solid favorite heading into the match.

But, Nadal dropped the first set and the boisterous Argentina / del Potro fans in the stadium went nuts.

After beating Roger Federer in his previous match, it looked like del Potro was on the kind of championship run he had a few years ago.

And then... Nadal destroyed him over the next three sets.

If not for seeing that first set, you would have thought that match was a total mismatch.

While many post-match interviews are pretty useless, I thought this one was particularly insightful. Nadal said something that put a smile on my face and had me rewinding the DVR to watch it again.

He explained that he entered the match with a plan of staying away from del Potro's strength – his forehand. And he followed that plan well.

He was doing just what he planned to do... but del Potro was ready for it, making adjustments, and pounding him.

Nadal said, "I realized I was not playing badly....and I was losing. I had to make changes."

I loved that statement because it reflected that the people who are the very best at what they do are willing to acknowledge when their best plans are not working.

frustrated when I couldn't find things or get stuff to work like I was accustomed.

The new computer bag is very nice, with a better design and many pockets. But it is not like the bag I used for years.

None of my stuff is where it used to be. I packed the bag myself... knew that I packed everything ... and still couldn't find anything.

My new travel bag is also nice. It rolls much more easily than my old bag.

So easily, in fact, that when I let go of it for a second, it rolled down a parking ramp and had me chasing to keep it from oncoming traffic.

I shouldn't blame inanimate objects for the laws of physics, but that doesn't mean I didn't.

My new phone looks and performs better than my previous. Still, I spent quite a bit of my trip grumbling about apps I had before that I apparently forgot to download onto the new phone.

Again, not the inanimate phone's fault...but I was still mad at it.

These were all trivial things. But it reminded me of the simple fact that changes – even changes for the better – usually cause stress.

Our human minds tend to be a bit annoyed when a routine is broken or a task that we have committed to our subconscious suddenly requires conscious thought.

There is a level of humility that the very best at what they do have that allows them to adjust their plans without changing their goals.

Okay, your work challenges may not involve facing 130 mph serves to do your job.

But striving through training, practice, and hard work to be exceptional at what you do gives you the flexibility to succeed where the less-prepared cannot.

Good plans may not always succeed.

Good and prepared people usually do.

Strive to be one of those people.

We may see it when we ask our teams to change a routine or handle tasks a different way.

We may see it when we ask customers to consider new and different ways to more efficiently bank.

Their initial discomfort with change doesn't mean they are difficult people. It means they are people.

Furthermore, initial resistance to change does not necessarily signal flaws in the change.

Change is unavoidable.

By keeping a proper perspective, however, much of the frustration can be.

"Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change."

»Jim Rohn



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