

"You are either supporting the vision or supporting division."

»Saji Ijiyemi

Truck Stop



I often remind frontline bankers that there are jobs within our organizations many do not truly appreciate until something goes wrong.

I was reminded of this recently in a definite un-bank setting. I brought my family to see my favorite band, The Goo Goo Dolls, in concert.

For a moment I felt guilty about paying what I did for great tickets.

I then remembered that my wife has paid for expensive tickets to see New Kids on the Block (Huh?) four times in recent years. My guilt vanished.

I received an email as we sat in traffic on our way to the venue. It stated the show would be starting two hours late.

The reason given was that the equipment truck had broken down.

A weeknight show scheduled to end around 10 PM would now end after midnight.

Run It Like You Own It



I've been an avid runner for about 30 years. That fact sometimes has me questioning myself.

I used to joke with friends who ran track that their sport was based around the activity other sports use for disciplinary actions.

Their sport is punishment!

To this day, I hear my son's basketball coaches yelling things out to the team like, "Hey...if you guys don't pay attention, we're going to stop practice and get on the line!"

That's coach-speak for running until he has their attention. It's not fun.

While heading out to run on a particularly hot day recently, I kidded with my wife that I should be back within the hour unless I blew out a knee or got a heat stroke.

(That was mostly a joke.)

My basketballer son looked over and said, "I can't believe you like running."

The younger me would have been embarrassed; the current me was actually bothered by that.

We arrived around the time the show was originally going to start to find the truck, indeed, had just arrived.

Having to wait outside on a humid Houston evening with two thousand other folks was not exactly a highlight of anyone's day.

They could not let people into the venue while they hauled in heavy equipment.

Folks in line, while mostly good-natured, commiserated about the late night for which they hadn't planned.

We were let in almost two hours later. I struck up a conversation with a guy who looked to be about my age (i.e. old dude) running the "Band Merch" station.

When I learned he was traveling with the tour, I smiled and asked, "How's your truck?"

He looked around, and then at me and said, "The band and crew have been here all day. That truck didn't break down. The tour manager fired the driver as soon as he pulled up."

The crew had to complete what is normally a five-hour job in two hours, with 2,000 people waiting.

Eventually, the band apologized to the audience, acknowledged the crew, and put on a fantastic show.

I'd bet most on that tour took the role the truck driver plays for granted when they hit the road.

I told him, "Well, I can't say that I always like it. Some days I do. Some days I hate it. I hope I don't hate it today."

He quipped, "Dude, don't ever call me weird. That's crazy. I can't believe you do something you don't like when no one is making you do it. I'm not killing myself running unless coach makes us."

As I began running that day, I reflected and chuckled over the fact that if I had someone making me do this on a sweltering day, I'd probably resent them for it.

But I was there of my own freewill, and had no complaints.

In most sports, coaches know that their sport is as much an athletic competition as a skills competition.

Many can perform before they are tired.

Those who can avoid becoming tired, or know how to adjust their games once they grow tired, tend to separate themselves as the game progresses.

Coaches sometimes make us do things we don't feel like doing now (or ever).

They don't do it to break us.

They do it to prepare us for success.

I often suggest to folks that if we suddenly gave them their own businesses, they'd be putting in longer hours, working more weekends, making more sales calls, and generally doing more of the things they sometimes complain about their managers asking them to do.

I'd also bet it's top-of-mind now.

Many of us rely on people performing jobs behind the scene that require high levels of competence and reliability.

Most of these vital folks tend not to ask for attention or praise.

Find ways to give them attention and praise, anyway.

Moreover, they'd do it by choice and of their own freewill, because it is *their* business.

Whatever our individual futures hold, the things success-minded managers and coaches are asking us to do today help position our companies - and us - for success tomorrow.

Work hard. Stay humble. Remain coachable. Own your future.

"Run if you can, walk if you have to, crawl if you must; just never give up."

»Dean Karnazes



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